



# COUNTY OF MENDOCINO

## *LIBRARY*

### **Policy for the Use of Meeting Rooms at Mendocino County Library Branches**

#### **I. Scope**

This policy outlines the rules under which outside organizations and individuals may reserve and rent a Meeting Room at the Mendocino County Library branches. The County Librarian or designee may authorize additional restrictions or exceptions that are consistent with this policy and assist in its implementation.

#### **II. Purpose**

The meeting rooms at the Mendocino County Library branches are primarily intended to be used as places to deliver Library educational programming, activities, and functions that serve the public, and to provide a meeting space for Library sponsored events. Use by others for non-Library events is available on a first come, first served basis. The Library can make its meeting rooms available for occasional use to the following types of organizations to hold meetings, workshops, or small conferences. The Library does not endorse the view of any group using the rooms and County staff do not provide supervision of the non-Library events.

#### **III. Categories of Groups**

- a. Mendocino County Library related groups (e.g., Friends of Mendocino County Library Branches, Library Advisory Board, etc.)
- b. Other governmental and civic entities directly serving the residents of the County
- c. Not-for-profit educational, cultural, intellectual, or civic organizations
- d. Private groups

#### **IV. Free Reservation**

- a. Free reservation of meeting rooms is available to non-profit groups, public agencies, and cultural, educational, or civic groups, provided all the following criteria are met:
- b. The meeting is a presentation and exchange of information and opinions of a non-commercial nature
- c. No commercial or fundraising activity may take place (including goods for sale, solicitation, or promotion of a business or product), no admission charged, and no donations solicited
- d. The meeting must be open to the public regardless of target audience, without payment of dues or other fees, except that closed-session meetings of legislative bodies held in accordance with the Brown Act are also allowed

**V. Fee-based Rental**

Fee-based rental of meeting rooms is available to commercial entities, other profit-based organizations, groups or individuals not meeting all the criteria listed for “free reservation” above, and for private social events such as parties, memorial services, or celebrations.

**VI. Limits of Use**

- a. Library sponsored events have priority over all outside users of the meeting rooms. The Library reserves the right to cancel confirmed reservations to accommodate Library sponsored events. Staff will notify scheduled meeting room users in the event of cancellation with as much notice as possible, and no fewer than seven (7) days in advance of the scheduled event, except as noted in subsection e, below.
- b. Free reservation of the Meeting Room (as defined in IV) is available to individuals or groups up to twelve times per year, on a rolling calendar. Other exceptions may be granted by the County Librarian or designee.
- c. There is no limit on the number of fee-based rentals of meeting rooms (as defined in V)
- d. Permission for use of the Meeting Room may be terminated at any time if the conduct of the group, or any member of the group, is disruptive to Library service or dangerous to the building, materials, exhibits, furnishings, or individuals, or violates the Library’s current Standards of Behavior Policy <https://www.mendolibrary.org/about/policies-guidelines/standards-of-behavior>. County staff reserve the right to take any action necessary to ensure a safe and appropriate environment.
- e. If the Library is closed due to an emergency or hazardous condition, such as a mandatory evacuation or a power outage, the meeting room will also be closed to outside users. In emergency situations, advance notification to users may not be possible, though an effort will be made to contact scheduled users.
- f. Activities taking place within a meeting, and physical objects, including banners, signs, and flags, may not extend beyond the meeting room into the building or outside the premises.
- g. Items may not be stored in meeting rooms prior to or after the meeting.

**VII. Safety**

- a. The posted capacity/occupancy of the room must be observed, and all fire and safety rules must be followed. Access to aisles, walkways, and entrances must be kept clear, including keeping electrical cords out of footpaths.
- b. The Library’s Standards of Behavior must be observed by all participants, with the following exceptions:
  - i. Food and Beverage Service
    - 1. Light refreshments may be served.
    - 2. Use of heating elements, such as hotplates or chafing dishes with fuel canisters (e.g., Sterno) is prohibited.
    - 3. Alcoholic beverages may be served and/or consumed only with advance written approval of the County Librarian and after obtaining any required license or permit from the California Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control. Intent to serve alcohol must be indicated on your room rental

application.

