



LS 711 Meeting Spaces

Section: 700-Brand Innovation

Effective: February 2023

Purpose

This policy articulates rules that govern the use of library meeting spaces. Library meeting spaces are intended to be used primarily for library functions; however, the library permits some other limited use of its meeting spaces. Individuals, community groups, and not-for-profit organizations (applicants) may apply for permission to reserve and use meeting spaces.

Policy

Approved use of library meeting spaces by the public must take place within regular library hours of operation. Activities may not adversely affect library operations.

All use of meeting spaces must be free and open to the public. Meeting spaces may only be used by applicants that do not unlawfully discriminate in their membership practices.

Applicants engaging in any commercial activities or for-profit transactions may not utilize meeting spaces. (Exception: Individual and small group tutoring in support of K-12 education.)

Library staff may request proof of non-profit status and will verify this status with appropriate agencies.

No solicitation or selling of goods or services, or fundraising activities of any kind may take place in meeting spaces unless done as part of a library program. The library reserves the right to deny use to any group pursuant to this policy.

Meeting spaces are not available for private social gatherings (parties, weddings, bridal showers, baby showers, family reunions, graduation ceremonies, etc.).

Use of meeting spaces is governed by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) Policy, Section Number 08.01.00.01, Policy for Use of County-Owned Real Estate and Administrative Directive AD-08, Political Activity.

Use of meeting spaces shall have the following priority:

- Early voting or voting precinct locations coordinated in conjunction with the Hillsborough County Supervisor of Elections Office which preempts all other uses.
- Library sponsored or co-sponsored programs.
- Organizations in partnership with the Library, including Friends of the Library, the Hillsborough Literacy Council, etc.
- Individuals, community groups, non-profit organizations, and other governmental agencies.

Applicants must have a current adult resident or non-resident Hillsborough County library card in good standing with no outstanding debt.

All persons present in a library meeting space must conform to the Library's Code of Conduct.

The Library, the Board of County Commissioners, the Public Library Board, and the Friends of the Library of Tampa-Hillsborough County, Inc., neither endorse, approve, nor disapprove of the aims, policies, viewpoints, or activities of groups utilizing meeting spaces.

Applicants may not reserve meeting spaces more than twice per month, nor more than three months in advance to ensure fair availability to all citizens. Walk-in requests for immediate use of meeting spaces are limited to a two-hour period and based on availability and compliance with this policy. The allocation of small meeting spaces is at the discretion of library staff to ensure the best use of the spaces and equitable access for all citizens.

Meeting spaces must be left in the same condition and arrangement in which they were found prior to usage. Applicants are responsible for any damage or loss of property. Accidents are to be immediately reported to library staff.

Library staff may attend or observe any meeting or any program at any time. The name, address, and/or phone number of any library may not be used as the address or headquarters of any group. No applicant may imply library sponsorship agreement without prior approval, and such approval shall be in writing and in accordance with library policy.

Applicants using meeting spaces are responsible for their own publicity unless the library has a formal sponsored or co-sponsored agreement and it is outlined therein.

Robert W. Saunders, Sr. Library features the Ada T. Payne Community Room. The size, scope, and nature of the events held in this room require particular operating procedures. Applicants may reserve the Ada T. Payne Community Room up to six months in advance for special events and three months for regular activities. This advance time period reflects the possible planning requirements for events held in this space and ensures equitable access for all citizens. Use of the special features of this room—including the catering kitchen, sound and lighting systems—are self-service.

Procedure

An application is required for all meeting spaces reservations, and it must be completed with enough processing time, usually two to three business days. Last minute requests will be considered on an individual basis and handled appropriately. All use of meeting spaces will take place only during regular library operating hours and use must conclude at closing time.

Applicants wishing to use the catering kitchen in the Ada T. Payne Community Room for the warming and serving of food, will be assessed a non-refundable cleaning fee. Payment of the fee must be made prior to use of the room. Applicants should retain receipt for proof of payment. The Catering Kitchen Permission Addendum must be filled out at least one month in advance.

All submitted applications are reviewed prior to confirmation of a reservation. Applicants will be notified of the status of their application. Each application is kept on file for one year.

The library retains the right to cancel a meeting space reservation in the event of a scheduling conflict with a library activity or co-sponsored program, or if conditions arise that affect the safety, health, or operation of the facility. If the library needs to cancel a meeting space reservation, library staff will recommend alternatives for canceled events.

Applicants holding reservations are requested to notify the library of any cancellation at the earliest possible date in order to free the meeting space for use by others. Reserved meeting spaces not utilized within 15 minutes of the event start time will be released for use by other citizens. Failure to provide notice of cancellation on more than two occasions will result in denial of future use.

Applicants must check in with library staff upon arrival for any meeting and provide them with an attendance count before departure.

Applicants wishing to bring refreshments must complete and submit a Food & Beverage Permission Addendum and will be assessed a non-refundable cleaning fee. Payment of the fee must be made prior to use of the room. Applicants should retain receipt for proof of payment. Failure to obtain an approved Food & Beverage Permission Addendum will result in a cleaning fee being assessed as well as denial of future use.

Serving or consumption of alcohol is strictly prohibited unless prior application approval has been obtained from the Library Board per policy LS404 Alcohol Use During Special Events.

Storage space for equipment, supplies, materials, etc. belonging to applicants cannot be provided by the library.

Sound amplification in a meeting space must not impede regular operations of the library.

Copyrighted or commercially produced films, videos, and DVDs must have public performance rights in order to be viewed in a meeting room.

Meeting spaces are not available for the provision of health care activities including but not limited to physical exams or the dispensation of medications including vaccinations other than as a library or county program.

Applicants failing to follow the above use limitations are at risk of having their meeting space privileges revoked.