

Auburn Public Library Meeting Room Policy

As a community gathering place, the Auburn Public Library makes meeting rooms available for people to come together to exchange ideas and information. This supports the Library's mission to provide opportunities for cultural experiences, self-directed learning, and access to information on a variety of topics.

The public's use of the Library's meeting rooms is protected by the First Amendment. Any meeting room open to the public is designated as a limited public forum for expressive activity. This requires that its use not be restricted on the basis of the content or viewpoint of the group's speech. ***Permission to use a Library meeting room does not constitute or imply the Library's co-sponsorship of the event, or its endorsement of any group's policies, beliefs, or programs.***

Definitions

The Library's meeting rooms are multi-purpose rooms designed for varied educational and cultural activities such as lectures, workshops, meetings, or performances. For the purpose of this policy, the library's multi-purpose rooms are referred to as *meeting rooms*, the group activities occurring in these rooms are referred to as *meetings*, and organizations using the Library's meeting rooms, regardless of their legal status or organizational structure, are referred to as *groups*.

General Regulations

It is important to read the entire policy for complete information on meeting room rules and regulations. Regulations in the Meeting Room Policy are designed to make the Library's meeting facilities available to groups in the community on a fair and equitable basis.

Groups using the meeting facilities must observe the following regulations:

- Meetings must be free of charge, and not held with the intention of generating revenue. Closed meetings must pay full rental fee and comply with all other regulations.
- Organizations in whose name the reservation has been made shall be financially responsible for damages to walls, floor coverings, furnishings, equipment, and fixtures, including those in the pantry, and any other contents of the room.
- Use of space may not disturb the use of the Library by other customers or disrupt Library operations.
- Attendance is limited to the capacity of the individual meeting rooms as set by local/state safety codes. Room exits may not be obstructed. Seating

and/or supplementary furniture is not allowed in corridors outside the meeting room.

- Light food and beverages may be served, provided that all evidence is removed from the premises before leaving, the pantry is cleaned, and all trash is properly bagged.
- Library staff is not responsible for the supervision of children while adults are attending a meeting, as per the Library's Young Child Safety Policy in the Library Policies.
- Unless arrangement for after-hours use of the meeting rooms have been made in advance, meeting rooms must be vacated thirty minutes before the Library's normal closing hour.
- If fees are assessed for use of the meeting rooms, payment and billing arrangements must be made at the time of reservation and paid for in advance. (See Reservation section for more details).
- Distribution of fliers related to the program may identify the Library as the meeting location, and provide the Library's address, but may not give out the Library's phone or fax number, email address, nor invite attendees to contact the Library for further information.
- The group, not the Library, is responsible for obtaining all rights regarding the copying, performance, display, or distribution of materials for the event.

Groups using the Library's meeting rooms may not:

- Collect or solicit fees or monetary donations for admission from attendees, unless the Library agrees in writing to be a co-sponsor. An organization may collect membership dues and/or meeting or class registration fees covering the related informational materials or outside speakers.
- Engage in direct profit, promote a product or service, or solicit sales, except in conjunction with a library program by agreement with the Library.
- Collect names of participants for future financial gain.
- Hold purely social functions (e.g. birthday parties) or fund-raising activities and functions, except in conjunction with a library program by agreement with the Library.

- Hold religious services or conduct personal political campaigns. However, meetings to discuss religion or politics are welcome.
- Smoke, use, or have in possession illegal substances or alcoholic beverages.
- Leave or store items in the Library before or after use of a meeting room.

Furniture and Equipment Set-up

- Set-up and special arrangements are the responsibility of the user.
- Rooms must be left as found when use is ended. If furniture is rearranged, it must be returned to the original arrangement.
- Furniture and/or equipment from the main area of the Library may not be brought into meeting rooms. Personal furniture or equipment may be brought into the Library with approval and prior arrangement.
- No tacks, nails, or adhesive tape may be placed in or on doors, walls, or furniture.

Use of meeting rooms must comply with local and state safety codes as specified by the City of Auburn's code enforcement officer.

Room equipment is self-serve. The Library is not responsible for equipment malfunction.

Scheduling Priorities

The Library reserves the right to cancel or rearrange room reservations if needed for Library purposes. In general, the Library allows groups to reserve meeting rooms on a first-come, first-served basis or, in cases of conflict, according to the following order of priority:

- Auburn Public Library
- City of Auburn
- Non-profit educational, cultural, civic, or social groups
- For-profit groups and businesses for classes, workshops, and meetings, excluding activities prohibited under the regulations above

Reservations

Reservations may be made up to three months, but no less than five days, in advance of the use of a room. Meeting Rooms may be reserved at:
<https://www.auburnpubliclibrary.org/reserve-room>

The group in whose name the reservation has been confirmed shall be the same group using the space for which the application is made.

Adults age 18 years or older may reserve a meeting room. Individuals supervising a group's use of a meeting room must be at least 18 years old.

