

WESTBROOK PUBLIC LIBRARY MEETING ROOM AND STORAGE POLICY

The Westbrook Public Library is a department of the Town of Westbrook and is a taxpayer-supported institution. As a result, the Library Board is responsible for establishing policies and rules of conduct to protect the rights and safety of all library patrons, volunteers, and staff, and for preserving and protecting the Library's materials, equipment, facilities, and grounds.

This Meeting Room Policy defines permissible and non-permissible use of library meeting, program, and storage facilities and equipment at the Westbrook Public Library and the scope of the staff's responsibility. The Library makes its meeting rooms available to the public under the terms of this policy to further its mission of providing intellectual, cultural, and social resources to the public. The Library meeting rooms are open to organizations engaged in intellectual, cultural, social, or charitable activities. In addition, due to limited meeting space in the Town of Westbrook, the Library makes its meeting rooms available to area businesses for non-commercial purposes, such as employee meetings or retreats. Neither the Library itself nor the meeting rooms are designed to accommodate commercial or pecuniary activities of any kind, including fundraising. This policy does not apply to the use of Meeting Facilities for Library activities or for activities or events sponsored by the Library.

"Meeting Rooms" shall include the Community Room, the Conference Room, the Study Room, the Mary Nyman Story Hour Room, and any temporarily designated meeting areas.

Meeting Rooms shall be available to Westbrook residents, Westbrook Library cardholders, and local organizations subject to the following conditions:

- The scheduled use shall not conflict with Library sponsored programs or the Library's ability to deliver its existing services.
- Meeting Room use is limited to regular library hours. Special permission may be granted for other town sponsored programming (such as Parks and Recreation camps) that are overseen by town employees other than Library staff.
- Availability of Meeting Rooms shall be on a first-come, first-served basis. To allow for the most access for the most organizations, the number of meetings allowed per Sponsoring Organization or Individual may be limited to one per month. The following priorities shall prevail in case of conflict: 1. A group affiliated with or sponsored by the Library, 2. Official Westbrook town business, 3. a Westbrook-based non-profit group, and 4. other groups.
- Meeting Room Applications, found at westbrooklibrary.org, may be accepted for up to six (6) months in advance of the requested date(s) of use.
- There is no charge for the use of the facility, but donations are welcome.
- Decisions regarding the use of Meeting Rooms shall be made at the discretion of the Library Director and/or Library Board of Trustees. The Library reserves the right to change a Meeting Room as needed.
- Meeting Rooms or other enclosed areas within any properties of the Library may not be used to solicit business from or conduct business with members of the public, such as, for example, buying or selling, marketing commercial products or services to the public, gambling, or the exchange of money. Meeting Rooms are not available for private parties, commercial purposes, political fundraising events, or for political campaign activities. However, use of the Meeting Rooms for meetings of an internal business nature, such as staff meetings, employee training sessions, or other meetings of employees is permitted. In addition, political organizations may use the room for organizational or regular business meetings.

- Artistic, dramatic, and literary performances or art displays, which are free and open to the public, are permitted. Such performances are consistent with the Library’s mission as expressed earlier in this policy.
- All advertising and press releases must make clear that the sponsoring group should be contacted directly for information regarding the program and a contact name and telephone number must be provided. The following statement must prominently appear on any sign, advertisement, invitation, or other notice or announcement of an event to be held in Westbrook Public Library Meeting Rooms: *“This event is neither sponsored nor endorsed by the Westbrook Public Library.”* Failure to include such statement may result in forfeiture of the right to use the applicable Meeting Rooms. All publicity for non-library sponsored events is the responsibility of the Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual using the room.
- All meetings should be free and open to the public. No dues or donations may be charged or solicited by Meeting Room users, Sponsoring Organizations, or Sponsoring Individuals for any program or exhibit.
- Apart from Town of Westbrook departments, a Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual may not require sign-in of attendees nor should any follow-up contact be made at the sponsor’s initiation. Voluntary sign-in and voluntary follow-up contacts by attendees is allowed.
- The Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual is responsible for proper supervision of their event/meeting and setting up tables, chairs, etc. The Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual will restore the premises to a clean and neat condition following the assembly (at least 10 minutes prior to the closing of the library).
- The Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual will reimburse the Library for any costs resulting from the use of a Meeting Room. The Library is not responsible for loss or damage to materials or equipment brought in by a Sponsoring Organization, Sponsoring Individual, or their attendees.
- Smoking, vaping, alcoholic beverages, and/or drugs are not allowed anywhere in the Library. Use of candles and flammable liquids is not allowed. Policy enforcement is the responsibility of the Sponsoring Organization or Individual.
- Notice of cancellation of Meeting Room use should be given to the Library as soon as possible. It is the responsibility of Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual using the Meeting Room to notify the public of a change of date, time, or cancellation.
- In the case of inclement weather, the Library will post closing information on the Library’s website (westbrooklibrary.org). The Sponsoring Organization or Individual is responsible for checking this information. The Library will not notify the group of any such closings.
- The Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual is responsible for the public health and safety of meeting attendees and ensuring compliance with all applicable laws and policies, including but not limited to all Library policies, current health and safety protocols, fire codes, performance rights to show films or other media, and any addendums to this policy. The bearing of firearms on Library premises by any person other than a law enforcement officer is prohibited.
- Any Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual that uses the Meeting Rooms agrees to indemnify and to hold harmless the Westbrook Public Library, its Board of Trustees, the Town of Westbrook, and its employees from any and all claims, actions, and causes of action of any kind, which may arise out of use of the Meeting Rooms by the Sponsoring Organization, Sponsoring Individual, or their attendees.

