



FACILITY USE POLICY

This policy is for application to those libraries within the City of Buffalo (Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries) and Buffalo & Erie County Public Library System functions.

I. STATEMENT OF POLICY

Use of facility spaces in the Buffalo Branch Libraries and the downtown Central Library are intended for activities conducted or sponsored by the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library (B&ECPL), its partners, community organizations and businesses.

All meetings must be open to the public.

II. USE OF FACILITY SPACES

A. Availability

Facility spaces include: auditoriums, meeting rooms, conference spaces and other areas which may be available in the library.

Facility spaces can be reserved for use during regular open library hours. Additional fees are imposed if the library is closed.

Facility spaces are available for use by both Non-Profit and For-Profit organizations and businesses.

In fairness to the numerous community organizations and groups that request meeting space, reservations may be limited in frequency.

B. Priority of Use

Library facility spaces are provided based on the following priority of use:

1. For programs and activities conducted or sponsored by the B&ECPL.
2. For programs and activities conducted or sponsored by in-residence partners of the B&ECPL.

3. For Non-Profit organizations or For-Profit businesses engaged in educational, cultural, intellectual, social, community or charitable activities of interest and/or benefit to the community.
4. For-Profit businesses and groups in need of meeting and/or training space.

C. Fee Structure

The facility use fee structure is based on the following factors:

1. B&ECPL in-residence partners, partnering groups or partnering organizations or partnering businesses
2. Non-Profit organizations - not charging an admission fee.
3. Non-Profit organizations charging an admission fee or For-Profit businesses not charging a fee.
4. For-Profit businesses charging an admission fee.

D. Requirements for Use of Library Facility Spaces

All organizations / groups / businesses using the library must:

1. Read and agree to adhere to the B&ECPL's *Rules of Conduct Policy*.
2. Complete and submit an *Application for Facility Use* with deposit.
3. Pay the rental and/or security deposit fee, if applicable.
4. Secure any necessary performance licenses and indemnify the B&ECPL and Erie County for any failure on the renting organization's part to do so. Accept liability for personal injury, damage to library facilities, and/or loss of library property arising from use of the facility space by the renting organization. Hold harmless the B&ECPL for any and all liability which arises out of the use of the facility space. The B&ECPL assumes no responsibility whatsoever for personal injury to or loss of property by any member, affiliated person, guest, invitee, or licensee of the using organization or group, its members, affiliated persons, guests, invitees, or licensees.

5. Make all meetings, programs, etc. open to the public.
6. Refrain from cooking or serving food or beverages of any kind. No alcohol is permitted. Burning or lighting of any materials, including incense and candles is prohibited. Any variation must be approved in advance by the B&ECPL Director or designee. The decision to approve a requested variation is within the sole discretion of the B&ECPL Director or designee.
7. Conduct meetings in such a way as not to disturb library operations. Adult supervision is required for any group of minors. The organization's contact person must be 18 years of age or over and be in attendance when the facility space is in use. That person shall be responsible for managing orderly behavior of all attendees, be responsible for payment of bills and for protection of B&ECPL property in connection with the meeting.
8. Notify the library designee in the event the meeting is cancelled. Failure to notify the library in a timely manner may result in the loss of facility use privileges.
9. Notify the library designee beforehand of any plans to record, broadcast or televise the meeting or any portion of the meeting.
10. Adhere to maximum occupancy of facility space and inform attendees of the location of fire exits and fire exit paths.
11. Refrain from transferring use of facility space to another organization or group.
12. Assume responsibility for participant accommodations (e.g. assistive listening devices, interpreters etc.) and specific articles of compliance as required by the Americans with Disabilities Act. The B&ECPL does not discriminate on the basis of disability in any of its programs and services. The B&ECPL may be able to assist with some accommodations if requests are made at least five (5) working days in advance of use.
13. Refrain from posting flyers, notices, posters or other materials in the library. The library will post your materials if they fall within the B&ECPL's *Distribution Policy*, contact the Development & Communications Department with inquires at 716-858-7182.

