



**BILLERICA**  
PUBLIC LIBRARY

## Meeting Room & Conference Room Policy

The Trustees of the Billerica Public Library have set forth the following policy in an attempt to ensure fair access to those who wish to use the meeting room facilities of the library.

Use of library's Meeting Rooms by any group and/or organization signifies acceptance of the terms of this policy. Groups and/or organizations are responsible for compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and for providing qualified interpreters or auxiliary aids, upon request, for their meetings.

Additionally, use of the Library's meeting rooms does not constitute or imply an endorsement of viewpoints by participants in the meeting by any library staff or by the Board of Trustees.

### *What rooms does this policy apply to?*

This policy applies to the following meeting room facilities:

- The large **Meeting Room** on the lower level. This room holds a maximum of 125 people and can be separated into two smaller rooms, which will hold roughly 50 people each. Please note that with chairs, the full room can accommodate 75 people. At any time, 42 chairs are available in the room. Additional chairs can be provided if needed.
- The **Conference Room**, located on the second floor. This room has seating for 12 people.

### *When are the rooms generally available?*

Meeting Rooms are available for use during regular service hours on days the library is open with the exception of Sundays and summer Saturdays. On Sundays and summer Saturdays, due to limited staffing, both the Meeting Room and Conference Room will be unavailable to the public for booking or use. NO ONE may enter the library prior to the library's posted opening time. Meetings must conclude at least 15 minutes prior to closing.

In the event of an unplanned library closing, all scheduled meetings will be cancelled and the library will notify the individual who initiated the booking using the contact

information provided during the booking. The group and/or organization may request to reschedule their meeting on another available date and time.

### *How can the rooms be used?*

Library meeting areas are used primarily for library-sponsored activities; therefore, the library retains the right to give priority to library-sponsored meetings, events, and programs in scheduling meeting room use. The library also reserves the right to decline bookings and/or uses that duplicate programs and services already offered by the library.

Meeting rooms at the Billerica Public Library are designed for groups and/or organizations that engage in educational, cultural, intellectual or charitable activities. All meetings must be free and open to the public.

Groups and/or organizations that are affiliated with a business or commercial organization, enterprise, or any other type of entity that exists primarily for profit may not use the meeting facilities without express permission for a specific event. On occasion, such use of a meeting room may be granted for a meeting deemed to be of educational or cultural value by the Library Director in consultation with the Board of Trustees.

Non-profit organizations may collect donations to cover incidental expenses only, but may not solicit donations for fund-raising purposes or make sales, except for the sole benefit of the library. For-profit organizations may not charge fees or make sales. The collection of attendees' names or other personal information in order to promote or solicit business is strictly forbidden.

Study groups of four or more are permitted to use the meeting rooms upon availability, but may not make advanced reservations. Prior to using a meeting room, a study group must agree to follow all rules and regulations of this policy, with the exception of those rooms being open to the public.

### *How can the rooms NOT be used?*

Meeting rooms may not be used by outside groups and/or organizations for social gatherings such as showers, birthday parties, dances, or any other closed meeting.

Meeting rooms may also not be used by outside groups and/or organizations for rehearsals or performances of dance or music programs, or any other type of program that involves music, dance, or any other activity that disrupts the normal operations of the library.

