

**FORT BEND COUNTY LIBRARIES
AFTER-HOURS MEETING ROOM POLICY
REVISED**

Policies and procedures for the after-hours use of meeting rooms are established by the Fort Bend County Commissioners Court in order to ensure maximum use of the county's facilities. The procedures herein provide guidance to the library staff in implementing the policies for Commissioners Court.

Responsibility for accepting applications for after-hours use of all meeting rooms lies with the Administrative Assistant at the Library Administration Building. The County Librarian retains authority for applying this policy following approval by Commissioners Court.

This policy applies to the main meeting rooms in the following libraries:

Albert George Branch (Needville),
Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch (Fulshear),
Cinco Ranch Branch (Katy Area),
First Colony Branch (Sugar Land),
George Memorial (Richmond),
Missouri City Branch (Missouri City),
Sienna Branch (Missouri City),
Sugar Land Branch (Sugar Land), and
University Branch (Sugar Land).

All of the meeting rooms at these branches can be accessed when the rest of the building is closed and allow for access to restrooms near the meeting rooms. Only the main meeting room in each library is covered by this policy; small meeting rooms, conference rooms, and storytime rooms are not available for after-hours use. (Mamie George Branch in Stafford has no meeting room and is excluded from this policy. The Law Library is also excluded.)

This policy applies only to hours when library staff is not on duty in the building. Another policy, entitled "Meeting/Conference Room Policy" applies to meeting room use when the libraries are staffed. A different application is required for using a meeting room when staff are on duty. The application and requirements for the other policy can be obtained at any Fort Bend County Library.

Generally, the after-hours policy applies seven days a week, but only when staff are **not** on duty between the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Because each library building is staffed and open to the public different hours, each branch has a specific schedule of available hours for use of the meeting rooms. The specific hours each building is available for after-hours use are shown on page 7.

Elected officials and Department Heads of Fort Bend County using library facilities for County business will be exempt from this policy and shall coordinate use of the facilities with the Administrative Assistant at the Library Administration Building.

Events that include use of several public areas of a library, as well as the meeting room, and that benefit Fort Bend County Libraries are exempt from this policy, upon approval by the Commissioners Court. Other organizations are not exempt from this policy and may not use public areas of the library other than the meeting rooms to which this policy applies.

(1) General Rules for After-Hours Use of the Meeting Rooms¹

- a. All meetings must be open to the public and to the media.
- b. No admission fees are allowed.
- c. Smoking, gambling, and use of alcoholic beverages are not permitted in the rooms.
- d. No food or drinks (other than water) may be brought in or used in the meeting rooms.
- e. No library technical equipment, including audiovisual equipment and computers owned by the county, may be used by groups using the building after hours.
- f. No open flames are permitted in the rooms. No person shall bring in or use an open flame, flame producing devices, or any flammable or combustible material, such as candles, incense, tea lights, charcoal, etc. Smoke machines are also prohibited.
- g. No items, including banners, posters, or decorations, may be affixed to the walls, ceilings, or other fixtures in the room. Users should bring their own freestanding easels for exhibiting items.
- h. No animals shall be allowed in the meeting rooms, unless they are in the service of a disabled person. Such animals must be leashed at all times.
- i. The length of time that is reserved for use of the room must include time for setting up and for returning the room to good order.
- j. Groups comprised of persons 18 years of age or younger must have at least one (1) adult chaperone for every eight (8) guests. Chaperones must

¹ Many of the General Rules listed here are the same as those applied to the business-hours meeting room policy.

be at least 21 years of age and must be present throughout the duration of the function.

- k. Users shall not post, exhibit, or allow to be posted, any signs, advertisements, show bills, posters, or flyers, inside or outside to any part of the building, except as authorized by the Library.
- l. Publicity generated by the group using the meeting room must neither state nor imply that the library is either sponsoring or endorsing a program or meeting, unless such is the case; neither shall publicity state or imply that attendance is limited to group members. Publicity must not give out the library's phone number as an information contact.
- m. Meeting rooms may not be used for activities involving more than normal wear and tear on the rooms; by groups meeting for private and/or social activities, such as showers, birthday parties, weddings, and recitals; by groups that have flagrantly or repeatedly violated library meeting room policies.
- n. Fort Bend County will not be responsible for any equipment or personal property that is not the property of Fort Bend County.
- o. Users are not allowed to store equipment or supplies at the facility other than during the hours that are specified on the application.

