

Community Room Policy

Adopted 10/8/2019 Revised 6/8/2021

Purpose and Permitted Use

An important aspect of the Library's service to the community and the primary purpose of the Library's Community Room is to provide a space for library sponsored activities and programs that expand access to information and cultivates a diversity of educational, cultural, and recreational interests among all ages. When the community room is not scheduled for a library activity or program, members of the community or local organizations and non-profit groups may apply for use of the room at no charge. At all times, the Library's needs will take precedence over public use of all meeting areas.

Outside of the Library's use of the room, other acceptable uses of the room may include:

- Meetings of individuals, government agencies, and community or local organizations
- Use by nonprofit groups for philanthropic, educational, cultural, or civic purposes free of cost to attendees
- Use by businesses or organizations for internal training or professional purposes

PLEASE NOTE: Entities offering classes or seminars may be permitted to charge a fee to its attendees only with prior approval from the Library Director.

The room is not available for the following uses:

- Sale or promotion of products or services, or any group meeting for a profitable reason
- Groups charging admission or soliciting donations
- Political campaigning or political fundraising activities
- Religious services
- Activities likely to disrupt regular Library operations
- Any group which has proven unsatisfactory for any reason during prior use

PLEASE NOTE: Commercial entities or professional practitioners seeking to host workshops, seminars, or other free "educational" presentations will not be permitted unless sponsored as an official Library program and must contact the Library Director to be considered for such requests. Please see the Library Programs Policy for more information.

Any person using any of the Library's meeting spaces agrees to the terms of this policy in its entirety without exception.

Disclaimers

The Library provides equitable access to the Community Room and does not discriminate based on religion, belief, political stance, race, age, sexual orientation, gender, or disability.

Permitting use of the Library's Community Room in no way constitutes an endorsement or sponsorship of the user's objectives, beliefs, policies, or programs. Under no circumstance may any user state or suggest that the Library, the Library Board, or the Library staff endorse or sponsor the meeting, the group, or any particular set of ideas.

General Rules for Room Use and Prohibited Activities

All uses of the Community Room must adhere to the Russell County Public Library's Code of Conduct, which is posted in the room. Use of the room may not interfere with or disturb the Library's regular operations. Number of attendees may not exceed the posted maximum occupancy of the room.

When publicizing an event, the Library's complete official name, "Russell County Public Library", may be used only as a designation of location. No abbreviations or adaptations of the Library's name may be used. Under no circumstance may any user claim or promote that the Library is sponsoring a program unless given specific permission by the Library Director.

The Library staff reserves the right to enter the community room at any time. Any group consisting of mainly persons under 18 years of age must always have an adult (21 years or older) in supervision. All areas of the Library facility and grounds, including the community room, are equipped with security cameras. All users of the room acknowledge that all activity is being recorded.

Reserved uses of the room are limited to the Community Room, kitchen, hallway, and public restrooms. During normal operating hours, all users of the room must be vacated 10 minutes prior to closing time, unless prior arrangements have been made. After hours entrance and exit will be admitted only through the main entrance.

The following are strictly prohibited:

- Meals may not be prepared on site. The Community Room kitchenette offers a small refrigerator and freezer which may be used for limited storage of cold items. Food, drinks, and other refreshments may be brought in or served in the room if a request is made at the time of reservation. Users are responsible for transport, set-up, and clean-up of all food, drink, and trash. The Library does not provide utensils, paper supplies, or dishware of any sort.
- The use of alcohol, tobacco, and electronic cigarettes or vaping devices are strictly prohibited in the Library.
- Nothing may be attached to the Community Room walls or ceilings.
- The use of open flames or candles is strictly prohibited.

The Library is not responsible for:

- Liability or injury to people, damage to their property, or loss of property belonging to users of the room

- Storage of materials or equipment
- Set-up or take-down of tables and chairs

Accidents shall be reported immediately to the Library. Failure to adhere to this policy may result in denial of future use of Library facilities.

The Library reserves the right to deny the use of Library facilities. Individuals who are denied use of the room may submit an appeal. Such an appeal must be filed in writing to the Library Board of Trustees within 10 days of the denial.

Making Reservations

All users requesting the Community Room must complete a reservation application at least 48 hours in advance, but not more than three months in advance. At the Library's discretion, use of the room may be granted with less than a 48-hour notice. Application for use of the room must be completed each time the room is requested and a maximum of three meetings at a time may be scheduled. Applicants are encouraged to allow for set-up and clean-up time in their request. The room may not be accessed before or after the time requested.

The person completing the application, whether as an individual or on behalf of an organization or business, must be at least 18 years old. The applicant assumes responsibility for the conduct of the attendees and any damages to Library property in connection with the meeting, event, or program.

The following features are available in the Community Room and must be requested on the reservation application in order to receive access:

- Kitchenette with serving window, including small refrigerator and freezer
- Audiovisual equipment
- Storeroom with additional tables (up to 15) and chairs (up to 75)

PLEASE NOTE: A minimum number of tables and chairs generally stay set-up in the room. Set-up and clean-up of additional tables and chairs are the responsibility of the user. Furniture may be rearranged by the user, but the room must be returned to its original condition upon exit.

All reservations are considered pending until approved by the Library and the applicant has received confirmation from a designated staff member. Upon confirmation, users must participate in a preliminary walkthrough of the room prior to their scheduled meeting. At this time, any known damages will be noted and the user will be required to sign off on their knowledge of the state of the room. An exit checklist will be provided in the room. The user is responsible for ensuring that all closing procedures are complete. Following the scheduled meeting, a designated staff member will do a follow-up walkthrough and the user will be held financially responsible for any noted damage in connection with the use of the room.

Users may cancel their reservation at any time but are strongly encouraged to notify the Library as soon as possible so that the room may be made available to other users. The Library reserves the right to cancel a meeting at any time and will notify the user of such action. In the event that weather conditions cause the Library to close, the Library will cancel use of the room during the time that the Library is closed.