

ACTON MEMORIAL LIBRARY
FACILITIES USE POLICY
Effective 7/27/2023

Purpose

The Acton Memorial Library Board of Trustees (hereinafter referred to as “Board”) welcomes use of the Meeting and Conference Rooms (hereinafter referred to as “rooms”) for civic, cultural, educational and philanthropic purposes of a non-profit, non-commercial nature having a substantial connection to the Acton community. In support of the rights granted by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, the Board and library administration consider it a responsibility of the Library to provide the widest and least restrictive forum for discussion. The Board will be guided by this responsibility in allocating use of these rooms. Use of the Meeting and Conference Rooms must:

- Be free and open to the public
- Comply with library policies, procedures and posted notices
- Be non-disruptive and consistent with normal library operations
- Occur during the Library's normal operating hours

Use of the rooms for library purposes (including, but not limited to, programming, staff meetings, Friends of Acton Libraries meetings and book sales, and AML Foundation meetings and events) and meetings of Town of Acton (hereinafter referred to as “Town”) boards and committees shall take precedence over other uses. If the Town of Acton or Library must use a meeting room that was previously reserved by a public group, every attempt will be made to find the group another space within the Town.

The library is not available for private functions. Fundraising and commercial activities are prohibited, except those that have received prior approval of the Board.

To be considered non-profit and non-commercial, you may not hold an event that is intended to result in direct or indirect sale or promotion of services or goods. However, with prior permission, individual artists, musicians and authors may indicate that their works are for sale and may display the prices of such works. Library staff may not transact sales of art or music.

The library is considered politically and socially neutral. The library does not discriminate against any political, religious or any other constitutionally-protected groups. In allowing a group to use a room, the Board and library staff do not imply any endorsement of the group’s beliefs, policy or program. No group shall, in any of its publicity, state or suggest that Acton Memorial Library, the Board, the Town, or the library staff sponsors or endorses the meeting, the group or any particular set of ideas.

The Library Director may give permission for use of the lobby/Solarium area for bake sales or similar events by non-profit organizations serving Acton.

Preliminary application

A representative for any groups except Town Boards and Committees seeking to use a room must complete and submit a [Preliminary Application Form](#) at least once a year, as described later in this policy. Representatives must be Acton residents over the age of 18 and involved with the group or willing to vouch for the group's legitimacy.

Reserving a room

In addition to the Preliminary Application Form, a representative for the group must complete a [Room Reservation Request](#) for each requested use of a room. An Acton resident must sign the form for each request.

Meeting rooms must be reserved at least one week before the requested reservation date.

The Board holds the authority for approval or denial of requests for the scheduled use of meeting rooms, who may delegate that authority to the Library Director.

The Board and the library administration reserve the right to reject a room reservation 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 to accept a room reservation, the Board and/or the library administration may take into consideration the contents of the Preliminary Application Form, the history of the group's use of meeting facilities, and any other information that they deem appropriate.

However, interpretation of and exceptions to this policy shall be at the sole discretion of the Board. If you disagree with the Library Director's decision, you may appeal to the Board.

Groups can reserve the Meeting Room or Conference Room for:

- A maximum of 4 months in advance
- A maximum of 3 meetings at a time
- No more than 1 meeting per month

Requests to reserve the space for more time shall be granted only upon approval by the Board.

The following rooms can be reserved:

- Conference Room (second floor), maximum occupancy 27
- Meeting Room A & B, maximum occupancy 70
- Meeting Room Section A only, maximum occupancy 35
- Meeting Room Section B only, maximum occupancy 35

All rooms except Meeting Room B have access to AV/Zoom equipment. When requesting a reservation that includes AV/Zoom equipment, please allow enough time before your meeting begins to test your equipment.

Completing a room reservation request does not guarantee a room. Reservations are considered tentative until all completed forms are submitted to the library and approved by library administration. Any false statements on the preliminary application and room reservation forms shall be grounds to deny the use of the rooms by the group submitting the application.

Failure to notify the library of cancellations may result in forfeiture of future bookings.

Rules for Use

All meetings shall be open to the public, including library staff, and free of charge. No person shall be excluded from attendance, except to comply with the occupancy limit for the requested room.

Groups shall, at their own expense, procure any license or permit necessary for the conduct of their meetings.

Groups may arrange the tables and chairs as they choose, providing they do not block marked fire exits. Light refreshments are permitted, provided the group cleans up. No food is allowed outside of the rooms or to be left on the premises, and alcohol is not permitted with the exception of Library-sanctioned events. Group activities must stay in their reserved space. The room must be returned to the condition in which it was found. A small kitchenette is available in the first-floor meeting room. The kitchen must be cleaned and closed up after use. Adequate adult supervision must be provided by the group to assure proper conduct of attendees. The individual in charge, as indicated on the Room Reservation Form, must be present during room use.

The library is not responsible for the loss, theft, or damage to a group's equipment.

All persons using a room shall comply with all reasonable and lawful requests by library staff and the Acton Police Department. Individuals who fail to comply will be required to leave the library. Groups who fail to comply, or whose leaders fail to comply, will be prohibited from using the rooms in the future.

Any special arrangements will be the sole responsibility of the person or group in whose name the reservation is made.

Liability

Filling out the Preliminary Application Form shall release the Board, the Board members individually, the Town and the library staff from any liability.

The Board reserves the right to require any applicant group to supply a certificate of insurance, from a Massachusetts-licensed insurer, in such amount and in such form as the Board may reasonably deem appropriate, such amount not to exceed \$200,000, naming the Board and the Board members individually, the Town and the library staff, as additional insured, and covering damage to the library building and grounds, damage to or loss of equipment and collection, and injury to persons occasioned by the meeting. Such certificate shall include evidence that the insurance it represents cannot be cancelled without at least ten (10) days' written notice to the Board. In the event of such cancellation, the meeting reservation shall be cancelled unless the group forthwith substitutes a new insurance certificate that meets the requirements.

The Board reserves the right to determine whether any proposed use of a room will require a police detail or other extraordinary police protection, and if so, the anticipated cost. In this case, the Board may consider the contents of the Preliminary Application Form and any other information that the Board deems appropriate, and may consult with the Chief of Police or their designee. If the Board determines that police protection will reasonably be necessary, the group seeking to reserve the room shall be required to pay the anticipated cost of such police protection to the Board at least one week before the meeting is scheduled. These funds will be used to pay for police protection, and any surplus will be returned to the group after the meeting. The group shall be liable to the Board and/or Town for any deficiency.

Parking

Due to limited parking, groups expecting over 15 attendees are asked to carpool.

Hours and Fees

There is no charge for room use.

All rooms must be vacated 15 minutes prior to the Library closing time unless otherwise approved by the Library Director.

Direct any questions about room reservations or this policy to the Library Director or their designated representative.

The Board reserves the right to amend this policy as needed.

Approved by the Board of Trustees of Acton Memorial Library this 24th day of August, 2023.