Meeting Room Policy

Florence County Library System
Approved by the Board of Trustees March 4, 2024

1. Purpose

The Florence County Library System welcomes public use of meeting rooms by community groups and organizations whose aims are educational, civic, charitable or cultural.

2. Eligibility

- 2.1 Library and library-related events have scheduling priority over other meetings held in meeting rooms.
- 2.2 Meeting rooms may be used by non-profit groups, civic and service organizations, and educational, charitable, or cultural community groups. Groups using meeting rooms should include at least ten (10) or more individuals.
- 2.3 Meeting rooms **may not** be used for:
  - Political rallies or campaigns for specific candidates or specific partisan political issues
  - Private social events including but not limited to showers, wedding receptions, birthday parties, graduation parties, sorority and fraternity parties, etc.
  - Advertising, selling, or soliciting products and services, including multi-level marketing presentations
  - Permanent or recurring location of a business, office, or organization
- 2.4 Use of meeting rooms does not imply endorsement by the library of the group's purpose or activities.
- 2.5 The library reserves the right to withdraw permission or cancel meeting rooms reservations for any reason, including:
  - Unanticipated building or weather conditions
  - Misrepresentation of the group's or meeting's purpose in the meeting room application
  - Failure to comply with the Meeting Room Policy, including group contact person not arriving within the reserved time frame
  - Damage to room, carpet, equipment, or furniture in a previous meeting
  - Disturbing regular use of the library by patrons
- 2.6 A group may appeal the denial of a meeting room reservation request by submitting a written statement to the Library Director within ten (10) days of notification of denial. The Library Director will submit the appeal for consideration by

the Library Board of Trustees at its next regularly scheduled meeting. The decision of the Board of Trustees will be the final decision.

3. Reservations

- 3.1 All applicants must submit a completed Meeting Room Application Form, including the name of a contact person who is at least eighteen years of age, a Florence County resident, and will be present at the requested meeting. Group members will not be allowed into the meeting room until the applicant is present. Applications will be approved by the Library Director or the Director's designee.
- 3.2 An organization or group can make up to three (3) reservations at a time. Reservations should be made at least one month in advance. Reservations for the Florence location can be made by calling (843) 413-7074 during operating hours or by completing the online form; reservations for branch locations can be made by calling the desired location.
- 3.3 A deposit of $100.00 (cash or check made payable to Florence County Library only) is required upon arrival for groups using meeting rooms. This deposit will be refunded if the meeting room is left in a clean and orderly condition.
- 3.4 Groups using meeting rooms may not charge entry or rental fees to attendees. Charges such as registration or materials fees for workshops, or membership dues to an organization, are not considered entry or rental fees.
- 3.5 Reservations and meetings are public information and may be posted publicly at the library. Groups may not assign their reservations to other groups or individuals.
- 3.6 Notice of cancellation should be made as early as possible. Failure to provide notice of cancellation on multiple occasions may result in denial of future meeting room requests.
- 3.7 Neither the name nor address of the library may be used as the official address, headquarters, or office location of an organization.
- 3.8 Meeting publicity may not include the library's phone number. Groups may not state or imply that their events are officially conducted or endorsed by the library.

4. Use

4.1 *Meeting room users are responsible for arranging tables and chairs for their own meetings.*

4.2 Entry and setup:
- All meetings must take place within normal operating hours of the library. The library reserves the right to have staff representatives observe or attend any meeting held in the facilities.

- Meetings may begin no earlier than 30 minutes after library opening, and must end no later than 30 minutes before library closing.
- Meeting room users are not allowed in staff areas of the library. Users must enter the room and transport equipment, supplies, etc., through the library's public entrance.

4.3 Food and drink:
- Light refreshments (coffee, punch, finger foods, etc.) may be served in the meeting rooms. Food and beverages may not be taken from meeting rooms to other parts of the library.
- No alcoholic beverages or tobacco products are permitted in meeting rooms or on library grounds.

4.4 Audiovisual and other equipment:
- Requests for use of audiovisual equipment at the Florence Library must be made at least one week in advance of the scheduled event. Personal computers may not be connected to the audiovisual system; presentations and other media must be prepared on a USB flash drive or be accessible online through email, etc.
- Library staff are not able to provide audiovisual, technical, or other assistance during meetings in progress.
- Meeting room users are responsible for supplying all meeting materials, including flip charts, paper, copies of handouts, writing implements, and any kitchen supplies. The library does not provide storage space and is not responsible for items left in its facilities.
- No signs or decorations may be affixed to any wall, window, column, door, ceiling, or any other surface in the room unless expressly approved by the Library Director.

4.5 Safety:
- All meeting attendees must comply with the library's Code of Conduct. Meeting activities may not infringe upon patron use and staff operations within the library.
- The applicant and sponsoring organization are responsible for safety and order during meetings. Group members will not be allowed into the meeting room until the applicant is present.
- Organizations using meeting rooms must comply with all applicable state and local laws including fire codes, occupancy limitations, and noise ordinances.
- No candles or other incendiary materials may be used. No electrical appliances may be used in the meeting room or kitchen except for coffee pots.

5. Exceptions

5.1   The Library Director may approve exemptions or exceptions to items in this policy, including the residency requirement for applicant; waiver of the deposit fee; use of rooms outside library hours; staff assistance during meetings; sale of books or other materials during a library-sponsored author event.

6. Other Rooms

6.1   The Meeting Room Policy also applies to the Computer Classroom and Study Rooms, with the following additions and exceptions:

6.2   Study Rooms (Florence and Lake City locations only)
- Food and drink of any kind are prohibited in Study Rooms.
- Study Rooms are available to individuals or small groups on a walk-in basis. Patrons must complete a short registration form at the Information Services desk before using the Study Room.
- Advance reservations are accepted, but not required, for the two large Study Rooms at the Florence location.
- Study Rooms may be used for 2 hours at a time. Staff may extend this time limit depending on availability and demand by other patrons.
- Study Rooms must be vacated no later than 15 minutes before library closing.

6.3   Computer Classroom (Florence location only)
- Food or drink of any kind is prohibited in the Computer Classroom.
- The Computer Classroom is only available to groups needing specific usage of the classroom's equipment. Groups needing meeting space but not the classroom's technology should submit a regular meeting room application.
- Computer Classroom users may not move furniture or make any alterations to computer equipment or software without prior permission from the Library Director.
- Computer Classroom users must enter and exit through the rear door of the classroom into the public area of the library. The front exit of the classroom is for staff use only and may only be used by classroom users during an emergency.
- Technical assistance must be coordinated with Information Technology staff **at least one week prior to the meeting**. The library will not assume responsibility for failure of equipment to work properly if this assistance is not coordinated.