

Omaha Public Library (OPL) Meeting Room Policy

PURPOSE:

As a community gathering place, OPL makes meeting and study rooms available for individuals and groups to exchange ideas and information. This supports OPL's mission to strengthen our community through access to stories, ideas, information, and experiences.

Private events are only held at Central Library and must be scheduled through the OPL Event Manager. These events are subject to separate policies and fees.

Statement of Public Use and Free Expression

The First Amendment protects the public's use of OPL's meeting and study rooms. Any meeting or study room open to the public is considered a limited public forum for expressive activity. Therefore, using meeting and study rooms cannot be restricted based on the content or viewpoint of a group's speech within the bounds of applicable laws and policies.

Permission to use a Library meeting or study room does not constitute or imply OPL's sponsorship, support, or endorsement of the views, policies, or beliefs of the user or the content of the meeting. Groups may not advertise or imply OPL endorsement in any announcements or promotional materials.

POLICY:

Scope of Use

The primary purpose of OPL's meeting spaces is to support library activities and programs. Library-sponsored events take precedence over all other uses. When not in use by the library, meeting rooms may be reserved by external groups in accordance with OPL policies and following the guidelines.

Fee Structure

- For-Profit: \$25 per hour
- All Other Eligible Groups: No charge (donations welcome)

Payment is required in advance to confirm the reservation.

Reservation Requirements

- All meeting and study room reservation requests must be submitted through OPL's online reservation system.
- Reservations are accepted on a 90-day rolling basis.
- Each group/individual is limited to a total of 5 meeting room reservations across all OPL branches per month and 1 study room reservation per day.
- Reservations for meeting rooms may not exceed 4 hours per day without prior administrative approval. Study room reservations may not exceed 2 hours per day.
- Reservation requests must be submitted at least 72 hours in advance.
- All reservations are subject to review and approval by OPL staff.
- Payment must be submitted through OPL's online reservation system at least 72 hours before the scheduled meeting.
- Failure to cancel a reservation at least 24 hours in advance or appear for a scheduled meeting may result in loss of future reservation privileges.

- Walk-in use of the meeting and study rooms is allowed. Walk-in groups and individuals must relinquish the room if the total daily hours per group/individual have been met or 30 minutes before the next scheduled meeting.

Emergency Closures

If OPL or a branch closes due to an emergency, every effort will be made to notify the reserving persons or entity who scheduled the meeting room prior to closing. During adverse weather or other unexpected closures, groups should call (402) 444-4800 or visit omahalibrary.org for the most up-to-date information.

General Use Guidelines

- Meetings must end 30 minutes prior to the library's closing.
- Rooms must be returned to their original condition. Groups are responsible for any damage or cleaning fees.
- Light refreshments are permitted (no alcohol, no food preparation on-site).
- Library meeting room technology is user-friendly and works with most common devices. Groups should plan ahead to test equipment and ensure it suits their needs. OPL does not provide additional equipment (adapters, power cords, cables, etc.). OPL cannot guarantee that personal electronic items will work with the library's audio/visual equipment.
- Room capacity limits must be observed.
- Adhesives such as tacks, tape, or glue may not be used unless on designated surfaces.
- Smoking, open flames, incense, and candles are prohibited.
- OPL is not responsible for loss or damage to personal or organizational property.
- Use of OPL's name, phone number, or logo in event promotion is not permitted.
- Room use does not imply endorsement by OPL. Promotional materials must not suggest OPL sponsorship.
- Rooms cannot be used as a depository for personal or organizational property.
- Groups must notify staff upon completion of meetings and report attendance numbers.
- Saddlebrook, A.V. Sorensen, and Florence branches are joint facilities. These locations have separate supplemental meeting room policies. Please refer to individual branch policies if requesting a room at these locations.
- The South Omaha Library Meeting Room Policy outlines the use of study rooms at that joint facility.

Prohibited Uses

Meeting rooms may not be used for:

- Social events (parties, showers, etc.), unless scheduled through the OPL Event Manager at Central Library. These events are subject to separate policies and fees.
- Activities involving alcohol or fundraising (unless library-sponsored)
- Sales presentations or commercial promotions
- Ongoing business operations
- Any activity disrupts OPL operations, impedes other visitors' use of OPL services, or poses an unreasonable risk to OPL staff, visitors, or property.

OPL reserves the right to deny, cancel, or terminate reservations that interfere with library operations or violate policy. Library staff may enter any meeting and terminate use if this policy is not followed.

IMPLEMENTATION:

All OPL personnel are responsible for consistently enforcing this policy. Exceptions may be granted only by OPL administration, which includes branch managers or designated library leadership.

Approved by the Board of Trustees
of the Omaha Public Library, August 20, 2025