

1.7 Meeting Rooms

The Library welcomes the use of its public spaces for community activities where users can gather, meet and discuss in a safe and inviting environment.

Meeting rooms are available at all library locations.

The Library prohibits discrimination in any form. Permission to use a Library space for a special event or meeting does not constitute or imply the Library's endorsement of the user's policies or beliefs.

1.7.1 Availability/Priorities

All branch locations have meeting rooms which may continue to be used after closing. Meeting rooms located at the Main Library may be requested on closed days and times for an additional service fee. Approval for use will be dependent on staffing availability.

Library sponsored and co-sponsored programs and activities take priority over all other meeting room reservations.

Meeting rooms may be reserved by:

- Non-profit groups and government agencies
- For profit organizations or individuals for social events; private parties, receptions, etc. See 1.7.6. for special events policy.

The Library may require proof of non-profit status. The Library Board has the final authority to decide which groups may meet on Library property and for what purpose Library property may be used.

1.7.2 Responsibility

Adults over the age of 18 may book meeting rooms. If the person who books the room is unable to be present, there must be someone over the age of 18 present at the meeting to act as a representative. The group must abide by occupancy limits, Library policies and all local, state and federal laws.

The group representative accepts full responsibility for any infraction of Library regulations and any damage to Library property incurred during or in connection with the meeting.

Groups must use the room for the purpose stated. Library staff reserve the right to attend any meeting or function to verify the room is being used for its stated purpose.

It is the responsibility of the group to operate requested audio visual equipment. Operational assistance during the meeting is available for an additional fee. (See Appendix D Meeting Room Fee Structure.)

Clean up is the responsibility of the group. Library staff should be notified when a vacuum or additional cleaning items are necessary.

The representative is also responsible for closing procedures at branch libraries if the meeting continues after closing. All doors at Library branches must be secured.

Publicity is the responsibility of the group using the meeting room. Publicity materials may not claim or imply Library sponsorship.

1.7.3 Damages and Indemnification

Damages

Organizations and/or individuals using meeting rooms shall be liable for all damages, expense and loss, including theft and property loss, caused by any person who attends, participates in, or provides goods and services connected with the organization's or individual's use of the facility and all tangible property. Replacement value may be used by the Library to determine the charge for damages.

Indemnification

Organizations and/or individuals using meeting rooms shall indemnify and hold harmless the St. Joseph County Public Library and its officers, directors, agents and employees from and against all losses, damages, claims, costs and expenses arising from injury or death of any person(s), or damage to property resulting from any act or omission of such users or their employees, agents, representatives, guests, invitees, or the general public to the extent that such losses, damages, claims, costs and expenses arise in connection with or relate to the organization's or individual's use of the facility.

1.7.4 Occupancy Limits

By order of the Fire Marshal, occupancy is limited as follows:

Branches:

- Francis Branch - 65 Large Room, 14 Small Room
- Centre Twp. - 65 Large Room, 15 Small Room
- German Twp. - 50 Large Room, 12 Small Room
- River Park, Western, LaSalle, Tutt - 45
- North Liberty, Lakeville - 30

Main:

- Ballroom A - 70
- Ballroom B - 30
- Auditorium - 250
- Auditorium Lobby -

- Beutter-Kernan Hall -
- Courtyard -
- Classroom B - 24
- Classroom C - 16
- Classroom D - 24
- Classroom E - 12
- Classroom F - 30
- Study Room L227 - 2
- Study Room L201 - 8
- Study Room L207 - 6
- Study Room L208 - 6
- Study Room L206 - 6
- Study Room L205 - 4
- Study Room L 202 - 12
- Study Room L215 - 8

Requests for tables and chairs in certain arrangements may reduce the number of occupants permitted.

1.7.5 Miscellaneous

Groups are responsible for loading and unloading their own program materials. The Library is unable to guarantee parking for meeting attendees.

Groups must adhere to the Library's Code of Conduct which does not permit the following on Library property: weapons, except as permitted by law, live ammunition, gambling, begging or soliciting, illegal substances, and smoking e-cigarettes, cigarettes, cigars, pipes or other use of tobacco products.

1.7.6 Special Events

The Library defines a special event as any function outside the scope of regular meeting room use, which may include additional library staff, equipment, and security. Groups or individuals may be required to sign and comply with a rental agreement. The terms of the rental agreement are non-negotiable.

Events may or may not be open to the public and may occur during or outside of regular library operating hours.

Events for purely social purposes which include but are not limited to parties or receptions, (e.g. weddings, birthday parties, anniversary parties, or other celebrations) are permitted. Groups or individuals reserving the meeting room will be charged based on the Library's fee structure for use. An additional fee, to be determined by the Library, may be added if Library staff or other resources are required for the event.

Groups or individuals are required to produce an appropriate public liability insurance policy and if applicable alcohol (retail liquor) liability for special events. Parameters of insurance required are available in the Special Event Guidelines.

Special Event reservations are made through the Library's Venues & Events Coordinator.

1.7.7 Fee Structure

Non-profits and community groups/clubs are not charged a fee for general usage of branch meeting rooms or Community Learning Center classrooms. A rental fee is charged for all meeting rooms when a non-profit or community group/club raises funds in any form from their event. This can include but is not limited to charging an entry fee, selling tickets, and holding a live or silent auction.

A rental fee is charged for all meeting rooms system-wide for usage by businesses or members of the public holding private social events.

1.7.8 Study Rooms

Study rooms are available for groups and individuals at select locations through reservations and on a first-come, first-served basis. See staff for more details.