

5-30 Public Use of Facilities: Meeting Rooms

Chatham Area Public Library's meeting rooms are designed primarily to meet the operational needs of the library and offer accommodations for educational, informational, cultural, and civic functions of the Chatham area community. When not used for library purposes, meeting rooms are available for public use. Public access to study rooms is covered in the Public Use of Study Rooms Policy (5-35).

Priorities:

Meeting rooms are available on an equitable basis. Priority use of meeting rooms is as follows:

1. Meetings, educational, informational, cultural, and civic programs sponsored or co-sponsored by the Library
2. Friends of the Library or Library Foundation meetings or their fundraising events
3. Meetings of not-for-profit or community organizations based within the Library District
4. Meetings of for-profit organizations based within or outside the Library District (see fee schedule for costs)
5. Non-District residents and all others that are allowed per this policy and that are appropriate to the mission and facilities of the Library. (See fee schedule for costs)

Limits of Use:

Meeting rooms are **not** available for:

- The sale, advertising, solicitation, or promotion of products or services is not allowed in Library meeting rooms. This guideline is waived for all Library, Friends of the Library, and Library Foundation programs of Library fundraising activities.
- Commercial use, including seminars, presentations, workshops, and lectures that include the sale, advertising, solicitation, or promotion of products or services, is not allowed in Library meeting rooms;
- Social gatherings or private parties, including but not limited to birthday parties, showers, potlucks, banquets, graduations, weddings, memorials, or family reunions
- Programs or gatherings that present a clear and present danger to the welfare of the participants, library staff, patrons, or the community. This includes meetings that would disturb library users, impede library staff, endanger the library building, or interfere with the functions of the Library.

Organizations may not use the Library for ongoing operational activities. Workshop fees or dues may be collected, but the public may not be denied entry to the meeting because of failure to pay.

Application Process and Cancellations:

- Patrons may apply by calling the Library or by applying online at www.chathamlib.org/room-booking.
- Library staff will review each request for compliance with the Library's Meeting Room Policy after the reservation has been submitted. The applicant will receive approval or denial of most requests by email as soon as possible. Staff may require a more extended review period and request additional information from the applicant on a case-by-case basis.
- If a group is denied access to a meeting room, it can appeal the denial in writing to the Library Director, and then ultimately to the Library's Board of Trustees, who will make the final decision.

- The applicant shall be the contact person and the sole individual authorized to make changes to the application, including modifications to room arrangements or requesting additional dates for room use. The applicant must be present at the event and agree to comply with this policy and all library rules. Failing to have the contact person present may result in the loss of the right to use the meeting rooms. This person is responsible for scheduling and overseeing the group's activities and is jointly and severally liable for any damage caused by the group. No person or group may transfer its reservation to another. Adults must directly and consistently supervise all groups with members under 18. The Library's Unattended Child policy must be followed by those bringing children to the library during meetings.
- Room bookings availability will be on a rolling 6-month calendar.
- The Library reserves the right to decide which room will be assigned for use. Requests for a specific room will be accommodated whenever possible.
- **The Library must be notified as soon as possible (preferably with 24 hours' notice) to cancel a reservation. Any group that violates the meeting room Rules for Use or fails to inform the library of their cancellation will lose the right to use the meeting rooms for 60 days.** The Library also reserves the right to cancel reservations due to weather or other conditions. If the library is closed, all meeting room reservations are canceled during that period.

Use and Care of Facilities

- Meeting organizers and attendees can access the rooms only after the library opens and must finish 15 minutes before it closes.
- Groups that require setup time before their meeting should include it in their reservations. No group will be guaranteed access to its reserved meeting room before its reservation time.
- Smoking, alcoholic beverages, hazardous materials, and/or weapons are not permitted on Library property.
- Library staff cannot deliver messages to meeting participants, except in medical emergencies.
- Occupants must not exceed the specified capacity for the room and must adhere to the designated room setup requirements.
- Children's groups of up to 20 children must be supervised by at least two adults, with one adult for every additional 10 children.
- The meeting rooms must be left as they were found. Only library chairs and tables are allowed in the meeting rooms. Cleanup or damage repair costs will be charged at \$60 per hour, with a minimum of \$25 or the actual repair cost.
- Items such as signage and decorations may not be attached to library property.
- Equipment, supplies, or personal effects cannot be stored in the Library before or after use. All groups must provide their own support for meeting preparation and cleanup.
- All users of meeting rooms and activity participants must adhere to the Library's Rules of Conduct.
- Staying in meeting rooms past the reserved time may lead to denial of future reservations and extra charges.

