

## MEETING ROOM POLICY

The First Regional Library welcomes the use of its public meeting room facilities for cultural, civic, educational and informational meetings of interest to the citizens of Desoto, Tate, Panola, Lafayette and Tunica Counties. Policies and procedures governing the use of Library meeting spaces are made in accordance with Article 6 of the Library Bill of Rights:

Libraries which make exhibit space and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.

Groups representing any point of view shall have equal opportunity to apply for meeting room use, provided all requirements are met. Use of the library meeting rooms does not imply endorsement by the Library.

### Guidelines:

1. Priority for scheduling the meeting rooms will be as follows:
  - a. Library and library-sponsored groups and programs will always take precedence over community meetings;
  - b. Library staff educational training programs and meetings;
  - c. Community oriented groups.
2. Non-profit community groups of at least three members representing any point of view shall have equal opportunity to apply for meeting room use, provided all requirements are met.
3. All meetings must open to the general public and to the media.
4. Use of the Library's meeting rooms does not constitute Library or FRL Board of Trustee endorsement of viewpoints expressed by participants in the program.
5. Library needs may pre-empt any other scheduled event.
6. Admission fees of any kind are not permitted. No donations, raffles, collections, fees, or sales of any kind may occur. This shall not prohibit bona fide non-profit organizations from charging dues to its members or charging for the cost of food or beverages provided so long as non-members can attend without charge if they do not consume food or beverages.
7. Only the Library and organizations affiliated with the Library (e.g. Friends of the Library or the Reggie Reading Foundation) may collect monies during library fundraising events, including book sales and author lectures.
8. Private social uses of the meeting rooms (including playgroups, birthday parties, etc.) are prohibited.
9. Meeting rooms are generally available only during regular branch business hours that vary upon location and meetings should be vacated before closing; however, some branches may accommodate meetings that occur before or after normal hours. Interested groups must contact the Library no fewer than 48 hours in advance of their proposed meeting.

10. Reservations may be placed for the year by completing a meeting room reservation form. This form must be completed by all groups.
11. Requests to reserve meeting room space must be made by an adult representative (i.e., person 21 years or older) from the requesting group. This individual must possess a valid First Regional Library borrower's card (i.e., any fines on the card must be under the limit, (see [Fines & Fees for Policy & Procedures](#)).
12. The completed meeting reservation form will include a brief description of the nature of the meeting and the name of the applicant, who will be responsible for the conduct of the group and for the clean-up of the room.
13. Requests to use meeting room space in any branch of the First Regional Library must be made through the branch(s) where the meeting(s) is to occur. Each branch location has different-sized meeting rooms and/or small conference spaces available (contact the branch Head Librarian if dimensional details are needed). Reservations will be made on a first-come, first-served basis.
14. The applicant and his/her organization shall be responsible for ensuring that use of the room is in accordance with Library policies and rules. Failure to comply with Library policies and rules will result in loss of permission to use the room.
15. Loss or damage to Library equipment or property will result in assessed charges and/or loss of use of meeting room privileges.
16. Reasonable fees may be assessed to the group and/or individuals for any clean up or repair. (see [Fines & Fees for Policy & Procedures](#)).
17. Activities for minors must be supervised by responsible adults with a reasonable ratio at all times.
18. The use of tape, staples, nails, adhesives, or signs on walls, doors, or windows is not permitted.
19. Alcoholic beverages and smoking are not permitted on Library premises.
20. Groups and organizations planning to use their own special equipment must schedule additional time to accept the delivery of such equipment. This equipment can only be delivered the day of the meeting. A representative of the group or organization must be present to accept delivery of the equipment. The Library is not responsible for outside equipment, nor does the Library provide technical support for outside equipment.
21. All posters, flyers or other advertisements announcing the use of such meeting space must include the following statement, "Use of library facilities does not indicate endorsement of any group by the Library."
22. The Library reserves the right to deny usage to any organization, group or individual which it believes to have been or potentially to be destructive or disruptive to the use of the library or otherwise in violation of the policies of FRL and/or applicable law.
23. All unresolved meeting room disputes will be reviewed by the First Regional Library Board of Trustees. This body shall be the final authority in these matters.

## MEETING ROOM RULES AND REQUIREMENTS CLARIFICATION:

- Library meeting rooms are not to be used for social events that include, but are not limited to, wedding receptions, class reunions, baby showers and birthday parties. No sales meetings, employee recruiting, or staff training of employees who work in a for-profit company will be allowed.
- Meeting rooms and libraries may be used as voting sites and polling places.
- No fees or dues may be charged or solicited by the user for admission to or participation in any program or exhibit. No donations or gratuities of any money or other property, may be solicited or collected from the audience, and no sales may be made in connection with meeting. Only library-sponsored events may include fund-raising efforts of any type.
- Meetings, programs and exhibits may not disrupt the use of the public library by others. Persons coordinating and attending meetings, programs and exhibits are subject to all library rules, regulations and federal, state and local laws. If library rules or established laws are broken if it is determined that the purpose of the organization or the meeting to be held at the library has been misrepresented, the meeting may be cancelled and the group may be denied future use of library meeting room facilities.
- Library facilities shall be left in a clean and orderly fashion, otherwise those who abuse the use of the Library will be asked to pay for the repair of any damages.
- Libraries will not be held responsible for any materials or equipment left behind by groups using the meeting rooms. Such materials or equipment may not be stored in the Library between meetings.
- Granting of permission to use public library facilities does not constitute an endorsement by the Library Staff or Board of the user's policies or beliefs. Press announcements, posters, flyers and other publicity should not give the impression that the program is sponsored, co-sponsored or approved by the library. The name of the Library, nor its address or telephone number may be used as the official address, headquarters or contact point for the group.
- No group should expect to reserve meeting rooms or exhibit space for the same time continually. In order to make meeting room space available on as widespread and equitable a basis as possible, it may be necessary to ask any group to limit use of the meeting rooms to one meeting per month. No bookings may be made more than one year in advance.
- The library reserves the right to reschedule confirmed meeting room reservations in order to use the space for programs or events sponsored by the library. Every effort will be made to notify the group in advance and to accommodate the scheduled event by offering another space in the Library when available.

