

RAPIDES PARISH LIBRARY MEETING ROOM POLICY

Purpose

The Rapides Parish Library meeting rooms are primarily used for Library (or Library sponsored) activities (programs, conferences, seminars, and exhibits.) Meeting rooms are also available to other groups and individuals for use as a service to the community.

Guidelines for Use

- The meeting rooms are available without charge to qualifying individuals or groups.
- Meetings must be free and open to the public and must be promoted in the media as such. No admission fee or donation may be required or solicited from those attending meetings in the library. No fees, tuition, donations, application, or registration charges may be solicited off-site for a meeting that is held at the Library, either before or after the event.
- Publicity is the responsibility of the individual or organization hosting the meeting. It is incumbent upon the organization to make every reasonable effort to clarify to the media (and to the public) that the Library does not necessarily sponsor the activity or endorse what it represents.
- No private parties or functions, such as wedding or baby showers, etc., are permitted in Library meeting rooms, even if they are ostensibly “open to the public.”
- The facilities are not available for shows designed to promote commercial products or services. Retail sales are not allowed, except by explicit permission of the Library Director when an author or artist is allowed to do a show and/or signing.
- Library programs and governmental functions such as public elections and required training of poll workers receive priority in the scheduling of the meeting rooms.
- Meetings involving young people under the age of 15 must have an adult sponsor in attendance during the entire meeting. Children under the age of 10 years must be accompanied by a parent or responsible caregiver at all times.
- Political events or rallies promoting a particular candidate, political group, or vote result are not allowed. However, general informational programs on political topics and forums discussing opposing viewpoints may be held.
- Use of the library’s meeting space does not constitute the Library’s endorsement of viewpoints expressed by organizers and/or participants of events held in its spaces.
- The library reserves the right to change, cancel, or revoke reservations for meeting rooms. If changes or cancellations are necessary, the Library will provide the affected group as much notice as possible.

- Meetings or gatherings of any kind that would interfere with the operation of the library or the safety of its users are prohibited. Examples include having a number of people greater than room size limits, activity or noise levels that disturb other users or the use of hazardous materials such as lighted candles.
- If a group has booked a meeting room but is more than 30 minutes late in arriving for the scheduled time, their booking for that session may be cancelled unless the user has called to say they will be late. Failure to give advance notice of cancellation may result in a warning to the organization; any further failure to notify in advance of cancellation may result in the cancellation of all of that organization's bookings and no future bookings.
- Any use of open flame is prohibited.
- No illegal activities may take place, inside or outside on Library grounds.
- Smoking is not permitted inside the library or within 25 feet outside of library buildings.
- Alcoholic beverages may not be distributed and/or consumed on the premises.
- No weapons or illegal drugs are allowed on the premises unless part of a demonstration by an authorized law enforcement agency.

Authority

Regional and branch managers will interpret the policy to the public should questions arise.

The Director of the Rapides Parish Library is the final authority in approving meeting room requests in accordance with this policy.

The Rapides Parish Library administration reserves the right to determine whether a request constitutes acceptable use of its public facilities.

Responsible Parties

For groups whose representative resides in the parish, a valid Rapides Parish Library card is required to reserve a meeting room. Groups requesting the use of a meeting room must designate a member to represent them. This member (18 years of age or older) monitors the event, accepts responsibility for the group and its use of the rooms, and signs the reservation form in that capacity. A library employee who participates with a group in the use of a meeting room may serve as the responsible party.

Reservations

- Reservations may be made directly through Library personnel or by accessing meeting room reservations information on the Rapides Parish Library website – www.rpl.org.
- Recurring meetings may be scheduled up to six months in advance.
- Reservations may be changed, cancelled, or revoked based upon Library needs.

- All reservation requests must receive confirmation from Library personnel pending availability.
- Reservation forms must be fully completed.
- Reservation requests that fall outside of normal library operational hours will be considered but are not guaranteed.

Furniture and Equipment

- Groups will arrange tables and/or chairs for their needs. No other physical changes, such as tape or tacks on walls, artwork or other surfaces, are allowed in a meeting room.
- Available audio-visual equipment is listed on reservation forms for each location and must be requested at time of space booking.
- Trash cans are on site; all trash related to meeting room use must be properly discarded.
- The space should be returned to its state upon entry prior to the group's exit.
- Permission to use a library meeting room will be withheld from groups which damage rooms, carpet, equipment, or furniture; or cause disturbances that interfere with Library use; or for any other failure to comply with rules and regulations.

This policy shall apply to the following meeting rooms:

1. Main Library, 411 Washington Street, Alexandria
2. Martin Branch, 801 West Shamrock Street, Pineville
3. Martin Luther King, Jr. Branch, 1115 Broadway Avenue, Alexandria
4. Hineston Branch, 1810 Highway 121, Hineston
5. Libuse Branch, 6375 Hwy 28 E, Pineville
6. McDonald Branch, 1075 Highway 497, Glenmora
7. Robertson Branch, 809 Tioga High School Road, Ball
8. Wettermark Branch, 1177 Haywood B. Joiner St, Boyce, LA 71409
9. Westside Regional Library, (two rooms) 5416 Provine Place, Alexandria

Approved by the Board of Control: October, 1999

Revised/Approved: February, 2005

November, 2008

February, 2009

December, 2009

May, 2014

January, 2016

March, 2018

September 2022