(2) Application for Use of a Meeting Room

- a. Applicants must be 21 years of age or older.
- b. Library reservations will occur on a first come, first served basis.
- c. A library meeting room may be reserved for specific days and times for a six-month term, with a right of first refusal for three (3) consecutive six-month terms. Applications and notice of refusal must be received by the library at least 30 days prior to commencement of use or end of use. Notice of refusal must be provided in writing.

Payment for use of a meeting room shall be made by personal check at the time an application is accepted by the library, at least 30 days in advance of using the room. No partial payments shall be accepted; applicants must pay for an entire interval of use prior to using the room.

- d. Applicants shall familiarize themselves with the facility before applying. Fort Bend County provides only the tables and chairs that are listed on page 7. Any other equipment or supplies must be furnished by the user.

- e. At no time shall a reserving party sublease or assign its reservation to another group or organization. Nor shall use of the library be for any purpose other than what was stated on the application.
- f. Applicants renting a meeting room are limited to the hours specified on their application. Any unauthorized or inadvertent use of the meeting room the day prior to, or following, a function will be billed at the same hourly rental rate.
- g. Application forms may be obtained from the Administrative Assistant's office at the Library Administration Building.. To request a form by phone, call 281-633-4702 or 281-633-4768. A form will be mailed, faxed, or emailed upon request.
- h. Completed applications must be brought in person to the Library Administration Building (office of the Administrative Assistant) by the person signing the application, or another person designated to handle all transactions involving the application and use of the meeting room.
- i. Groups must submit, on their application, at least two other representatives of the organization (with names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses) with the authority to inquire about or change reservations on behalf of the organization.
- j. Renters will be charged a per hour fee (see Application Form) by Fort Bend County, for a minimum of two (2) hours of use. Parts of an hour will be charged as one hour. Renters will also hire and pay a peace officer for a minimum of two (2) hours of work and at least as long as the room is in use and/or rented. All peace officer arrangements must be made through the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office at (281) 341-4786 or (832) 473-2672 with the designated Sheriff's Security Coordinator for the libraries. Law enforcement officers will be provided by the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office at their current contract cost rate. All law enforcement fees must be paid in full at the time the reservation is made. The officer on duty will be given the keys by the library staff and will be in charge of opening and closing the library at the requested time and for providing law enforcement during the rental period.
- k. Applicants using the library meeting rooms shall comply with all County ordinances and Federal and State laws. As in accordance with County fire codes, all exits and doorways must remain clear and unlocked during functions, and access to all hallways and fire extinguishers shall remain clear. All marked fire lanes will be kept open at all time. Applicants agree to abide by the designated room capacity as shown on page 7.

- l. Fees for elections, or similar events, may be waived by the County Librarian.
- m. The applicant, or her/his designated representative, is required to be present in the meeting room and available to County personnel during the entire course of the event for which the applicant made a reservation.

(3) Other Responsibilities

- a. Applicants assume liability for the cost of repairing any damage to County property or equipment.
- b. When it is deemed necessary, the County reserves the right to require applicants to provide public liability and/or property damage insurance and any other coverage needed to protect the property of Fort Bend County.
- c. Each meeting room has a variety of tables and chairs for users. None of the furnishings may be taken outside of the facility for any reason.
- d. Fort Bend County reserves the right to require additional police officers, paid by the applicant, if it is determined that there is additional security needed. If additional police officers are called out due to a disturbance, the applicant will be charged for the extra officers at a rate that is 1 ½ times their regular hourly rate.
- e. Applicants are solely liable for the meeting room and must secure the building and its contents at all times during the reserved time. All property missing during this time will be charged to the reserving party.
- f. Users are responsible for all clean-up. The applicant agrees to dispose of all garbage off-site, pick up trash in the parking lot left by the event, clean and return all tables and chairs to their original locations, and otherwise return the building and grounds to the condition they were in before the applicant's rental period.
- g. Any events which have been scheduled due to false or misleading information provided by the user shall be rejected and cancelled without return of fees.
- h. In the event of an emergency or extreme situation beyond the control of the County, a confirmed reservation may have to be cancelled. All groups should be aware of this possibility. Should a reservation be cancelled, it may be rescheduled or a refund given.

In the event that a group or organization using a room wishes to cancel their reservation, the library must be notified in writing at least 30 days in advance, in order to give others an opportunity to use the meeting room. Should a reservation be cancelled, a refund will be given.

- i. If the library staff is called out to respond to an emergency that is not the fault or responsibility of the County (including the pulling of fire alarms in a non-emergency situation), the applicant will be billed for any charges incurred by the library.
- j. In case of building emergencies during the use of the meeting room, including, but not limited to, plumbing problems, power failure, or air conditioning problems, the user shall call the Library Maintenance Coordinator at (713) 545-6099 (cell phone) or the people listed on the emergency contact sheet to be provided at the time of application.

