

Meeting Rooms Policy

Portland Library

Statement of Purpose

The Board of Directors of the Portland Library views the use of the library meeting rooms as a library service. The rooms shall be available to the library community in its broadest sense and shall reflect the Library's educational, cultural, social and recreational roles and its function as a community gathering space. The use of a room by any group or individual does not in any way constitute an endorsement of the group's or individual's policies or beliefs by the Library or the Town of Portland.

The Library Board subscribes to Article IV of the Library Bill of Rights, which states that facilities shall be made available to the public served by the given library on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

I. Availability

The Portland Library has meeting rooms and two small study rooms available for public use.

Meeting rooms:

The Mary Flood Room:

- with tables and chairs: capacity is 40 people,
- with chairs only: capacity is 70 people

The Wagner Room: capacity is 30 people

The Van Beynum Room: capacity is 12 people

Study Rooms:

The Nocek Room: capacity is 6 people

The Buck Room: capacity is 6 people

The Nocek and Buck study rooms may be booked by individuals for quiet study, tutoring, or meetings. If applicable, please also see the Tutoring Policy

Meeting rooms are generally available by reservation during hours when the library is open to the public.

II. Application for Use of Meeting Rooms

The meeting rooms shall be available for booking to groups or individuals on a first come, first served basis, subject to the approval of the Library Director or his/her designee.

To book a **meeting room**, a representative of any non-government town group must fill out and sign a meeting room application form and either submit it through the library website, or send the application in **by mail, e-mail, or hand-delivery**.

An updated application is required every three years and groups must contact the library promptly and a revised application should be submitted if there is a change to relevant contact or setup information or nonprofit status.

The Library shall respond to requests for the current calendar year within three business days of receipt,

but please note that the library is unable to confirm reservations from outside groups for the upcoming calendar year until all regular Town meeting schedules have been approved.

To book a **study room**, an individual or a representative of a group may call or come in to the library and speak with a staff member at the Information desk and reserve a space up to 60 days in advance.

In case of conflict, the priority in booking for meetings:

- 1) Critical Town Meeting with the exception of a previously scheduled library program when another venue can appropriately accommodate the Town group.
- 2) Library and library affiliated groups or programs.
- 3) Portland non-profit and Civic organizations or groups whose activities will benefit the citizens of Portland
- 4) Non-profit and civic organizations not relating to Portland, and local **For-profit groups conducting non-commercial activity which is free and open to the public.**

Definition: **Critical Town meetings:** Meetings of the Board of Selectmen, The Planning and Zoning Commission and the Inland Wetlands Commission, and other municipal commissions.

III. Limits:

The Mary Flood Room may remain in use beyond the usual closing time until 11 pm; a designated group member must be trained in closing procedures.

In case they continue beyond closing time, public meetings held in a room other than the Mary Flood must move to a designated area to allow monitoring of the entrance door activity after the Library is closed.

Except for Critical Town Meetings, groups shall be limited to regular bookings of no more than once a month.

Non-profit groups with no Portland affiliation and local

for-profit groups are limited to a maximum of one use of the meeting rooms between the respective periods from January to June and July to December.

Tutors who receive pay for their services may only reserve a room one business day prior to the day of use, and are held to a time limit of two hours per day. Study room users who do not receive pay for their services or are tutors employed directly by the Portland Public Schools may reserve a study room or the Van Beynum Room at any time during normal operating hours.

The Library reserves the right to approve or deny requests for use of the meeting or study rooms, or cancel a reservation for the use of a meeting or study room, in case of conditions that could reasonably be expected to disrupt the library's operations.

IV. Eligibility & Fees:

The rooms shall be available to non-commercial, tax-exempt, cultural, civic, professional, educational or governmental groups.

Individual juveniles and groups of juveniles under the age of 16 may use the meeting or study rooms only with verified adult supervision; one adult per each group of ten (10) juveniles present.

The rooms and the library facility shall not be used for the following purposes:

Commercial activity, soliciting, or sales of products or services, with the exception of tutoring, as named above, Political rallies, meetings, or phone banking for the purpose of supporting or opposing a specific candidate, Religious services, Group or private social events, Events where admission or registration fees are charged, or where donations are solicited.

Fundraising may take place only at the discretion of the Library Board or designee.

The Library reserves the right to seek references of the individual booking the room and of any group, before booking the room.

V. Guidelines and Responsibilities

Supervision and Responsibility for order:
The organization and the individual applying for using the meeting room are responsible for supervising the use of the room.

A child or children accompanied to the library by a user of a meeting room may not be left unattended in the library or in a meeting or study room.

Groups using the meeting rooms may be responsible for arranging the room and shall be responsible for restoring the room to the same condition in which it was found.

If the kitchen is used, it must be left in clean, orderly condition. Permission from the library must be granted before refreshments may be served in the Van Beynum Room.

Applicant should supply a request for set up of the meeting room at the time of application which the library and town will do its best to provide.

Study rooms are to be left in clean, orderly condition, and food should not be disposed of in study room trash receptacles.

Per the library's Behavior and Environment Policy "beverages are allowed only in appropriate closed containers and to be kept at a minimum distance of 4 feet from any library electronic equipment."

Users of the library's audio-visual equipment must be trained in advance and will be held responsible for any damage to hardware.

Alcoholic beverages may not be served in the Library. The Library is a **Smoke-free** building.

Cooking, use of candles, and vaping are prohibited. Materials shall not be affixed to wall surfaces without prior written permission.

A statement clarifying sponsorship must appear in all advertising and press releases using the following phrase:

"This program is sponsored by (organization's name) and will be held in the _____ meeting room of the Portland Library."

Groups, excepting Critical Town meeting groups, may not store materials at the Library.

No group may use the Library as its mailing address or information contact point.

The Library shall not be responsible for damage or loss to equipment, supplies, exhibits or exhibit materials, or any other items owned by an individual or group and used in the meeting rooms.

VI. Liability

Waiver:

The Library Board and the Town of Portland or their employees or agents are not liable for any claims

arising out of the use of this facility.

The library reserves the right to require that groups or individuals provide a certificate of comprehensive general liability insurance with minimum coverage of one million for property damage and personal injury arising of use of the facility.

The applicant shall be required to pay in advance, either through a cashier's check or a surety bond, the cost estimated by the Director of any security measures which are reasonable or necessary for the meeting.

VII. Exceptions:

Exceptions to this policy may be made at the discretion of the Library Director or his/her designee.

Failure to act in accord with this policy and/or the following library policies: the Behavior and Environment Policy and/or the Child Behavior and Supervision policy may result in cancellation of a meeting and/or future denial of meeting room privileges for any group or individual.

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October 22, 2009
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