E. B&ECPL Reservation of Rights

1. Facility use by the B&ECPL takes precedence over use by outside groups. The B&ECPL reserves the right to pre-empt the use of facility space for B&ECPL purposes upon 60 days notice to the organization requesting that space. Any deposit will be returned to the displaced organization.
2. The B&ECPL may charge fees for the use of its facility spaces and for cleaning, equipment and/or security.
3. B&ECPL personnel must have free access to facility spaces at all times. The B&ECPL retains the right to monitor all meetings conducted on the premises to ensure compliance with its regulations. Meetings that are observed to be in violation of B&ECPL policies will be terminated immediately and future use may be denied.
4. The B&ECPL reserves the right to subdivide facility spaces for use by another organization, if necessary.
5. The B&ECPL reserves the right to close due to adverse weather conditions or emergencies and will attempt to notify the organization's contact person.
6. The B&ECPL shall not assume responsibility for the security of items brought into meetings. The B&ECPL will not provide storage of materials or equipment for an organization or group.
7. B&ECPL personnel are not in a position to assist organizations with their event.
8. The B&ECPL will include all events in its online public Events Calendar (www.BuffaloLib.org) and any other event listing currently being utilized. The B&ECPL will use the applicant's designated contact for all inquiries. Except as a designation of location, the name of the B&ECPL may not be used in any publicity relating to use of facility spaces unless preapproved by the library designee.
9. Permission to use a facility space does not constitute an endorsement by the B&ECPL of a program or point of view expressed.

F. Organization or Function Specific Guidelines

1. Partnering organizations and Non-Profit organizations – not charging an admission fee:
 - a. Meeting must be free and open to the public.
 - b. No admission fee, required donation or goodwill offering shall be charged to people attending a meeting.
 - c. No products, services, or memberships may be advertised, solicited, or sold.
2. Partnering organizations, Non-Profit organizations charging an admission fee, and For-Profit businesses:
 - a. Meeting must be open to the public.
 - b. Facility use fees are based upon a formula intended to return appropriate public benefit to the community.
 - c. No products, services, or memberships may be advertised, solicited, or sold.
3. Political functions:

The intent of the B&ECPL Facility Use Policy is to allow use of its facilities for a forum of public debate on public policy, while at the same time prohibiting use of its facilities for partisan political purposes.

B&ECPL facility spaces are “limited public fora.” The B&ECPL prohibits the use of its facility spaces for actions or events organized by a political campaign committee or other group that exists for the purpose of promoting, endorsing or opposing a candidate or a ballot or election issue.

Meetings at which candidates will discuss current ballot or election issues are permitted provided they are: (1) hosted by a non-partisan, non-profit organization (i.e. League of Women Voters), which is approved as such by the B&ECPL and satisfies all requirements of the B&ECPL, and (2) all candidates for the same office (or, in the case of a referendum, representatives of opposing views) have been invited to participate.

Meetings held by elected officials to gather input or communicate with their constituents are permitted, except that meetings, actions or events held by elected officials (or candidates for elected positions) are not permitted during the 30 days prior to any general, primary or special election or any referendum.

III. LIBRARY CONTACT INFORMATION

All groups seeking use of the Central Library or a Buffalo Branch Library should see the contact information below:

Central Downtown Library

1 Lafayette Square

Buffalo, NY 14203

Development & Communications Dept. at 716-858-7182

At the downtown Central Library, fees may be charged for use of:

- Mason O. Damon Auditorium, 324 permanent seating, and an elevated stage
- Central Meeting Room, 100 seat capacity
- West Room, 50 seat capacity
- Other rooms and library spaces may be available for use and fees may be charged
- ADA compliant

Buffalo Branch Libraries:

At the Buffalo Branch Libraries, fees may be charged for use of:

Crane Branch

633 Elmwood Ave.

Buffalo, NY 14222

716-883-6651

- Second floor meeting room with elevated stage has stair access only

Dudley Branch

2010 So. Park Ave.

Buffalo, NY 14220

716-823-1854

- Main level meeting room - ADA compliant

East Clinton Branch

1929 Clinton St.
Buffalo, NY 14206
716-823-5626

- Main level meeting room - ADA compliant

East Delavan Branch

1187 E. Delavan Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14215
716-896-4433

- Lower level meeting room, stair access only

Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch

1324 Jefferson Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14208
716-883-4418

- Main level Auditorium and smaller meeting room -ADA compliant

Niagara Branch

280 Porter Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14201
716-882-1537

- Lower level meeting room and meeting spaces

North Park Branch

975 Hertel Ave.
Buffalo, NY 14216
716-875-3748

- No separate facility rooms available

Riverside Branch

820 Tonawanda St.
Buffalo, NY 14207
716-875-0562

- Main level meeting room - ADA compliant

Original "Meeting Room Policy" adopted 4/14/1993.

Amended 2/19/1998.

Amended 11/20/2008, now known as "Facility Use Policy".

Amended 5/16/2013 to take effect 7/1/2013; supersedes "Mason O. Damon
(Central Library) Auditorium Policy" last amended
11/20/2008.

Amended 10/15/2015 per Resolution 2015-37 to take effect 11/15/2015.