

Meeting Room Policy

The offering of meeting room space by the Somerset County Library is one of the many ways the Library hopes to foster greater free expression and access to ideas representing all points of view on all subjects. The Library welcomes the use of their meeting rooms within the guidelines of this policy. Priority for meeting room use will be given to library-sponsored events. After this priority, reservations for meeting room space are on a first-come, first-served basis.

Authorization for use of the meeting rooms will be based upon the provisions of this policy and will not be based upon the viewpoint, beliefs, or affiliations of the organization or individual making the reservation. Use of the rooms does not imply library endorsement of organizations.

The Library Director, or a designee, is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

Meeting Rooms

There are meeting rooms available for public events in the Crisfield and Princess Anne Libraries.

The Crisfield Library has a meeting room with a 200-person capacity and seating for 95. A kitchenette is available.

The Princess Anne Library has a meeting room with an 80-person capacity and seating for 40.

All rooms are fitted with a projector or monitor for displays of presentations. The libraries will provide a laptop if requested in advance.

Study Rooms

The Crisfield Library has two study rooms, seating up to six people each. The use of these rooms is free of charge. These rooms are reserved for individual study, tutoring or small meetings and are not to be used as on-going personal or office space. Reservations may be made in blocks of up to four hours.

When not reserved, the study rooms are free to be used on a drop-in basis.

Reservations

Reservations may be made up to one year in advance. To allow equitable access throughout the community, organizations and individuals are limited to no more than twelve reservations on the calendar at any one time. The libraries reserve the right to deny or delay acceptance of a reservation if there is a reasonable belief that it may introduce a complication into the scheduling of library events, such as Summer Reading Program performers. The libraries

may cancel a reservation in case of weather emergency and will notify groups as early as possible.

Reservations should be scheduled from the time the group will begin setup to the time the group will vacate the room. Leaving half-an-hour of leeway on either side of the meeting is recommended. Available times in both libraries are: Monday through Wednesday, 9 am to 7 pm, and Thursday through Saturday, 9 am to 5 pm. Attendees at meetings outside of regular library are restricted from entering other areas of the facilities, except as necessary to access the Princess Anne meeting room.

Meetings may be scheduled after regular library hours but must be approved by the branch manager, based on the availability of staff to remain afterhours. There is an additional \$25 fee per hour to cover staffing costs. This cost will not be waived.

Publicity for a meeting must clearly identify the sponsoring organization. Publicity cannot state that the libraries are a sponsor or co-sponsor of a meeting without permission. The libraries' phone numbers, fax numbers, and email addresses are not to be included in any publicity, and the organization may not list the address of a library as its official address regarding the meeting.

An application form requesting use of a meeting room must be filled out. The application may be found online at somelibrary.org/meeting and at the front desks of the libraries. The following must be provided in order to reserve the meeting room: contact name, organization name if applicable, phone number, address, email address, date of meeting, and time scheduled, from the start of setup until the room is vacated.

Reservations are not official until any fees have been paid.

Fees

Both rooms are available at a cost of \$25 per hour, including setup and cleanup time. The meeting room fee is waived for government agencies and 501(c)3 non-profit organizations.

Any damage to furnishings, equipment or the facility will be charged at replacement or repair cost to any group damaging the room. Future use of the room, including reservations that have already been scheduled, will be denied until fees are paid.

Cancellation

Non-profit organizations should notify the library of a meeting cancellation as soon as possible.

Other organizations or individuals must cancel seven or more days prior to the meeting in order to receive a refund of the reservation fee. Refunds of the reservation fee will be given if the library cancels the meeting due to inclement weather or emergency.

In the case of no-shows, future use of the room may be denied.

Set-Up, Use and Care of Rooms

Groups are responsible for the setup, re-arrangement, or removal of furniture from the way it was last left. The room is to be left clean. All trash must be removed from the library by the organization after the meeting.

The room must not be left unattended during the time it is reserved. Groups of children or teenagers must be supervised.

Alcoholic beverages are permitted to be served and consumed on the premises only for Library, Somerset County Library Foundation, or Friends of Somerset County Libraries functions. Alcoholic beverage service and consumption by non-profit organizations or at private functions must be granted special permission by the Board of Trustees. However, in these limited instances, proper permits and licensing must be obtained by the user. The original permits and licensing must be shown to the branch manager and permission granted one (1) week prior to the meeting/event. A library employee must also be present. Consumption of alcohol by minors and the serving of alcohol to minors are against state law and are strictly prohibited. Consumption of alcoholic beverages outside of the library is illegal and prohibited.

Smoking and open flames are not permitted on library property.

Gambling and controlled substances are not allowed.

Organizations using the meeting room must observe the public accommodation provision of the Library which states it is unlawful “to discriminate against any person in the full use and enjoyment of such public accommodation, on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, ancestry, national origin, handicap or disability, use of guide or support animals due to the blindness, deafness, or physical handicap or because the user is a handler or trainer of guide or support animals.”