

Policy

The Briggs Lawrence County Public Library Trustees are responsible for establishing appropriate rules for the use of all Library buildings and property and have adopted these rules in accordance with the authority granted them by the Ohio Revised Code.

The Library maintains meeting room facilities in the buildings it owns for the primary purpose of promoting Library services through programs, meetings and other Library activities presented by Library staff, the Friends of the Library or organizations affiliated with the Library. BLCPL welcomes the use of its Meeting Room by organizations engaged in educational, cultural, civic, intellectual, and charitable activities or activities requiring the use of library materials or neutral public spaces. In addition, libraries are considered limited fora of free speech. They cannot discriminate on the basis of content although they can reasonably restrict the time, place, and manner of meetings. Libraries cannot restrict meetings because they are political or religious in nature. This limited forum of free speech may open the library to controversial entities and meetings.

Meetings or programs sponsored by the Briggs Lawrence County Public Library presented by Library staff, the Friends of the Library, or organizations affiliated with the Library will be given priority in the scheduling of the Meeting Room, after which other requests will be considered by the Executive Director in the order in which they are received.

Any use by the public for non-Library affiliated programs is allowed in order to further the Library's mission of facilitating the exchange of diverse information and ideas. This philosophy inherently limits the use of meeting rooms to persons or organizations whose meetings are open to the public and who welcome the exchange of diverse information and ideas, and as such, excludes any persons or organizations who reject or censor an exchange of information and ideas. The Library is not responsible for and does not advocate or endorse the viewpoints of any group or individual using its meeting rooms. Access to meeting rooms will be provided on equal terms, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting use.

The Library retains the right to deny the space to any user whose planned use of the space does not comply with these terms. The Library reserves the right to cancel a reservation at any time if it is determined by the Director that the space is required for use by the Library or a Library affiliated organization or if it is deemed necessary at the discretion of the Library Board of Trustees.

The Director is responsible for the administration of the meeting room policy and for establishing the administrative procedures for its implementation. The Branch Manager of each building is responsible for and must approve all reservations for meeting rooms. A representative of the group should complete and sign the Meeting Room Reservation Form prior to the meeting date.

The Library reserves the right to revise any meeting arrangements scheduled if necessary and to preempt established reservations upon reasonable notification to the organization. In the event of a Library building emergency or weather-related emergency, meetings may be canceled.

In the event a group fails to appear for its scheduled meeting without giving notice, the Library reserves the right to allow the space to be used for other purposes.

Groups using a meeting room more than once for the same purpose need only complete the form once every six months with the dates listed thereon. A copy of the completed form must be kept on file in the Branch Manager's or Assistant Manager's office.

The individual signing for the meeting room reservation form must be an adult and must assume responsibility for the orderly conduct of the group, and in the event of any damage to Library property and/or equipment, that individual will be liable.

The Library assumes no liability for theft or damage to property brought onto Library property or for injuries which occur as a result of actions of sponsors or participants in activities in meeting rooms.

Use of the Meeting Room does not constitute the library's endorsement of viewpoints expressed by participants in the program. No individual or group may state or imply the Library has endorsed or sponsored events being held in the Library meeting rooms without written approval from the Library Director. To establish the fact that the Briggs Lawrence County Public Library is not sponsoring the event, all publicity which includes the name of the Library in any way must also include the statement:

"This Event is sponsored by (insert the name of the organization reserving the room) and is not sponsored or endorsed by the Briggs Lawrence County Public Library or its Board Members or employees."

Rules for Using a Meeting Room

- Meeting Rooms shall not be used in any way that materially interferes with the operation of the Library or which causes a threat to the safety of Library property or its patrons.
- No fee may be charged, no collection may be taken, and no purchase may be required of those who attend. The only fund-raising events permitted in the Library meeting rooms are those events sponsored by the Library, the Friends of the Library or other organizations affiliated with the Library and can include but are not limited to book sales, bake sales, author signing and sales, and other fund raisers for the benefit of the Library or Library affiliated groups.
- No User Meeting at the Library shall use the Library as its official address.
- Storage of items owned by Users using the Public Meeting Rooms will not be permitted.
- Meeting Rooms are available for use during regular service hours on days the Library is open. Exact times may vary by location. No one may enter the Library prior to opening hours.
- Users using the Library Meeting Rooms must comply with all applicable State and
- Federal laws and regulations- such as hiring an interpreter or providing auxiliary aids required under the Americans with Disability Act when requested by the public.

- Users using the Library Meeting Rooms may not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, color, creed, national origin, religious belief, or handicap, against any person requesting admission to the meeting.
- Users may not tape nor tack anything to the walls or door.
- The User is responsible for the supervision of all children who may accompany its members. Children should remain with the user or be supervised by an adult who must remain with them.
- Meeting rooms shall be left in good order.
- User agrees to pay for any special maintenance required and all damage done to the meeting room during the meeting. User also agrees to pay for all damage done to the Library premises as a result of the meeting.
- Library staff will not take or deliver messages for meeting participants.
- Food and/or beverages may be served. All refreshments must remain in the meeting area. The User using the room must provide all supplies.
- Users agree to pay for any security measures that the Library determines are reasonably required in connection with any meeting proposed by the User. At least 48 hours prior to the meeting, User shall deposit such funds with the Library, as the Library reasonably deems necessary in light of the relevant circumstances, to cover the cost of such security measures.
- The contact person for each User is responsible for ensuring that each member of his or her group is aware of and abides by these regulations.
- Use of a Library meeting room by the public must not interfere with Library operations in any way, and groups or individuals whose program interferes with Library operations by causing disruptions, congestion, noise, or other interference in the judgment of the building manager or Director will be asked to leave. Failure to comply will result in Library staff calling local law enforcement for the removal of the parties and could result in charges being filed as allowed by law.
- No meetings held in the Library's meeting room can be "closed door" meetings with restricted access unless approval for such has been granted in advance by the Library Director for such events as job interviews, testing, tutoring, proctoring, and depositions.

