

# Shutesbury Public Library

## Meeting Room Policy and Procedures

Adopted by the Shutesbury Board of Library Trustees, February 9, 2026

Amended April 27, 2026

### I. Mission

The mission of the Shutesbury Public Library is to provide library users of all ages with materials and programs to meet their educational, entertainment, and informational needs in an environment that fosters community.

Meeting rooms are important extensions of this mission, providing space for learning, collaboration, and civic engagement.

### II. Purpose and Priorities

1. Meeting rooms in the Shutesbury Public Library (hereafter “the Library”) are primarily intended for Library programs, services, and events.
2. When not in use by the Library, meeting rooms may be reserved for educational, cultural, civic, or community purposes by town committees, boards, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and individuals.
3. Programs or meetings that align with the Library’s mission and are free and open to the public will receive priority.
4. The Library Board of Trustees (hereafter “the Trustees”) affirm their commitment to the American Library Association’s *Library Bill of Rights*, which states that libraries “should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.”

### III. Non-Endorsement and Public Notice

Permission to use Library meeting rooms does not constitute endorsement of programs, beliefs, or policies of any individual or group using the facilities by the Library staff, the Trustees, or the Town of Shutesbury.

All promotional materials for non-Library events must clearly state:

“This program is not sponsored or endorsed by the Shutesbury Public Library.”

Although reservations for Library meeting rooms may appear on the Library’s public events calendar, publicity for events is the sole responsibility of the sponsoring individual or organization.

### IV. Authority and Administration

The Trustees establish the policies, rules, and regulations for use of Library meeting rooms. The Trustees retain final decision-making authority regarding use of the Library’s meeting rooms.

The Library Director, under the authority of the Trustees, is responsible for interpreting, applying, and enforcing this policy and may delegate related tasks to Library staff.

The Library Director or designated staff may decline a reservation request if:

- There are parking, staffing, or scheduling limitations;
- The proposed use conflicts with Library operations or policies; or
- The applicant or organization has previously failed to comply with Library policies or damaged Library property.

Questions or appeals regarding decisions about meeting room use must be submitted in writing to the Trustees. The Trustees will consider questions or disputes at their next regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Trustee decisions are final.

## V. Meeting Room Descriptions

- **Community Meeting Room**

The meeting room capacity is approximately 50 people (theater-style seating). It is equipped with a kitchenette, tables, chairs, and a wall-mounted monitor with audiovisual (AV) connectivity. This room may be available for use outside regular Library hours at the discretion of the Library Director.

- **Small Study Room**

The small study room capacity is approximately 4 people. It is located within the main Library and is available only during Library open hours.

## VI. Eligibility and Use

1. The meeting room and small study are public spaces available for use when not reserved or scheduled for library programs. A schedule of reservations will be posted near the circulation desk.
2. Meeting rooms are available to individuals, community groups, local businesses, and organizations engaged in civic, educational, cultural, or community activities that align with the Library's mission.
3. Programs and meetings that are free and open to the public will receive scheduling priority.
4. All events in the **Community Meeting Room** must take place between 9:00 AM and 9:00 PM.
5. The Library recognizes that some local businesses or instructors may wish to use meeting rooms for short-term educational or skill-building workshops offered for a fee. Such use may be permitted when:
  - The activity contributes to community learning or cultural enrichment;
  - The use is occasional or time-limited rather than recurring on an ongoing basis.
6. Regularly scheduled commercial classes (e.g., weekly or continuous sessions) are not permitted.
7. The Library reserves the right to limit the frequency or duration of business or fee-based uses to ensure equitable access for all community members and to maintain the Library's primary purpose as a public facility.
8. Any business use is subject to a room use fee as determined by the Trustees.

## 9. **Private Social Functions:**

The Library recognizes that library users may wish to use the Community Meeting Room for small private social gatherings such as birthday parties, baby showers, or family celebrations.