## *What is the reservation procedure?*

1. Requests for use of a meeting room may be made in person, by telephone, or online. Online reservations are only available for meetings of four hours or less. Online bookings can be made up to one day prior to the scheduled meeting. Bookings for same day meetings must be made by phone or in-person.
2. Rooms may be booked no more than 60 days in advance.
3. When making a request, the group and/or organization must provide a distinguishing name for their group and/or organization and a descriptive summary of the meeting's topic and purpose. Reservations will not be approved until both are provided.
4. The individual making the reservation must check in with a library staff person at the 2nd floor reference desk prior to beginning the meeting and must be present at the meeting for the duration. If the individual making the reservation cannot make the meeting, they must notify the library in advance and assign an alternative individual, who must meet all policy requirements and will assume all responsibilities assigned in this policy to the individual making the reservation. If the individual making the reservation is not present and previous arrangements have not been made, the meeting will be cancelled.
5. The individual making the reservation is responsible for ensuring that each member of his or her group and/or organization is aware of and abides by these regulations. Further, the individual making the reservation as well as the membership of the group and/or organization as a whole, will be held responsible for any and all damages that occur as a result of the use of the facilities.
6. Each time a booking is made, groups and/or organizations who wish to use the library's meeting space must agree to this Meeting Room/Conference Room policy by either checking the acceptance box when making the booking online or by verbally agreeing when making the booking in person or by telephone.
7. Arrangements for use of audiovisual, digital or other equipment are the responsibility of the group and/or organization and must be made when reserving the room. If arrangements have not been made in advance, equipment and assistance in its use may be unavailable at the time of the event.
8. Requests will be honored on a first-come, first-served basis. Effective January 2020, meeting room reservations may only be placed by Billerica residents, who can provide proof of residency with a valid Billerica library card or photo ID. In the case of Condo Associations or similar organizations, a resident (or member) of the association residing in Billerica must make the booking if the property management company is not located in town.
9. In the interest of fair access to all, the rooms are not intended to be used as a regular meeting location for any particular group and/or organization, and may not be advertised as such. No more than three time slots may be reserved for a group and/or organization at any given time. Additionally, groups and/or organizations may only book the rooms a combined total of 4 times per

calendar year beginning January 2020. Groups and/or organizations partnering with the library to deliver auxiliary services and programs will be exempt from this limit at the discretion of the Library Director.

10. Library staff may follow up with questions before approving a reservation. If the individual making a reservation does not reply with 48 hours, the reservation will be cancelled.
11. Notice of cancellation should be made as soon as possible. After 30 minutes, a group and/or organization may forfeit its reservation if it fails to appear as scheduled.
12. If a group and/or organization fails to show for two meetings in a row and does not call to cancel, all future reservations are forfeited until the group and/or organization calls to reschedule.
13. As of January 2020, any scheduled meetings in which a group and/or organization does not show and does not call to cancel will be counted toward the 4 bookings per calendar year limit. Additionally, any meetings that have to be cancelled due to non-compliance with this policy will also be counted toward the 4 bookings per calendar year limit.

### *How can I promote my reserved meeting?*

While the library will post reservations on its public calendar, groups and/or organizations are solely responsible for promoting their meetings. Any posters, press releases, social media postings, or other publicity issued by a group and/or organization must make clear that meetings held in the library's meeting rooms are not sponsored, co-sponsored or approved by the library and that the meeting is open to the public. Failure to follow this guideline will result in cancellation of the meeting.

Please note that the following language will be added to meetings listed in the library's public calendar that are not sponsored or affiliated with the library: "This meeting has not been sponsored by Billerica Public Library."

### *What is the policy on food and beverages?*

Smoking and alcoholic beverages are not allowed in the meeting rooms.

Simple refreshments may be served. The library may provide a coffeepot, but coffee, cups, utensils, cream, sugar, or other equipment and supplies will be the responsibility of the group and/or organization.

There will be no cooking or food preparation on site.

Please clean the kitchen facilities thoroughly if used; trash must be bagged.

### *What services are provided by the library for reserved meetings?*

Room set-up is not provided by the library and groups and/or organizations are responsible for having their own supplies. Time for setting up and cleaning up afterwards should be included in the meeting time requested.

The library assumes no responsibility for private property brought into the building.

Library staff will not take or deliver messages for meeting participants except in an emergency.

### *What are the other requirements for room use?*

Please leave meeting rooms as they are found.

If the furniture is rearranged, it should be returned to the original arrangement at the end of the meeting.

Furniture and/or equipment from the main area of the library may not be brought into meeting rooms.

Equipment, supplies, or personal effects cannot be stored or left in library meeting rooms before or after use.

Attendance at meetings will be limited to the capacity of the individual meeting rooms.

Seating and/or supplementary furniture are not allowed in corridors outside the meeting rooms.

Users of the meeting space may be asked to leave if use is deemed disruptive or in any way contrary to library policy.

Groups and/or organizations failing to comply with any part of this policy or the established procedures will be denied further use of the meeting room.

Any question of interpretation of this policy will be referred to the Director. Final determination rests with the Board of Trustees.

Any individual subject to disciplinary action, including but not limited to revocation or suspension of library privileges, may appeal the decision of the Director to the Library Trustees within 30 days of such decision. The Library Trustees require that all appeals be in writing.

*Revised and adopted by vote of the Board of Library Trustees February 2020*