

**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. The County Librarian retains authority for applying this policy following approval by Commissioners Court.

Responsibility for accepting applications for after-hours use of all meeting rooms lies with the Administrative Assistant at the Library Administration Building.  
This policy applies to the main meeting rooms in the following libraries:

Albert George Branch (Needville),  
Cinco Ranch Branch (Katy),  
First Colony Branch (Sugar Land),  
Fulshear Branch (Fulshear),  
George Memorial (Richmond),  
Mission Bend Branch (Houston)  
Missouri City Branch (Missouri City),  
Sienna Branch (Missouri City),  
Sugar Land Branch (Sugar Land), and  
University Branch (Sugar Land).

Only the main meeting room in each library is covered by this policy. Mamie George Branch in Stafford has no meeting room and is excluded from this policy. The Fort Bend County Willie Melton Law Library is also excluded. The Pointe at Missouri City Branch Library has its own policy and is excluded from this policy.

This policy applies only to hours when the library is closed to the public. Rooms cannot be reserved on County holidays/closures. The "Meeting/Conference Room Policy" applies to meeting room use when the libraries are open. The application and requirements for the "Meeting/Conference Room Policy" can be obtained online or at any Fort Bend County library.

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. See Appendix A.

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 Branch Manager at the desired location.

**(1) General Rules for After-Hours Use of the Meeting Rooms<sup>1</sup>**

- a. All meetings must be open to the public and to the media.
- b. No admission fees are allowed.
- c. No sales of products, services, or memberships are allowed.
- d. Author appearances are not allowed after hours.
- e. Smoking, vaping, gambling, and use of alcoholic beverages are not permitted in the rooms.
- f. No food or drinks (other than water) may be brought in or used in the meeting rooms.
- g. No library technical equipment, including audiovisual equipment and computers owned by the county, may be used by groups using the building after hours.
- h. 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.
- i. 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.
- j. 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.
- k. 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.
- l. Groups comprised of persons 18 years of age or younger must have at least one (1) chaperone for every eight (8) guests. Chaperones must be at least 21 years of age and must be present throughout the duration of the function.
- m. 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.

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



- n. 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. Library logo may not be used for any publicity purposes, including but not limited to, invitations, flyers, and social media.
- o. 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 music or dance practices or recitals; by groups that have flagrantly or repeatedly violated library meeting room policies.
- p. Fort Bend County will not be responsible for any equipment or personal property that is not the property of Fort Bend County.
- q. Users are not allowed to store equipment or supplies at the library other than during the hours that are specified on the application.
- r. All attendees are subject to the rules listed in the Library Rules of Conduct Policy.

**(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 after-hours 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.
- d. Payment for use of a meeting room shall be made by credit card (Visa, Mastercard, or Discover card ONLY), personal check, or cash 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. A fee will be charged for returned check. Another payment type will be accepted, otherwise the rental will be voided.
- e. Applicants shall familiarize themselves with the facility before applying. Fort Bend County provides only the tables and chairs that are listed in

Appendix A of the Meeting/Conference Room Policy. No additional furniture may be brought on library property.

- f. 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.
- g. 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.
- h. Application forms may be obtained from the Administrative Assistant's office at the Library Administration Building (1003 Golfview Dr, Richmond, TX 77469 For more information, call 281-633-4702.
- i. The application must be completed in person at the Library Administration Building by the person signing the application, or another person designated to handle all transactions involving the application and use of the meeting room.
- j. Groups must include, 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.
- k. 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.
- l. A peace officer is required if a meeting room is rented for use outside of regular library business hours. Renters are responsible for hiring and paying a peace officer for a minimum of two (2) hours of work and for the entire period the room is in use after hours. All peace officer arrangements must be made with the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office; you cannot provide your own security. Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office reserves the right to require additional peace officers, paid by the applicant, if it is determined that there is additional security needed.
- m. 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 times. Applicants agree to abide by the designated room capacity as shown in Appendix A.



**(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. 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 or damaged during this time will be charged to the reserving party.
- e. Users are responsible for all clean-up. The applicant agrees to dispose of all garbage off-site, clean and return all tables and chairs to their original locations, and otherwise return the room to the condition it was in before the applicant's rental period. If you do not clean the room, you will forfeit your deposit.
- f. 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.
- g. 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.
- h. 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 15 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. Please inform peace officer on duty in the event of a security-related emergency or a building emergency, including, but not limited to, plumbing problems, power failure, or air-conditioning problems. In case of medical emergency, call 911 and notify peace officer on duty.

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