Library Equipment

Groups wishing to use any audio-visual equipment must coordinate with library staff at least one week prior to the event to ensure they receive instruction on how to operate it and to confirm that the equipment meets their needs.

Equal Opportunity

Activities in the meeting rooms must not be restricted to anyone based on age, gender, sex, race, religion, marital status, political affiliation, national origin, disability, or any other protected category. Users of Library meeting rooms are required to follow all relevant local, State, and Federal laws and regulations, including the Americans with Disabilities Act, such as by hiring an interpreter or providing auxiliary aids when requested by the public.

Endorsement

The Library is not responsible for the content of assemblies or speeches during meetings, programs, or events held on its premises. Permission to use the Library’s meeting room facilities does not imply the Library's endorsement of any business, commercial enterprise, philosophies, practices, or viewpoints of presenters, participants, or attendees. It also does not indicate Library sponsorship, promotion, or endorsement of any political party, position, candidate, or referendum question. Permission to use a facility is revocable and does not constitute a lease. The Library reserves the right to deny applications based on space availability, staffing, frequency of use, or other reasons outlined in this policy.

Advertisements or announcements implying such endorsement are not allowed. The Library will not serve as the phone or address contact for the event or activity.

Liability

The organization agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Chatham Area Public Library and its Board of Trustees from any liability arising from the use of the premises. Organizations using the meeting rooms will be responsible for any accidents resulting from their activities. The organization’s representative agrees to cover all damages and losses related to the meeting concerning the Library's building, contents, and equipment. The Library is not responsible for the equipment, materials, or personal possessions of anyone attending the meeting. The organization’s audiovisual materials must obtain all necessary performance licenses and indemnify the Library against any failure to do so.

Meeting Room Capacities:

Capacity Limit	CONFERENCE ROOM	ACTIVITY ROOM	GALLERY A	GALLERY B&C	GALLERY D	GALLERIES ABCD
CHAIRS ONLY	30	40	20	50	16	150
TABLES AND CHAIRS	20	32	12	30	12	90

Facility Amenities	CONFERENCE ROOM	ACTIVITY ROOM	GALLERY A	GALLERY B&C	GALLERY D	GALLERIES ABCD
ACCESS TO CATERING KITCHEN		X			X	X
PROJECTOR	X		X	X		X
COMPUTER	X		Laptop hookup is available	X		X
Tables for crafts and activities		X				

Meeting Room Set-Up Options: The Library will provide a basic room set-up as follows:

- **Bahlow Conference Room options:**
 - Conference Room "U"-Style, tables and chairs set up for 20, with an additional 10 chairs available within the room.
 - Classroom Style, with 10 chairs, with an additional 10 chairs available within the room.
- **Activity Room:** Four rows of tables set up with a chair cart available for use.
- **Gallery A options:**
 - Four tables and 8 chairs presented in a square, with a chair cart available for use.
 - Theater style, with 10 chairs, with a chair cart available for use.
- **Gallery B&C options:**
 - Six tables, with 12 chairs presented in a rectangle, with a chair cart available,
 - Theater style, with a maximum of 50 chairs and one table on the South wall.
 - Classroom style, with a maximum of 26 chairs and 13 tables, facing the South wall.
- **Gallery D options:**
 - Four tables and 8 chairs presented in a square, with a chair cart available for use.
 - Theater style, with 10 chairs, with a chair cart available for use.

There will be no fee charged for basic room setups. Custom seating arrangements or use of the large gallery space (ABCD) are available for an additional cost. Refer to the Fee Schedule for more information.

LEGAL REF.: 75ILCS 16/30-60, Americans with Disabilities Act
 CROSS REF.: 5-10, 5-50, 5-60
 ADOPTED: MARCH 20, 2000
 LAST AMENDED: SEPTEMBER 15, 2025