- ii. Commercial Activity - Fee-based rental of meeting rooms allow users to conduct commercial activity (i.e., goods for sale) and solicitation of donations, as permitted by law.

#### **VIII. Set Up and Clean Up**

- a. No custodial service for moving materials or arranging furniture is provided; users should set up and replace tables and chairs.
- b. Materials may be displayed only on areas provided for that purpose, or on easels. At no time may users mar or alter the walls, ceilings, painted surfaces, or floors with nails, staples, glue, tape, or other substances.
- c. Users are responsible for leaving the room in as clean a condition as it was received. If clean-up is not acceptable, the Library may schedule the necessary cleaning and charge all costs to the responsible party who reserved or rented the meeting room.

#### **IX. Publicity**

- a. Publicity for non-Library sponsored events in the meeting room is the responsibility of the users. The Library will not promote outside activities through its own publicity channels, including social media.
- b. Organizers of meetings that are not co-sponsored by the Library must ensure that any promotional material or publicity advertising their meeting shall not claim that the Library is presenting, sponsoring, promoting, or endorsing their meeting, and the County's logo may not be used in any publicity materials.
- c. Publicity notices for non-library events must include the following disclaimer: "This program is neither sponsored by nor affiliated with the Mendocino County Library."

#### **IX. Liability and Insurance Coverage**

- a. The Mendocino County Library assumes no responsibility for personal property loss.
- b. Users are responsible for damage to the room or property in the room.
- c. All persons, groups, and organizations shall agree to hold harmless, defend and indemnify the Mendocino County Library, its officers, officials, employees, and volunteers from and against any and all claims, demands, actions, losses, damages, expense or cost, or liability of any kind, including death, which might arise from the use of the Library meeting rooms.
- d. The Library reserves the right to require any meeting room user to provide proof of insurance which shall insure the County against any liability arising from use of a room.
  - i. If insurance is required by the Library, the individual or group must procure and maintain \$1 million General Liability insurance naming the Mendocino County Library, its officers, officials, employees, and volunteers as additional insured and must specify that the meeting room user's insurance shall apply on a primary, non-contributory basis to any insurance or self-insurance carried by the County.
  - ii. If insurance is required by the Library, applicants must submit proof of insurance to the County Librarian or designee at least 10 days prior to the scheduled event.

#### **X. Procedure for Application and Reservation Process**

- a. The County Librarian establishes the list of Library meeting rooms available for outside

- use, the hours available for use, and the procedures for use.
- b. A meeting room use application must be approved before arrangements for use of the room can be made.
  - c. Persons responsible for the application and reservation must be at least 18 years of age.
  - d. Applications must be submitted, and arrangements must be completed at least seven (7) days in advance of the event.
  - e. Full payment for fee-based rentals is required at the time of reservation. If the event is cancelled by the applicant at least thirty (30) days prior to the event, all fees are refunded. If the event is cancelled by the applicant fewer than thirty (30) days prior to the event, all fees paid are forfeited. Refunds will be processed at the Library's administrative headquarters and provided by check sent in US mail.
  - f. If the Library must cancel an outside event with advance notice, or an event cannot take place due to an unexpected building closure, all fees will be refunded.
  - g. If the Library must cancel an event due to the dangerous or disruptive conduct of the group or any of its attendees, fees will not be refunded.
  - h. The Library reserves the right to require additional conditions be met prior to finalizing arrangements for Meeting Room use. These conditions may include, but are not limited to proof of insurance, security deposit, cleaning deposit, key deposit, limit on materials/items permitted in the meeting room, or contracted Security services.

**XI. Denial of Meeting Room Use**

- a. The use of a Meeting Room may be denied for any reason outlined in this policy, including failure to meet the conditions required for free reservation or fee-based rental and failure to follow the Library's Standard of Behavior
- b. Denials of Meeting Room use may be appealed to the County Librarian in writing. The County Librarian's decision is final.

**XII. Fees**

Fees for Meeting Room rentals are set by the Board of Supervisors and are available in a separate schedule. Fees are not charged for groups that meet the definition for a free reservation in IV above, nor for Library sponsored events. Exact fees due will be calculated by the Library and full payment will be collected at time of reservation.