In case of security-related emergencies, contact the relevant local law enforcement agency (police or Sheriff's department) or call 911.

*Original version
approved by
Commissioners Court
March 8, 2005*

*Revised version
approved by
Commissioners Court
March 14, 2006
October 7, 2014*

FORT BEND COUNTY LIBRARIES
APPLICATION FOR AFTER-HOURS USE OF MEETING ROOM
(Application must be made in person at the Library Administration Building.)

Today's date _____

1. Name of organization _____
2. The undersigned representative of the organization agrees that use of the meeting room will be in accordance with the policy established by the Commissioners Court regarding after-hours use of library meeting rooms. The undersigned representative agrees that he/she is responsible for use of the room. It is the responsibility of the person named below to pay for any fees for use, or additional charges incurred during use. Fees for required services for peace officers will also be paid by this person.

Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

Title in organization _____

Address _____

Telephone number _____ Email address _____

Name, address, telephone number, and email address of at least two other representatives of the organization with the authority to inquire about or change reservations on behalf of the organization:

3. Nature of Meeting or Activity

cont on the back

4. Library Location Requested _____

Day, Date, and Time Period Requested _____

Frequency of Use (weekly, monthly, etc.) _____

Specific Dates and Times Requested (2 hours minimum per use)

Total hours of use requested _____

Security Deposit: \$150.00

Fees for meeting room use are \$70.00 per hour.

Total hours ____ x \$70 = _____ **Total Fee**

Please make checks payable to Fort Bend County.

Fees to be paid for peace officer are current contract cost rate.

5. Clean-Up Agreement

I agree to assume full responsibility for cleaning of the meeting room in accordance with the policy. I further acknowledge that I will be financially responsible for payment of custodial services if I fail to clean up the facility and grounds properly.

Signature

Date

MEETING ROOM INFORMATION

BRANCH NAME	LOCATION	TIME AVAILABLE		ROOM CAPACITY	CHAIRS AVAILABLE	TABLES * AVAILABLE
		BEFORE/AFTER HOURS				
University Branch Library	14010 University Blvd. Sugar Land, TX 77479	Wednesday, 6-10 pm Friday & Saturday, 5-10 pm Sunday, 8 am-10 pm		130	130	10
Sienna Branch Library	8411 Sienna Springs Blvd. Missouri City, TX 77459	Wednesday, 6-10 pm Friday & Saturday, 5-10 pm Sunday, 8 am-12:30 pm; 5-10 pm		130	130	12
Cinco Ranch Branch Library	2620 Commercial Center Blvd. Katy, TX 77494	Wednesday, 6-10 pm Friday & Saturday, 5-10 pm Sunday, 8 am-10 pm		130	130	14
George Memorial Library	1001 Golfview Drive Richmond, TX 77469	Friday & Saturday, 5-10 pm Sunday, 8 am-12:30 pm; 5-10 pm		125	125	12
First Colony Branch Library	2121 Austin Parkway Sugar Land, TX 77479	Thursday, 6-10 pm Friday & Saturday, 5-10 pm Sunday, 8 am - 10 pm		100	100	10
Sugar Land Branch Library	550 Eldridge Sugar Land, TX 77478	Wednesday, 6-10 pm Friday & Saturday, 5-10 pm Sunday, 8 am-10 pm		90	90	8
Missouri City Branch Library	1530 Texas Parkway Missouri City, TX 77489	Thursday, 6-10 pm Friday & Saturday, 5-10 pm Sunday, 8 am-10 pm		60	60	6
Bob Lutts Fulshear/Simonton Branch Library	8100 FM 359 South Fulshear, TX 77441	Monday & Thursday, 8-10 pm Tuesday & Wednesday, 6-10 pm Friday & Saturday, 5-10 pm Sunday, 8 am-10 pm		60	60	4
Albert George Branch Library	9230 Gene Street Needville, TX 77461	Monday & Tuesday, 8-10 pm Wednesday & Thursday, 6-10 pm Friday, 5-10 pm Saturday, 1-10 pm Sunday, 8 am-10 pm		50	50	4

* standard 6 ft. tables

LIBRARY STAFF EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS:

Raul Cardenas (Maintenance Coordinator) - 713-545-6099 (cell phone)
Isaac Brown (Maintenance Worker) - 713-545-5459 (cell phone)