Rules for Specific Meeting Types

- Meetings by recognized trade or professional associations, and training or testing sessions held by schools or universities, local businesses, associations, or civic organizations are interpreted to be educational programs and are permissible as part of the Library's missions to provide educational programs.
- Use of the Library meeting rooms for employment screening, employment training or job interviews are permissible as part of the Library's mission to aid Lawrence County residents in obtaining opportunities for employment. Library meeting rooms are not available to people or businesses that charge fees to individuals for job placement services.
- Use of meeting rooms by elected officials, and city, county, village, township or governmental or quasi-governmental boards is permitted to allow opportunities to meet with their constituencies and/or to discuss issues of importance to members of the community as part of the Library's mission to provide a venue for the exchange of ideas

and information of concern to the community. Such meetings may include times for appointments with individuals or groups to meet privately with their elected officials or board members. The Library meeting rooms can also be used for the purpose of “Meeting the Candidates” as long as such are sponsored by non-partisan organizations, at the discretion of the Library Board.

- Elected or appointed boards, committees or councils of Cities, Counties, Villages, Townships, or other statutory bodies of Lawrence County may use Library meeting rooms to conduct their regular scheduled business meetings. During such use, the rules, and procedures of that elected or appointed body would control the conduct of their meetings in the Library.

Meeting Room Request Procedures

Persons or groups may request a meeting room via the website booking module or they may submit a completed [Meeting Room Reservation Form](#) to the Library staff at least one week before the event. The reservation is not considered completed and the room reservation is not considered confirmed until the form has been submitted and approved by the building manager and or Executive Director.

Facility Requirements

Permission to use the rooms includes ordinary use of the furniture and fixtures, including chairs and tables. The use of Library owned TV/DVD players and portable public address system (if available) must be requested at the time the room is reserved and approved by the building manager. All other items must be provided by the person or group reserving the room.

Furniture and room set-up may be provided by the Library only if specific instructions are provided one week in advance. The Library will not guarantee to have assistance available at the time of the event to modify the room arrangement.

Refreshments and light-catered meals may be served. Users are responsible for cleaning up and restoring the room to its original condition before leaving.

Failure to comply with meeting room policy or rules may result in the loss of meeting room privileges including immediate termination of a meeting by appropriate Library personnel.

Terms and Conditions

- All meetings must be completed fifteen (15) minutes before the Library closes. The Library meeting spaces are scheduled for specific times in thirty (30) minute increments. Meetings and events, and their preparation (personal equipment or materials placement, refreshments, registration, etc.) must be planned to begin and end within the prearranged times.
- Meetings requiring clean up must end one half hour prior to the Library’s closing to allow for a timely exit. All clean up must be completed by the group or individual using the room.

- Organizations conducting business meetings or presenting programs may wish to restrict or limit public comments during all or part of their meeting or programs. However, any such restrictions should in no way interfere with the public's ability to attend, observe, or listen to the program.
- No admission fees can be charged, nor donations or offerings solicited as a condition of attendance.
- No products or services may be advertised, solicited, or sold in Library meeting rooms or on Library property.
- Meeting rooms can only be reserved for use by the public during times the Library is open to the public.
- The meeting rooms cannot be reserved more than 6 months in advance.

Prohibited Uses

1. Visitations involving custody issues or marital or family counseling,
2. Gathering of signatures for any type of petition or ballot issue is not permitted inside the buildings, although such are permitted on the sidewalks as long as entrances, exits and parking spaces are not blocked and Library patrons are not harassed, coerced, or intimidated,
3. programs promoting any type of illegal activity,
4. No organization meeting at the library shall use the library as its official address or the library's telephone number for the relay of messages of the organization.
5. Programs promoting any type of behavior that encourages violence or discrimination directed at any group based on age, race, religion, sex, disability, or national origin,
6. Programs that include any type of gambling or games of chance involving cash prizes or payouts.
7. Smoking, alcoholic beverages or drug use of any kind are prohibited in the Library.
8. Gambling, betting, wagering, raffles, or tip boards are prohibited in the Library.

Denial of Use

Groups or individuals may incur costs or be banned from the use of library facilities if there is:

- Damage to the library property.
- Failure to return the meeting room to clean condition after use.
- Misrepresentation of the purpose or focus of the meeting or who the speaker is.
- Failure to promptly vacate the meeting room after use.
- Violation of any of the provisions of the Meeting Room Policy.
- The program or individuals using the Meeting Room do not conform to the mission and regulations of the library's service philosophy.