All groups using library meeting rooms shall complete and submit an on-line application. By completing the application form, the group indicated that it has read the Meeting Room Policy and agrees to abide by the terms and conditions of this policy.

Room reservations are made through the Library Director or designee (currently the Administrative Assistant). No group may reserve or use a meeting room unless it complies in all respects with the provisions of this policy and submits a completed application. Certificates of Insurance may be requested in certain circumstances.

The room will not be considered reserved until full payment has been received.

Any false, misleading, or incomplete statement on the application is grounds to deny use of meeting rooms by the applying group.

The Library reserves the right to reject a reservation request if the anticipated use is likely to be:

- Unreasonable disruptive to library users or operations
- Too large for the applicable meeting room capacity
- Disorderly
- Dangerous to persons or property, or
- In any other way inconsistent with or in conflict with any of the terms and conditions of this policy.

In determining whether such likelihood exists, the Library will take into consideration the content of the application form, the history of the group's meeting room use in the Library, the history of the group's use of meeting room facilities elsewhere, and any such other information that may be deemed appropriate.

The Library reserves the right to determine, in its reasonable discretion, whether any proposed use of a meeting room will require a police detail or other extraordinary police protection and, if so, the anticipated cost. In making this

determination, the Library may take into consideration the factors listed above. The Library may consult with the Auburn Chief of Police or his/her designee to make this determination. If the Library concludes that such police protection is reasonably necessary, the Library will notify the group that they will be responsible for reimbursing the police for their costs.

Rental Fees

The Library's meeting rooms (the **Androscoggin Community Room**, the **Conference Room**, and the **Computer Lab**) are available for a standard fee and, on a limited basis, by Auburn and Lewiston non-profit civic, social, cultural, educational, and governmental organizations at no charge. Nonprofit groups wishing to hold more than eight (8) hours of meetings per year may be charged the standard rental fee. Also, in cases where extra custodial services are required, the organization may be charged to cover the cost of the custodian's time.

Effective January 1, 2025: Rental charges for meeting room use must be paid prior to the event.

Library staff will contact you to collect payment after submitting your online reservation request. Credit Cards (Visa, Mastercard, and Discover) and checks are accepted. As a courtesy, APL will keep the booking on our calendar for no more than seven (7) business days while awaiting payment. If payment is not received within this timeframe, the room will no longer be held.

If the event is canceled prior to two (2) business days before the reserved time, the Library will reimburse the full amount of the total room fee. If the cancellation is within two (2) business days of the event being canceled, the Library will reimburse all but a \$50 fee. The \$50 fee will be waived only if the event is canceled or rescheduled because of the weather.

The Library reserves the right to require a security deposit for payment of damage repair and cleaning from any applicant, which must be paid in advance of the scheduled use of the room.

Insurance Requirements

All groups using any meeting room shall agree to hold the Library and the City of Auburn and all Library staff harmless from, and not hold them liable for, any and all costs, damages, losses, claims, and expenses incurred, directly or indirectly, as a result of the group's use of a meeting room. Such costs, damages, losses, claims, and expenses shall include, without limitation, any damage to the meeting room and its contents or to any other part of the library building, grounds, or collection; the cost of employees' overtime, if required by the use of the meeting room; the cost of police protection if required by the Library; and any claim asserted by any third person against the Library, the City of Auburn, or

any library staff or volunteer on account of any alleged injury causally related to the meeting together with defense costs including reasonable attorneys' fees.

The Library's application requesting authorization for meeting room use constitutes a release by the group and each and all of its members of any claim against the Library, the City of Auburn, and the Library staff and volunteers, for any injury to persons or damage to property suffered by such group or any of its members during or as a result of the use of the meeting room, except if injury or damage to property is directly and solely caused by the gross negligence or intentional misconduct of any person acting on behalf of the Library or the City of Auburn.

The Library reserves the right to require any applicant group to supply a Certificate of Insurance from an insurer licensed to do business in Maine, for an amount that the Library determines appropriate, but not exceeding \$1 million. The Certificate of Insurance must name the Library as an additional insured, and cover damage to the library building, grounds, collection, and injury to persons if occasioned by the meeting. Such Certificate shall show evidence that the insurance it represents is not cancelable except on at least ten days' written notice to the Library. In the event of such cancellation, the meeting reservation shall be canceled unless the group substitutes a new insurance certificate meeting this policy's requirements.

Group Use of the Library Computer

The Library Computer Lab is available for use by outside groups under the terms and conditions defined under the Library's Meeting Room Policy, with the following exceptions:

- The Library Computer Lab is available for computer training only.
- No food or drink of any kind is allowed in the computer lab.
- The computer lab may be reserved by outside groups for use during Library hours only, and training sessions must end no later than one half hour before closing.
- The furniture and fixtures in the Library Computer Lab may not be rearranged.
- Applicants who will require any hardware, software, or configuration changes to the lab's equipment must consult with the Library about these changes before filing an application. The Library does not guarantee that requests for such changes can or will be accommodated.