

Policy on the Use of Community Spaces

Adopted by the Chestatee Regional Library Board 10-23-23

The primary function of library meeting rooms, computer lab and conference room:

To provide space for library-related activities such as story hours, film programs, discussion groups, and other activities sponsored or co-sponsored by the library. These activities will receive priority in the use of the rooms. The library reserves the right to reschedule or cancel meeting room reservations at any time in order to use the meeting room space for programs or events sponsored by the library. As much notice as possible will be provided to the group(s) affected by the change, and suggestions for other space will be made when possible.

Tutor rooms are for individual or small group classroom study, tutoring or work preparation and not a substitute for commercial or private office space. Patrons aged 11 and up with a valid PINES library card may reserve these spaces on the day they are needed. Requests should be made during library hours.

Library meeting rooms may be used for non-commercial, non-promotional purposes by groups, including but not limited to those engaged in educational, civic, cultural, and governmental pursuits. Businesses may request meeting rooms for staff meetings and trainings that do not include sales or promotional activity. Fees for use of the meeting spaces by Businesses for the purposes of staff trainings etc. will be set by each county individually. For the purpose of this policy, "commercial" means the exchange, buying, selling or promotion of goods and services with the intent of financial gain. Library-sponsored events shall be exempt from this requirement. Meeting rooms may not be used for private gatherings (weddings receptions or showers, birthday parties, reunions, etc.) No sales are permitted on library property, nor may any exhibit be advertised for sale. Library-sponsored events shall be exempt from this requirement.

No admission or attendance fee may be charged for any program or meeting held in a library meeting room. All meetings must be open to the general public, and groups using the library facilities may not exclude from the meeting any member of the public on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, political affiliation, age, sex, or physical ability.

Use of the meeting rooms by outside agencies does not constitute an endorsement by the library, library staff or Board of Trustees of the viewpoints expressed by the participants in programs or meetings.

Meetings scheduled by non-library groups must be held inside meeting rooms and cannot be held in public library areas. All signage and equipment related to an approved meeting must also stay inside the meeting room. Meeting spaces are not available to organizations or individuals for fundraising purposes. Clubs who collect dues are not excluded from meeting room use but may not require payment of dues as a condition of entry to a library meeting room. Groups are prohibited from making statements in their advertising or meeting announcements that suggest the library's sponsorship or endorsement.

Users of library meeting rooms may not at any time use the name, address nor telephone number of the Chestatee Regional Library System, Dawson County Library or Lumpkin County Library as the official address or headquarters for any individual, organization or business. Individuals signing the Meeting Room Application must have a current PINES borrower's card. Official government agencies are exempt from the cardholder requirement.

Although a group may schedule *a series of meetings* in a library meeting room, the room is not intended to be a regular place for any non-library group. The library director or designee reserves the right to review all meeting room requests and may reject any which are deemed to be unsuitable. Failure to adhere to the rules governing the meeting room will result in denial of the privilege to use all such library facilities in the future including computer labs, study rooms, etc.

Application

Applications for the use of the room may be obtained at any branch of the library system and is available online on the library's website. The application must be filled out in full, signed by the applicant, and approved by the Branch Manager.

The applicant must sign a statement affirming that he/she is aware of the library's policy on the use of the room and that the group will abide by the policy. If audiovisual equipment is required, it should be reserved at the time of the application. [LC1] In accepting reservations for the use of a meeting room, the library will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, political affiliation, age, sex, or physical ability.

Minors

Reservations must be made by an adult (18 years or older). The person making the reservation shall be the contact person, unless specified otherwise, and shall be the only person authorized to make changes in the reservation. When the room is to be used by organizations or groups with members under the age of 18, the adult in charge should arrive before the young people and must stay until the departure of all young people.

When parents are attending meeting room functions, children may not be left unattended. Library staff will interrupt a meeting to ask parents to supervise their children.

Liability

Any damage to or loss of library property resulting from the use of the room will be the responsibility of the individual signing the application. Users are also responsible for any equipment or supplies owned by any group or individual brought into the meeting room, and such material must be removed at the conclusion of the meeting. The library is not responsible for items left in the room.

The user of the meeting room is responsible for leaving it in the same condition in which it was found; otherwise, a minimum maintenance fee of \$25 may be assessed. Group activities involving more than normal wear or tear on the room will not be permitted, nor will activities that might disturb regular library operations. If a meeting in progress does disturb library operations, the library reserves the right to immediately terminate the event. The group, upon notification of a disturbance, shall immediately discontinue the disturbance or vacate the premises.

When it is necessary for a key to be issued to the adult in charge of a meeting or event, that adult shall pick up the key prior to library closing time immediately before the scheduled meeting. This same adult shall also be responsible for returning the key to the library by the first day it is open immediately following the scheduled meeting. If a key is lost, the organization is responsible for the cost of having the locks changed.

No smoking or tobacco use including vaping and e-cigarettes is allowed in the meeting room or in any area of the library.

The Chestatee Regional Library System does not endorse or support any program or meeting held in a library meeting room unless the program is specifically sponsored or sponsored in part, by the library.

Catering and Kitchen use

Self-Catered as well as outside catering may be used to serve light meals and refreshments and are acceptable within the Library System's approved Meeting Room Policy. Alcohol is not permitted. If kitchen facilities are available they may be assessed a per use fee.