

**ST. JOSEPH PUBLIC LIBRARY
MEETING ROOM POLICY**

PURPOSE

Fulfilling St. Joseph Public Library's (SJPL) mission to offer a welcoming place for community interactions, meeting rooms are available to groups for meetings which are: open to the public, foster personal growth and further community relations.

POLICY

- SJPL meeting rooms are available for community. Reservation of rooms is mandatory. Rooms are available for non-profit organizations, government agencies, and groups or for-profit entities engaged in educational, civic, cultural, religious, hobby, and other activities involving personal growth, recreation, or service. SJPL will make no effort to censor or amend the content of a meeting in a SJPL facility.
- The Branch Manager of each SJPL facility or their designee will review all requests for meeting room use and determine eligibility prior to granting approval. The SJPL Director and SJPL Board of Trustees are the final authority in granting or refusing any appeal or exception to the policies stated in this document.
- Use of SJPL meeting rooms does not imply endorsement by SJPL staff or Board of Trustees of the viewpoints presented.
- Unlawful activity shall not be permitted in the meeting rooms or on SJPL premises and such activity shall be a basis to deny future use of meeting rooms by groups or individuals violating this policy.
- The East Hills, Washington Park and Downtown libraries have rooms available for public reservation and use.
- Meetings must be held during regular SJPL hours. Meetings must end on time so the room can be cleared or prepared for other meetings. All meetings must end 15 minutes before the Library closes.
- Meetings should be open to the public, except that public governmental bodies may hold a closed session pursuant to the provisions of State statutes and regulations. Due to the public nature of the meeting rooms, reservation requests shall not be protected as a Library circulation transaction, but treated as public documents. SJPL meetings, Library Foundation meetings or meetings of the Friends of the Library may be closed in accordance with the Missouri Sunshine Law. Meetings by a tenant of SJPL may be open or closed reflecting the legal requirements for the meetings in question.

- Fees may not be charged for attendance at programs. Programs requiring partial reimbursement for the actual costs of providing the program will be reviewed on a case by case basis for possible exemption from the rule prohibiting fees.
- Programs involving the sale, advertising, or promotion of commercial products or services, are prohibited. Commercial programs listed or presented as informational, educational, or instructional must remain so, and presenters shall make no direct solicitation of attendees to secure clients or customers for their commercial purpose.
- Fundraisers are not permitted without the consent of the Board of Trustees, given at a regularly scheduled Board Meeting.
- SJPL staff is unable to provide childcare services or facilities for the supervision of the children of persons attending a meeting in SJPL meeting rooms. (Please review the SJPL policy on unattended minors.)
- Groups who use the Library rooms may serve light refreshments. (Note: alcoholic beverages are prohibited without the consent of the Board of Trustees, given at a regularly scheduled Board Meeting.)
- SJPL has a limited supply of folding tables and chairs available for public use, but does not provide special room set-up or arrangements.
- SJPL has a number of pieces of audio-visual equipment which may be used in its meeting rooms. The exact type and availability of the equipment will vary. It is suggested that needed equipment be requested at the time of the room reservation. SJPL cannot provide operators for the equipment. If SJPL equipment is to be used, the individual operating the equipment must make arrangements with staff, at a time convenient to staff, to receive basic training on use of the equipment prior to that use.
- Any equipment and displays brought in for a meeting must be removed at the end of the meeting. SJPL is not responsible for lost or stolen items or damage to items which the group has brought onto the premises.
- Signs, working papers, or posters may not be attached to the walls of the meeting rooms.
- Groups that want to display handicrafts, artwork, or other material may apply to reserve space for that purpose. SJPL reserves the right to review and approve such applications on a case by case basis. The group sponsoring the display is solely responsible for the safety of the materials displayed. SJPL may require proof of insurance coverage for the value of the display, a damage deposit, or a waiver of responsibility on the Library's part when the Library deems it appropriate. This requirement may be waived if members of the group are continuously present to provide security for the display during the hours the building is open to the public.
- Before accepting application the applicant will be asked to read the St. Joseph Public Library Meeting Room Policy. By signing the application form the applicant agrees that the rules,

policies, and conditions in the Library meeting room policy have been understood and certifies the group's acceptance of them.

- The meeting room application will expire two years from the date signed. At that time a new application will need to be submitted and approved. Groups using SJPL space are encouraged to update their certification during the month before the certification expires, as well as anytime the group's contact person or other information changes.
- To ensure the general availability of SJPL meeting space to the public, SJPL will limit multiple reservations by the same group. Certain groups that meet a specific need which is also part of SJPL's expressed goals for itself, may be considered an exception and granted regular meetings, if they desire.
- SJPL maintains top priority in reserving rooms for SJPL programs, including programs SJPL sponsors or co-sponsors. The Convention and Visitor's Center located at the East Hills Library will have priority use of meeting rooms second only to SJPL.
- Reservations may be denied for the following reasons:
 1. Excessive noise levels that would disturb patrons or staff.
 2. Inability to determine that a group qualifies.
 3. Determination that a group does not qualify.
 4. Activities for which the available rooms are not designed.
 5. Past failure to honor reservations and SJPL policies.
 6. Past improper use of the room.
 7. Any other reason the SJPL Director, the Branch Manager, or the SJPL Board of Trustees deems appropriate.
- If a meeting room reservation has to be canceled every attempt will be made to reschedule as soon as possible.
- Within 24 hours of requested usage, an individual library patron may, upon request, use a meeting room which is not in use until the next group's reservation time.
- Groups are responsible for the requirements and for providing requested accommodations for meetings or programs under the Americans with Disabilities Act.
- The group is responsible for leaving the room in the condition in which it was found. Charges will be assessed for damages or required extra cleanup. Representatives of the group may inform library staff at the end of their meeting that they have cleaned the room and request an inspection. Library staff will inspect the room as soon as possible. Damages to SJPL's premises, equipment, or furnishings as a result of meeting room use will be charged to the group responsible. The group or organization and its members, jointly and severally, will assume and bear full responsibility for loss of, or injury, or damage to, any property of SJPL caused or inflicted by the organization, its members, affiliated persons, guests, or invitees.

- All persons, groups, or organizations using SJPL facilities take the premises “as is” and assume all risks of injury, including death or property damage, to members of the group, organization, event participants, and event spectators which might arise out of activities of the group or out of the conditions present on the facilities.
- Every person, group, or organization using SJPL facilities shall indemnify, hold harmless, and defend the Library, its Board of Directors, and its employees from any and all liability or financial loss, costs, or expenses (including reasonable attorney’s fees and legal costs) resulting from any suits, claims, losses, or actions brought against the Library and/or employees which results directly or indirectly from wrongful or negligent actions of the permittee including its sponsor, spectators, participants, members, officers, directors, or agents. Wrongful or negligent actions include, but are not limited to, failure to adequately inspect, discover and remedy, or warn of defect in the premises or grounds.