Such use may be permitted under the following conditions:

- Attendance is limited to a maximum of 50 people.
  - The event takes place only when the Library is closed to the public.
  - Overflow parking arrangements are approved in advance by the Library Director.
  - A room rental fee and refundable cleaning deposit, as set by the Trustees, are paid in advance.
  - The renter is responsible for setup, cleanup, and removal of all trash and recyclables. The renter must provide their own trash bags.
  - Alcoholic beverages are not permitted.
  - Use must not interfere with Library programs, operations, or maintenance.
- Permission for private social functions is at the discretion of the Trustees and Director and may be limited to ensure equitable access for community and Library purposes.

10. The Library's meeting rooms may not be used for any activity that violates local, state, or federal law.

## 11. **Frequency of Use:**

No individual or group may reserve a meeting room more than twice per month; exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Library Director.

Town boards and committees may use Library meeting rooms more frequently if the schedule allows and such use does not conflict with Library programs or operations.

## **VII. Reservations and Scheduling**

### 1. **Community Meeting Room Reservations**

- Applications to use the Community Meeting Room must be submitted at least ten (10) business days in advance of the event; fourteen (14) days is preferred.
- Reservations may be made up to three (3) months in advance.
- Applications must be submitted via the online form on the Library's website. Assistance is available for those without computer access.
- Applications will be reviewed and responded to within five (5) business days.

### 2. **Applicant Requirements**

- The applicant must be at least 18 years of age and must attend the meeting or event.
- Applicants aged 14–17 may reserve a room only with the sponsorship of an adult who must be present.
- First-time users must complete a room walkthrough with the Library Director or designee before their event.

### 3. **Information Required**

Applications must include:

- Contact information for the responsible party;
- Group or organization name (if applicable);
- Event title, purpose, and estimated attendance;
- Event start time, end time, and duration;

- Requested room setup and AV needs;
  - Whether food or beverages will be served (no alcohol permitted);
  - Name of the person responsible for setup and cleanup.
4. **Recurring Use**
- Town boards and committees may reserve recurring meetings up to three months at a time and must renew requests thereafter.
5. **Cancellations**
- Cancellations should be made as early as possible, ideally at least 48 hours in advance.
  - Failure to notify the Library of a cancellation or repeated no-shows may result in loss of future meeting room use privileges.
6. **Closures and Emergencies**
- If the Library closes due to inclement weather, power loss, or an emergency, all events are canceled.
  - Notice of closure will be posted on the Library's website and social media.
  - It is the responsibility of the applicant to confirm the Library's closure status and reschedule if desired.
7. **Small Study Room**

If the Small Study Room is not in use, Library users can check in with Library staff and use it, but they have to leave the room five minutes before a reservation.

- **Small Study Room Reservations**
  - The Small Study Room may be reserved for up to two (2) hours.
  - Reservations may be made up to three (3) months in advance.
  - Library users ages 14 and up may reserve the Small Study Room.
  - Reservations can be made by:
    - Calling the library at 259-1213
    - Emailing [shutesburylibrary@shutesbury.org](mailto:shutesburylibrary@shutesbury.org)
    - Stopping by the library in person
  - Reservations will be held for 20 minutes. If the user does not arrive within 20 minutes, the reservation will be canceled.
  - Failure to cancel reservations more than two times within a six-month period may result in the loss of study room privileges.

## **VIII. Rules and Regulations**

1. **Room Setup and Restoration**
- Users are responsible for setting up and returning furniture and equipment to its original arrangement.