Specifications for individual Meeting Rooms in addition to the above, includes but is not limited to:

Community Room:

Accommodates: 20-100 people

(Note: for comfortably seated adults, we recommend no more than 80)

Meeting Time Limit: based on availability

Provisions: kitchen, tables, chairs, and podium. AV equipment available with prior arrangement. AV training appointments can be made as needed.

Light refreshments, but no alcohol, may be served. The Community Room kitchen area may be used. The Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual will restore the kitchen area to a clean and neat condition following the assembly.

Conference Room:

Accommodates: 2-15 people

(Note: for comfortably seated adults, we recommend no more than 10)

Meeting Time Limit: based on availability

Provisions: tables, arranged conference style, and chairs. AV equipment available with prior arrangement. AV training appointments can be made as needed.

Storage Room and Community Room Storage Closets:

Use of the undeveloped storage space on the ground floor of the Library as well as the Community Room Storage Closets shall always be at the discretion of the Library Director and/or the Library Board of Trustees, who will use the following priorities in their determination: 1. A group affiliated with or sponsored by the Library, 2. Official Westbrook town business, and 3. a Westbrook-based non-profit group. Sponsoring Organizations using the Storage Room may request access to the interior Storage Room door at the front desk.

Study Room:

Accommodates: 1-2 people

Meeting Time Limit: Two (2) hours per day per Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual.

Provisions: table and chairs

Mary Nyman Story Hour Room:

Accommodates: 10-15 children with adult supervision

Provisions: table and chairs

Use of the Mary Nyman Story Hour Room is designated for library programming and activities. Special permission may be granted by the Children's Librarian or Library Director and must be for Children's activities and in compliance with the Westbrook Public Library Child Safety Policy.

Revised and adopted June 2021

Addendum A:
COVID-19 Addendum

Meeting Rooms shall be subject to the following conditions under the COVID-19 Addendum:

- Masks and social distancing are requested for all Meeting Room use. Masks are required for individuals who are not fully vaccinated in accordance with State of Connecticut Executive Order No. 12.
- Adherence to the COVID-19 Addendum is the responsibility of the Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual.
- Additional cleaning protocols are the responsibility of the Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual.

Community Room:

Accommodates: 20 people maximum with physical distancing

Provisions: tables, chairs, and podium. AV equipment available with prior arrangement. AV training appointments can be made as needed.

No refreshments may be served while the COVID-19 Addendum is in effect.

Conference Room:

Accommodates: 2 people maximum with physical distancing

Provisions: tables, arranged conference style, and chairs. AV equipment available with prior arrangement. AV training appointments can be made as needed.

Storage Room and Community Room Storage Closets:

No changes pursuant to this addendum.

Study Room:

Accommodates: 1 person maximum with physical distancing

Meeting Time Limit: Two (2) per day per Sponsoring Organization or Sponsoring Individual.

Provisions: table and chairs

Mary Nyman Story Hour Room:

Use of the Mary Nyman Story Hour Room is designated for library programming and activities while the COVID-19 Addendum is in effect.

The COVID-19 Addendum is in effect until further notice.