

Meeting Room Policy:

Purpose Statement:

Newton Public Library welcomes the use of its meeting rooms by organizations engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, charitable, advocacy, civic, religious, or political activities. Meeting rooms are available so that people may gather to exchange ideas, access and share information, and participate in community activities. Meetings and activities held in the library should be in accordance with the library's mission and goals.

Regulations:

Rooms are available with the following exceptions:

- Groups or individuals whose conduct would interfere with the proper functioning of library business, is incompatible with the library environment, or would interfere with the library's operation. This includes conventions and trade shows, events of a strictly social nature (weddings, parties, funerals, reunions, dances, etc.), and events that would create excessive noise. Events that conflict with the library's Code of Conduct policy are not permitted.
- Groups or individuals whose intent is to use the room for retail sales or monetary gain. This includes the receipt or solicitation of fees, contributions, or donations; distribution of materials or promotion of commercial information except for passive availability of basic business information; or collection of attendees' personal information for future sales or solicitations. Money may only be collected for the actual cost of food provided to attendees. The director may make exceptions for library-related events. This does not preclude for-profit entities from using library meeting rooms for employee trainings or similar events.
- Groups or individuals whose purpose is illegal.

All meetings and events must be free of charge for those attending.

Public use of rooms may not interfere with the library's operation. Attendees must abide by the library's Code of Conduct. This includes ensuring the proper supervision of children according to NPL policy. Violation of conduct policies should be reported to staff, and further use of meeting rooms may be denied to individuals or groups who disregard library regulations.

Programs or gatherings which present a danger to the welfare of the participants, attendees, library staff, patrons and /or the community are prohibited. Programs not in keeping with the library's goals and objectives, that impede library staff or endanger the library building or collection or otherwise interfere with the proper functions of the library by causing excessive noise, safety hazards, security risk, etc., are prohibited.

The library reserves the right to cancel any reservation. This may be for reasons such as: failure to follow library policy to preserve a safe environment, failure to provide follow-up information about planned use of the room, any emergency that may arise, or for other reasons determined by library staff.

Library staff reserve the right to attend events at any time.

Any damage, loss, theft, or misuse of library equipment or facilities is the responsibility of the group or individual reserving the room.

All publicity concerning meetings should make clear that the library is not the sponsor, and should include the statement: ***“Not a program of Newton Public Library.”***

No alcoholic beverages may be served in library meeting rooms. Smoking is prohibited inside of NPL and within 20 feet of all entrances.

Persons attending meetings who bring children requiring supervision should not leave such children alone in the Library reading or hall areas during the meeting. If the event involves minors, adult supervision and presence is required at all times.

Fees:

Meeting rooms are available without charge to meetings that are open to the public and fit within the mission of the Library. Donations are gladly accepted. Closed meetings by private and for-profit groups are subject to fees.

	Government, Community, and Non-Profit Groups	Private Groups	For-Profit Groups Engaged in Educational Activities
Open Meeting	No Fee	No Fee	No Fee
Closed Meeting	No Fee	Fee	Fee

Bessmer Meeting Room fee is \$20/hour

Board Room fee is \$10/hour.

Scheduling:

Library related activities will be given priority in scheduling. All other scheduling for the meeting rooms must be reserved by the users on a first come, first serve basis. No standing reservations may be made. The meeting rooms may be booked no more than three months in advance.

A designated contact person, at least 18 years of age, must fill out the meeting room reservation form. Library staff must confirm or deny all reservations. Approval or rejection of requests for meeting rooms will be determined using this policy. When questions arise as to eligibility for requesting use of meeting rooms, library staff may seek more information from the group or individual.

Meetings and programs, including set up and tear down time, must be during the library’s hours of operation and conclude 15 minutes prior to closing time.

If a meeting, program, or class is canceled, the group's contact person/coordinator should notify library staff in advance in person or by phone.

If the library closes because of a weather-related or other emergency, efforts will be made to notify the contact person of groups scheduled to use a meeting room. During adverse weather conditions, group contact persons are urged to check Newton Public Library's Facebook page or call the library for closing information.

NPL reserves the right to cancel any reservation at any time. If NPL cancels a reservation, it is not required to provide a rationale or show cause for doing so.

Use of Rooms:

Set up and special arrangements of chairs and tables are the responsibility of the customer. No signs, tables or set up are allowed outside the meeting room.

Groups needing additional technology (tv, projector, screen, etc.) must provide at least one week's notice. Equipment availability varies by room and whether other meetings are concurrently scheduled. The Library does not provide staff to operate any technology equipment during meetings, including livestreaming equipment.

Decorations or displays must be freestanding, limited to tabletops, or adhered to the wall using only blue painters tape. No other tape, tacks, or glue may be used.

Groups and individuals are responsible for leaving the meeting rooms in good order after use. This includes:

1. Returning all tables & chairs to the original setup
2. Placing all trash in receptacles provided by the library
3. Reporting any spills, damage, or other issues to staff at the service desk
4. Removal of all personal items.

Special cleaning required due to damage caused to library property or equipment will be charged to the group or person reserving the room and/or result in denial of future room requests.

Refreshments (except alcoholic beverages) may be served in the Bessmer Room if they are kept inside the meeting room. The Bessmer kitchenette, with oven, refrigerator, and microwave, is available for groups using the Bessmer Meeting Room. Food and supplies can only be kept in the kitchenette for the duration of the meeting time. The group or individual must provide all serving supplies.

When not otherwise reserved or needed for library purposes, the Board Room may be used for small groups who have not made prior reservations. All meeting room policy stipulations apply.

Safety & Security:

Exits and egress routes may not be obstructed.

Groups must adhere to the maximum capacity set by law and posted in each meeting room. Occupants may not exceed stated capacity for the meeting rooms: Bessmer Room = 260; Board Room = 15.

Storage is not available. The library is not responsible for items lost or stolen.

No flame-producing or hazardous devices may be used in the library.

Exceptions:

The following are exempt from the provisions of this policy:

- Library-sponsored programs and events;
- Meetings and events of the Library Board of Trustees or Newton Public Library Foundation; and
- Meetings and events of community partner organizations of which Newton Public Library is a member.

Liability:

- Newton Public Library is not liable for injuries to individuals or for damages to (or the loss of) personal property of individuals or groups using a meeting room. **The library is not responsible for the content of programs presented by outside groups.**

Policy Amendment & Appeals:

The Newton Public Library Board of Trustees will review the meeting room policy periodically and may amend policies and procedures at any time.

Any appeals for changes or exceptions to any portion of the meeting room policy will be considered. An individual or organization wishing to file an appeal shall submit a written appeal to the director. The appeal will be reviewed by the Board of Trustees at the next regularly-scheduled board meeting for a final decision.