- Tables and chairs must remain in the meeting rooms and not be moved into other areas.
  - Rooms must be left clean and orderly.
  - Users must remove all trash and recyclables from the premises.
- 2. Breakage or Damage**
- Any breakage or damage must be reported to the Library Director or Library Staff immediately.
- 3. Custodial Services**
- The Library does not provide custodial services for non-Library events.
  - Floors must be swept as necessary, and any spills cleaned before leaving.
  - Failure to leave the space in satisfactory condition may result in cleaning fees or suspension of meeting room privileges.
  - For private social functions, the cleaning deposit will be refunded upon satisfactory inspection of the room by the Library Director or their designee.
- 4. Audiovisual Equipment**
- Basic AV equipment is available upon request at the time of reservation.
  - Library staff may provide brief instruction regarding use, but are not responsible for troubleshooting personal devices.
  - Users are responsible for ensuring someone on-site can operate needed equipment.
- 5. Food and Beverages**
- Light refreshments may be served.
  - No cooking or open flames allowed.
  - Users must provide their own paper goods and utensils.
  - Alcoholic beverages are prohibited inside the Library and on the Library grounds.
- 6. Parking**
- Library parking is limited to designated spaces.
  - Overflow parking at the Highway Department across Leverett Road must be arranged in advance through the Library Director or designee.
- 7. Behavior and Conduct**
- All attendees must comply with the Library Conduct Policy.
  - Excessive noise, obstruction of access, or disruptive behavior is prohibited.
  - Meeting organizers are responsible for attendee conduct.
- 8. Smoking and Vaping**
- Smoking, vaping, or otherwise using tobacco, marijuana, or other drugs are prohibited.
  - Open flames are strictly prohibited inside the Library and on Library grounds.
- 9. Liability and Hold Harmless Agreement**
- Individuals and groups using Library meeting rooms assume full responsibility for any injury or damage to the facility, its furnishings and equipment arising from their use.
  - The Library, its employees, the Trustees, and the Town of Shutesbury are not liable for personal injury or property damage.
  - Applicants must agree to release, indemnify, and hold harmless the Town of Shutesbury, the Library Trustees, and Library staff from all claims arising from use of the facilities.
  - Acceptance of these terms is required as part of the reservation application.

## 10. Insurance Requirement

- Individuals or organizations renting the Library's meeting room for private events (such as meetings, classes, parties, or receptions) are responsible for any damage to the building, its grounds, and its contents and for the conduct of their guests.
- **The Library requires renters hosting private events to provide proof of general liability insurance that will cover the Indemnification and Release provisions of the rental agreement for the date of the event.**
- **A certificate of insurance must:**
  - i. Provide coverage in an amount of at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence
  - ii. The policy must include coverage for bodily injury and property damage, including damage to the Library building, grounds, furnishings, and equipment arising from the use of the facility during the event.
  - iii. **Name the Town of Shutesbury and the Shutesbury Public Library as Additional Insured**
  - iv. Be submitted seven days prior to the event date
- Homeowner's insurance policies do not always provide adequate coverage for events held in rented facilities. Renters are encouraged to check with their insurance provider or obtain a one-day special event policy if needed.
- Failure to provide required documentation may result in cancellation of the reservation.

## 11. Violations and Loss of Privileges

- Failure to comply with any aspect of this policy may result in immediate revocation of meeting room privileges and possible assessment of cleaning or repair costs.
- Illegal activity in Library spaces is strictly prohibited and will result in permanent loss of use privileges.

## IX. Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically by the Library Director and the Trustees to ensure it continues to meet the needs of the community and the mission of the Library.

## Appendix A: Room Use Fee Schedule

The following fee structure provides a framework for equitable and sustainable use of the Shutesbury Public Library's meeting spaces. Specific fee amounts shall be set and published by the Trustees and may be revised periodically. Where payment is required, it must be by check made out to the Town of Shutesbury, with Library Meeting Room in the memo line.

<b>User Type</b>	<b>Eligible Use</b>	<b>Fee</b>	<b>Deposit</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<b>Town-Sponsored</b>	Town committee or board meetings or programs	No fee	None	May meet during or after Library hours as approved.
<b>Nonprofit / Community Group</b>	Free, open to the public meetings or events	No fee	None	Donations to the Library are welcome but not required.
<b>Local Business or Instructor — Occasional Use</b>	Short-term, educational, or skill-building workshops for a fee	\$25/hour for residents, \$35/hour for nonresidents. All users must pay for ½ hour pre and ½ hour post event for set-up and clean-up. This fee may be waived at the discretion of the Library Director.	\$100	Subject to Library Director or designee approval; limited to occasional, time-limited use. Renter must remove trash and recyclables.
<b>Private Social Function</b>	Private gatherings such as small parties, showers, and receptions	\$35/hr with a minimum of three hours, including ½ hour each of setup and cleanup	\$100	Attendance limited to 50; allowed only when the Library is closed; renter must remove trash and recyclables.
<b>Other Use</b>	Uses not fitting the above categories	Determined case-by-case	As required	Subject to review by the Library Director and/or the Trustees.