Charlton Public Library
Meeting & Study Room Policy

The Charlton Public Library makes community meeting and study spaces available for public use on an equitable basis within the requirements described in this policy. These rooms are provided to further the mission of the Charlton Public Library to support an informed citizenry by serving their cultural, educational, and informational needs. All activity in the meeting and study rooms shall comply with established Library policies. The Director and/or Trustees have the authority to deny the use of Library meeting spaces to any individuals or groups that fail to comply with the intent and provisions of this policy.

The Library recognizes and respects the rights of free speech and assembly and will implement this policy in a consistent and viewpoint-neutral manner. Permission to use the Library's meeting and study rooms does not constitute an endorsement by the Library of the user's philosophy, viewpoint, or objectives.

Availability & Eligibility Requirements - Meeting Rooms

The following meeting rooms are available for use when not in use by the Library:

Dexter Hall - 150 maximum occupancy (50 person maximum outside regular Library hours)
Community Meeting Room - 45 maximum occupancy
Local History Room - 8 maximum occupancy (limited availability)

Dexter Hall and the Community Meeting Room are available Monday through Friday between 9:30 am and 10:00 pm and Saturday (September-June) between 9:30 am and 2:00 pm. Rooms are not available on Sundays, holidays or when the Library is closed for unforeseen reasons. The Local History Room has limited availability. The Children's Story Time Room is not available for non-Library use.

Reservations will be considered in order of request with priority given as follows:

1. Charlton Public Library programs and events
2. Groups affiliated with Charlton Public Library (i.e. Friends of the Library)
3. Town of Charlton Departments, Boards, or Commissions
4. Charlton-based non-profit organizations or not-for-profit community groups with a substantial connection to Charlton. (Organizations may be asked to provide proof of non-profit status.)

All programs and events must be free and open to the public.

Rooms may not be used for private events (birthday parties, graduations, showers, socials, etc.); meetings involving the sale or promotion of products or services; fundraising purposes, except for the benefit of Charlton Public Library. Admission fees may not be charged or solicited.

Reservations must be made 2 business days prior to the requested date of use. Reservations may be requested up to 90 days in advance, and no more than 2 times per month by the same group. Scheduling conflicts will be resolved at the discretion of the Director.

Cancellations are requested at least 24 hours in advance of the scheduled meeting/event when possible.

Reservations must be made online at charltonlibrary.org

Refusal of Reservation Requests & Appeal Process

To the extent permitted by law, the Library may deny an application for meeting room use if:

1. The request for meeting room use contains a material falsehood or misrepresentation, including the official name of the group, contact information, or attempts to bypass request limitations through inaccurate information.
2. The person/group requesting use of a meeting room has damaged Library property on prior occasions and not paid for the damage.
3. The person/group requesting use of a meeting room has violated the terms of a prior meeting room reservation.
4. The proposed use is prohibited by law.

Any group denied a reservation to use a meeting room may appeal the decision to the Library Board of Trustees within 10 days, stating in writing the reasons why the denial of the use is erroneous. A decision will be rendered within 30 days following receipt of the written request.

Rules/Stipulations for Use of Meeting Rooms

1. The use must be consistent with, and not disrupt, normal library operations or violate the Library Behavior/Use Policy.
2. Attendees must comply with any/all requests by Library staff, Charlton Police and Fire Departments.
3. Children must be supervised at all times and are not allowed on the Dexter Hall stage.
4. The individual making the reservation must be at least 18 years of age, must be present for the meeting/event, and must assume full responsibility for the meeting/event.
5. During regular Library operating hours the individual who made the reservation must check in at the Circulation Desk upon arrival AND departure.
6. For meetings/events scheduled outside of regular Library operating hours: attendees must enter via the back, lower-level entrance and take the elevator to the appropriate floor; the back, lower-level entrance will be locked 15 minutes after the scheduled start time of the event; attendees who leave the building may not be able to re-enter the building. The front doors of the Library will remain locked.
7. Cancellations (with or without notification) more than two times in a six-month period may result in denial of future applications.
8. The Library reserves the right to cancel a reservation in order to use a room for Library purposes, or due to inclement weather or other emergency situation.
9. The Library reserves the right to relocate a user to a room most suited for its size and function.
10. Light refreshments (such as cheese/crackers, fruit, cookies, coffee/tea) are permitted in Dexter Hall and the Community Meeting Room only. No food/drink is allowed in the Local History Room. Foods with strong odors (likely to permeate the building) are not permitted.
11. Rooms must be returned to the condition they were in prior to the meeting/event.
12. Posting or mounting materials on walls, doors, furniture or fixtures is prohibited.
13. Alcoholic beverages, open flames, or smoking are not allowed in or on the premises by outside groups.
14. The Library may impose reasonable and actual administrative costs on a user including, but not limited to, necessary security, clean-up, and traffic management costs.
15. The Library may hold the user exclusively responsible (financially and otherwise) for any damage to Library property resulting from an approved use.
16. Groups may arrange for photographers and/or news media coverage during their event; however, it must not interfere with normal operation of the Library.
17. A/V equipment and/or room setup requirements must be requested in the online reservation form at the time of the room request. When A/V equipment is requested, groups MUST make an appointment for

training at least 7 days prior to the meeting/event date. Staff is not available to assist with troubleshooting during the meeting/event. Groups must supply their own laptops, extension cords, and office supplies.

18. Promotional materials created by outside groups must state “This event is not sponsored or endorsed by Charlton Public Library”. The Library does not prepare or issue press releases, promotional materials or otherwise promote non-Library meetings/events. Only Library-sponsored or co-sponsored meetings/events are published on the Library online event calendar.

Availability & Eligibility Requirements - Study Rooms

The Library offers two small quiet study rooms with a maximum capacity of 2 occupants. Rooms are available during normal Library operating hours and must be vacated 15 minutes prior to closure.

The individual reserving and occupying the room must be at least 14 years of age and must check in at the Circulation desk upon arrival AND departure.

Reservations will be held for no more than 15 minutes before being made available to other patrons.

Reservations must be made online at charltonlibrary.org

All other rules/stipulations listed above for Library Meeting Rooms are in force for study rooms.

Disclaimers

All room reservation approvals are temporary, revocable, and conditional on details in this policy. The Charlton Public Library Board of Trustees and/or Library Director reserve the authority to revoke reservation approvals without penalty or liability in its sole discretion for any lawful reason, and to impose time, place, and manner conditions upon the meeting room use. The Library Board of Trustees has final authority concerning availability of meeting room use to the public at large.

The Charlton Public Library and Town of Charlton assume no responsibility for the safety of any private property brought onto the premises, nor for injury to or death of any persons attending an approved use.

Approved by the Library Board of Trustees on August 17, 2023.
Reviewed and approved by the Library Board of Trustees on October 17, 2024
Reviewed and amended by the Library Board of Trustees on October 22, 2026