



**POLICY**

**SECTION: 9.1**

**SUBJECT: Meeting Rooms**

Richmond Public Library offers free use of meeting room space for meetings and programs that serve an educational, cultural, civic or recreational purpose. Meetings and programs held in library meeting rooms must be free, open and of potential interest to the general public. [Complete the reservation form](#) to request a public meeting room.

**Libraries with public meeting rooms**

Belmont – [meeting room, 20 people](#)

Broad Rock – [meeting room, 20 people](#)

East End – [meeting room, 20 people](#)

Ginter Park – [meeting room, 20 people](#)

Hull Street – [meeting room, 20 people](#)

Main – [Auditorium, 150 people; Gellman Room, 50 people; Annex 25 people](#)

North Ave – [meeting room, 20 people](#)

West End – [meeting room, 20 people](#)

Westover Hills – [meeting room, 20 people](#)

**Libraries with study rooms**

Two libraries offer small study and medium size study rooms. Reserve online, call or visit the library to reserve a study room, up to seven days in advance. Reservations are limited to two hours per day for each individual or group.

Main Library

West End Branch Library

**Public use of library meeting rooms**

In keeping with its mission, Richmond Public Library offers meeting room space to the public for educational, cultural, civic and recreational purposes, subject to the rules outlined below.

Richmond Public Library supports and endorses the American Library Association's [Library Bill of Rights](#), which states, "Libraries which maintain meeting spaces, exhibit space or other facilities open to the public should make them available on equal terms to all persons, regardless of their beliefs or affiliations."

In keeping with the role of a limited public forum, public libraries have traditionally provided free meeting room space for community groups when space is available. The fact that an organization is permitted to meet at the library does not constitute an endorsement of the organization's beliefs by the library, its staff, its Board of Trustees or the City of Richmond City Council, Mayor or Administration.

**Meeting room use rules**

1. Library or City of Richmond programs and sponsored events have priority in the use of meeting room space. The library reserves the right to reschedule confirmed meeting room reservations to accommodate library-sponsored programs and events. Cancellations by either the group or the library must be made 24 hours in advance of the meeting date.
2. Reservations of meeting rooms may be made two months in advance. If your request is less than 14 days away, please call the library during open hours to reserve. Use is granted on a first-come, first-served basis. Use of the meeting rooms may be limited to once per month for each group, due to limited meeting room space.
3. All meetings must be open to the public.
4. No admission fees may be charged or solicited. No donations of money or other property may be solicited or collected from the audience. No promotions or sales of services, products, merchandise, materials or other items are allowed.
5. Sales of services, products, merchandise, materials or items or solicitations for donations authorized pursuant to a library-sponsored program or event, or on behalf of the Friends of the Library or The Library Foundation, are permitted.
6. As described in number 4 above, commercial use of library meeting rooms is generally not permitted. However, a commercial entity or professional practitioner may use a library meeting room to provide an educational program open to the general public related to his or her field of expertise. In such a case, an educational opportunity offered by an expert provides benefit to the public. During such a program, no attempt may be made to sell, at the time of the program or in the future, a specific product or service offered by the entity or practitioner or any other commercial interest. Therefore, the individual or entity offering the program may not hand out business cards or brochures promoting any business, product or service and may not solicit personal information (names, addresses, phone numbers, etc.) from the program participants, either as part of a pre-registration process or during the program itself.
7. Musical recitals and individual practice sessions are not permitted. Rooms may not be used for birthday and anniversary parties, weddings, funerals, or other personal celebrations.
8. Neighborhood library meeting rooms in locations that do not have quiet study rooms may not be reserved as "quiet rooms" but may be used as such on a drop-in basis if not in use.
9. Meeting rooms are available during hours when the library is open. Meetings must adjourn 15 minutes before closing time.
10. Light refreshments may be served, but groups may not prepare food on library property. Groups are responsible for cleanup.
11. In publicizing a meeting to be held in a library meeting room, the sponsoring group must be clearly identified. Groups must not imply library sponsorship of their program or organization in their publicity.
12. With prior approval, groups may post signs in library-approved locations.
13. Tables, chairs and limited audiovisual equipment is available at each location. No other equipment is provided. The group is responsible for setting up, rearranging, and taking down tables and chairs. Meeting rooms must be left clean, in good repair and in the same condition as found. Any group that damages library property will be liable for costs incurred with such damage and may lose the privilege of using meeting rooms in the future.

14. The library is not responsible for theft of or damage to property brought into a library meeting room.
15. An adult age 18 or older must sign the Library Meeting Room Application below, and at least one adult age 18 or older must be present when youth groups use the meeting rooms.
16. Each group is responsible for ensuring that attendance at its meeting does not exceed the maximum occupancy for the meeting room as set by the Fire Marshal.
17. All groups, clubs, entities or individuals using a library meeting room must comply with these rules and with the [Richmond Public Library Rules for Library Conduct](#). Failure to comply with the rules may lead to immediate termination of the meeting, exclusion of individuals from library premises pursuant to the rules, and/or loss of future meeting room use privileges.
18. The Main Library Auditorium is reserved for Library, City and public events and meetings that have a minimum attendance of 75 people. The auditorium may be reserved a minimum of one month in advance at a maximum of 4 hours per event.

### **Meeting room use by other government agencies (e.g. city, county, state and federal)**

The library makes its meeting rooms available for use by other government agencies, or their contractors, when possible. Library and county programs and sponsored events have priority for use of meeting room space, and demand by the public for meeting room space may also affect how frequently library meeting rooms are available to other government agencies. Use by other government agencies is subject to the above rules, with some exceptions:

1. Another government agency, or contractor working on behalf of a government-funded agency, that has booked space within two months of the use date will be considered to be confirmed in the use of the space.
2. Reservations of meeting rooms may be made four months in advance.
3. Meetings booked by other government agencies do not need to be open to the public.
4. Government agencies holding meetings or programs that are open to the public are permitted only during normal hours of operation when the library is open to the general public. Internal meetings for government agencies may be scheduled during hours when the library is staffed but not open to the public. An agency that wishes to use a library meeting room during hours the library is not staffed will be referred to the Library Director or Deputy Director.

### **Procedures**

All groups must complete and submit [Public meeting room reservations](#). A [downloadable version of the form](#) (PDF) is also available. Please review the meeting room rules and procedures contained in Public Use of Library meeting rooms. Paper application forms are also available at all library locations where meeting rooms are available and on the library website.

Please submit paper applications to the library where the proposed meeting will be held. The library supervisor or manager at the location where the meeting is requested will review and approve or deny all applications based on the Public Use of Library meeting room rules. When in doubt, the application will be referred to the Deputy Director or the Library director for consultation.

Any applicant denied use of a library meeting room may appeal the denial in writing to the director of libraries. The director will review the application and respond in writing to the applicant.



Adopted: February 16, 2005  
Revised: May 2007  
Revised: October 2007  
Reviewed: February 2009  
Revised: January 24, 2018