

Boston Public Library Meeting Room Use Policy	Operations Policy
	Date Approved: January 17, 2006 Previously Approved: _____

The mission of the Boston Public Library (hereinafter the “Library”) is to preserve and provide access to the historical record of our society and to serve the cultural, educational and informational needs of the people of the City and the Commonwealth. In support of this mission, the Library provides meeting rooms at all library locations. Meeting rooms are available to community and non-profit groups and organizations for meetings that are educational, cultural or civic in nature. The use of the facilities shall be in accordance with the policies and procedures set by the Trustees of the Boston Public Library.

In allocating the use of meeting rooms, the Trustees of the Library and Library staff shall not discriminate on the basis of the political or religious beliefs of applicant groups, or on any other constitutionally or statutorily-prohibited basis. However, the provision of meeting room space is not the primary mission of the Library, and must always be subordinate to the paramount need to provide a safe, peaceful, and respectful environment in which to read and study. No use of meeting rooms that is likely to disturb Library patrons in their customary use of Library facilities, impede Library staff in the performance of their duties, or endanger the Library buildings or collection will be approved or permitted. Use of meeting rooms for Library purposes shall take precedence over all other uses.

Permission to use a Library meeting room does not constitute or imply Library endorsement of the aims, policies or activities of any group or organization, or the views expressed in the meeting.

Reservations for meeting room space are on a first-come, first-serve basis. Library or City-sponsored meetings have priority and the Boston Public Library reserves the right to preempt any scheduled meeting. The Library will make every effort to give advance notices of such preemption.

All meetings must be free of charge and open to the public. No admission charge, request for donation or items for sale are approved by the Library. Meeting rooms shall not be used for entrepreneurial or commercial purposes, for the solicitation of business, for profit or for fundraising other than fundraising that supports the Library, unless specifically permitted by the Library. No goods or services shall be promoted, sold or exchanged upon the premises or by sample, pictures, or descriptions.

Groups using Library meeting rooms must not use advertising and publicity which imply that their programs are sponsored, co-sponsored, endorsed or approved by the Library, unless written permission to do so has been previously given by the Library.

Reservations may be made no more than three months in advance. No group may consider the Library its permanent meeting place or use the Library as its mailing address.

The Library has the authority to accept, renew, or reject requests for use of the room under the established policy. To promote the accessibility of the meeting rooms to a wide variety of community groups, the Library may limit meetings for any particular organization. The Trustees of the Boston Public Library and the Library staff reserve the right to reject a reservation request if the anticipated meeting is likely to be unreasonably disruptive to regular library functions, too large for the applicable room capacity, disorderly, dangerous to persons or property, or in any other way inconsistent with or in contravention of any of the terms and conditions of this policy. In determining whether such a likelihood exists, the Trustees of the Boston Public Library and/or the Library staff may take into consideration the contents of the application form, the history of the group's meeting room use in the library, the history of the group's use of meeting facilities elsewhere, and such other information as they may deem appropriate.

The Trustees of the Boston Public Library and/or Library staff reserves the right to determine, in its reasonable discretion, whether any proposed use of a meeting room will require a police detail or other extraordinary police protection, and if so the anticipated cost thereof. In making this determination, the Trustees of the Boston Public Library may take into consideration the contents of the application form, the history of the group's meeting room use in the library, the history of the group's use of meeting facilities elsewhere, and such other information as such the Board may deem appropriate, and may consult with members of the Boston Police regarding this inquiry. If the Trustees of the Boston Public Library and/or Library staff determines that such police protection will be reasonably necessary, the group seeking to reserve the use of a meeting room shall be required, as a condition of such reservation, to pay to the Trustees of the Boston Public Library by such date in advance of the meeting as Library staff reasonably sets, the anticipated cost of such police protection, and such sum applied thereto, with any surplus being returned to the group after the meeting. The group shall be liable to the Library for any deficiency.

In facilities with meeting rooms that are not secure from the rest of the Library, meetings should conform to the scheduled operating hours of the library. Exceptions may be made upon request and with the organization paying in advance for the needed staff.

All organizations or groups shall indemnify, defend and hold harmless the Boston Public Library and the City of Boston, its officers, agents and employees from and against any and all claims, suits, actions of any kind, arising and resulting and accruing from any negligent act, omission or error of the organization or group resulting in or relating to personal injuries or property damage arising from the organization/group's use of the Library meeting room.

The Boston Public Library Board of Trustees delegates to the Library President or his/her designee the authority to develop and implement procedures which carry out the provisions of this policy. Exceptions to the policy may be granted only by the Boston Public Library Board of Trustees or its delegate.

Companion Document: Boston Public Library Meeting Room Use Procedures, January 2006