## MAKING A REQUEST TO USE LIBRARY MEETING ROOM SPACE:

- 1) Requests to use meeting room space in any branch of the First Regional Library must be made through the branch(s) where the meeting(s) is to occur. Each branch location has different-sized meeting rooms and/or small conference spaces available (contact the branch Head Librarian if dimensional details are needed). Reservations will be made on a first-come, first-served basis. Requests to reserve meeting room space must be made by an adult representative (i.e., person 21 years or older) from the requesting group. This individual must possess a valid First Regional Library borrower's card (i.e., any fines on the card must be under the limit, see [Fines & Fees for Policy & Procedures](#)). This representative must complete and submit a meeting room registration form, wherein they will agree to be responsible for the group's conduct and general use of the space.
- 2) Meeting rooms and small conference rooms are generally available for use during normal library open hours. However, some branches of the First Regional Library allow meeting room spaces to be used when the Library is closed (the local branch Head Librarian will have details). Persons using meeting room space at times when the Library is closed will generally be confined to that meeting room space and/or rest rooms. Use of the Library's telephone will generally not be made available to groups, so other arrangements should be made for after-hours telephone use in the unlikely event of an emergency, or for any other reason or purpose (e.g., bringing a personal cell phone).
- 3) No meeting may be scheduled for more than one year ahead of the meeting room requested. Please note that renewals of annual or other regularly scheduled reservations are not automatic. An updated registration form must be submitted at least once each calendar year (January-December) - and may be requested of a group more often (check with the local branch Head Librarian for details). If the name and/or phone number of the responsible party for an organization changes over the course of a calendar year, the form should be updated to reflect these changes. This group's registration information thereafter becomes public information. However, because of First Regional Library's Confidentiality policy on patron's records and information, the names and phone numbers of those individuals who are listed as contact persons for a particular organization would NOT be given out to patrons who express an interest in that particular group. Staff would take the contact information of the inquiring party and relay it to the organization.
- 4) Groups wishing to use Library meeting room space on a regular (e.g., weekly, monthly) basis may request to do so on a first-come, first-served basis, up to one year in advance. Representatives of those groups that meet on a regular basis should understand that a regular day of the week and/or time may not be assured and should be willing to accept the limitations of room availability. Individuals requesting quiet space for the day, small groups of students needing a place to discuss school assignments, or other library users requesting the use of a meeting room on an ad hoc basis, may be allowed to use the Library's meeting room space as these rooms and schedules permit for a one-time situation without the necessity of having a signed reservation form on file.

## EXPECTED CONDUCT:

- 1) The adult leader or contact person, as listed on the registration form, will be held responsible for the conduct of the group. Meetings held during regular library open hours must be conducted in low tones, being mindful and respectful of others using the Library at the same time. The leader will be assessed if damages to the building or library property occur during a meeting of the group they have agreed to represent and should expect that continued use of that space by that group will be denied. No activities that could be construed as dangerous or hazardous will be permitted.
- 2) Groups consisting of children (persons under the age of 21) must have adult supervision (i.e., someone 21 years or older) at all times when that group is actually using the public library meeting room space.
- 3) The room must be left in exactly the same condition as when entered (e.g., chairs stacked or arranged as before the meeting began) and the room must be left clean (i.e., any and all garbage carried outside the building and placed in the appropriate container or dumpster). Nothing is to be affixed to the walls of the room. Reasonable fees will be charged if cleanup or repairs to the room are required as a result of the meeting.
- 4) Groups may serve refreshments in most locations, but only with the permission of the Head Librarian. In some locations, kitchen facilities are available (check with the branch Head Librarian for details). Branch staff will not be expected to serve or clean up.
- 5) The Library does not offer porter service or group storage space. The Library assumes no responsibility for private property used or left behind in meeting room spaces. Materials found to have been left in meeting room spaces may be discarded after reasonable efforts made to return the property prove unsuccessful.
- 6) No furniture or equipment may be moved into or out of any meeting room space unless and until the Head Librarian grants permission.
- 7) Smoking is not permitted in any part of the Library, including public restrooms.
- 8) Publicity for meetings to be held in public library branches should clearly identify the name of the sponsoring group, along with the date, time and the name and phone number of the person from whom an interested person may obtain more information. All such publicity must include the following statement, "Use of library facilities does not indicate endorsement of any group by the Library." Library staff members will give out any information on meetings to be held in their branch that has been made available to them, but cannot be held responsible for knowing the details of random newspaper announcements and the like. Notify the Library immediately if your group is forced to cancel or change a meeting time.
- 9) Permission to publicize meetings on-site (e.g., the posting of flyers, signs or posters within the Library or outside on Library property) must be obtained from the branch's Head Librarian beforehand.

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