Sunderland Public Library — Sunderland, MA

Use of the Community Room

The Trustees of the Sunderland Public Library have formulated these policies on Community Room use to ensure that Sunderland and other area residents have the greatest possible access to educational and cultural opportunities. The library encourages events that are open to the public and free of charge.

The Library Community Room is made available as a public service, and by accepting reservations for this room, the Sunderland Public Library in no way endorses the program or philosophy of the group or individuals using the facilities. The Trustees affirm the American Library Association's *Bill of Rights*, which states that facilities should be made available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliation of individuals or groups requesting their use.

The Sunderland Public Library makes available its Community Room as part of its goal of serving the community as a cultural center. Specifically, the library's Community Room was designed:

- first, to provide space for library programs;
- second, to provide space for Sunderland government and civic groups to meet; and
- third, to provide space for groups from the larger community to offer programs and hold meetings in Sunderland. (This third use for the Community Room is limited to programs or meetings held during regularly scheduled library hours of operation or when library staffing permits.)

Library programs have priority in scheduling events for the Community Room. Other interested groups or individuals may schedule use of the room on a first-come, first-served basis. Under Sunderland Public Library policies, the Community Room may be available at no charge to the user or for a small charge. Proceeds from charges collected for use of the Community Room will be used to offset building maintenance costs. Users of the Community Room may also make donations for this purpose.

Regulations and Procedures

I. Request Procedure.

A. The Library Director will make all room reservations. Reservations will be confirmed after the Director receives a completed and signed registration form (either hardcopy or the online form). The signer of the registration form will be responsible for any damages to the facilities. The signer will also be responsible for clean-up charges assessed in cases of unusual wear and tear on the room.

B. Each applicant will receive a copy of this policy.

C. Application for room reservation may be made in person, online, or by mail. An application will be considered complete when the reservation form and deposit is submitted to the Sunderland Public Library.

D. Space may be reserved up to 6 months in advance for Sunderland community organizations, or three months in advance for other organizations, as space is available. Applicants for use of the Community Room may submit applications for no more than 26 reservations per 12 month period. Individual applications are

limited to 13 events/reservations at any one time. Subsequent applications may be submitted after the expiration of the original application.

E. Library staff will enter approved room reservations on the calendar upon completion of a registration form. Full payment of any applicable fee is due before the start of the reservation.

F. Cancellation of a reservation must be reported 5 library working days in advance. Refunds will be made only with this advance notice. Failure to cancel or to appear for a reservation may result in forfeiture of room use privileges. The library reserves the right to refuse service to patrons with an outstanding bill of $75 or more.

G. Requests to waive room rental fees should be addressed to the Board of Trustees for consideration.

H. The Library Director has authority to interpret the *Use of the Community Room* policy statement.

I. Library audio-visual equipment may be reserved on a first come, first served basis. Reservations must be made at least 24 hours in advance. Current equipment includes a TV, projector, a mounted projection screen, DVD player and an OWL Hybrid Meeting Device. Only library staff are permitted to handle the OWL, and its use is available to the public based on staff availability.

J. Groups and individuals wishing to reserve the Community Room may be required at the discretion of the Library Director, Library Trustees, or Town Officials to hire additional security for scheduled events. Any requirements will be stipulated at the time of confirmation of reservation. Proof of satisfactory provision of required security will be necessary before users of library facilities will be allowed to use the facilities. Failure to provide required security will be regarded as a late cancellation and will lead to all applicable charges for room reservation.

II. Conditions for Use.

A. When reserving a room, specify the number of chairs and other equipment needed. (Fire regulations limit occupancy of the Community Room to 90 individuals. However, comfortable seating capacity for the room is between 50 and 70.) The library will provide chairs and tables as requested and as available. The event sponsor will be responsible for setting up chairs and tables and returning the room to its pre-event condition. Furniture from elsewhere in the library may not be used.

B. All events and post-event cleanup must be completed by the time specified on the reservation form.

C. Sponsors of events serving food and beverages are responsible for providing food and beverages and for all clean-up. The library does not provide flatware or dishes. NO ALCOHOL is permitted in the library. All food must be removed from the refrigerator. If clean-up is not performed to the satisfaction of library staff or the Board of Trustees, sponsors may be charged for the cost of professional cleaning.

D. Smoking is prohibited in all areas of the library as required by state law. No open flames are permitted in the Library, per Fire Department regulations.

E. Sponsors of events held in the Community Room are expected to treat library users and staff with courtesy. Library use requires that there be no excessive noise on the premises.

F. Groups sponsoring events are totally responsible for liability of the participants, both active participants and the audience, in any program on library property. The library reserves the right to require individuals or groups wishing to use the Community Room proof of liability insurance.

G. The library will refuse space to individuals or organizations that have previously failed to comply with stated conditions for use. This includes (but is not limited to) failure to allow staff to follow normal closing procedures, excessive noise leading to complaints by other library users, or failure to clean up after a presentation.

H. The library reserves the right to turn over delinquent accounts for nonpayment of rental and cleanup fees to a collection agency if a request for payment from the library is not met within 20 days.

I. The library staff cannot deliver messages to anyone attending a meeting in the library. Please plan to bring a cell phone for any necessary communications.

J. No signs for events in the Library Community Room will be permitted outside on the grounds of the library, unless otherwise approved by the Board of Trustees. State law prohibits signs secured to a tree, rock, or natural feature. Public meetings are posted on the daily announcement board.

K. Use of the Community Room after regular library hours or when library staff are not present is restricted to library-sponsored programs, Sunderland town government boards or committees, or Sunderland-based civic groups (such as Sunderland Woman's Club, Sunderland Youth Baseball, etc.) Other individuals or groups wishing to use the Community Room must schedule events so that they begin and end during the library's regularly scheduled hours of operation or when staff is present. (Information about scheduling is available from the Library Director.)

L. For events scheduled when the library is closed, signs may be posted at the entrances to the library. Such signs may not exceed 11 by 17 inches and must be removed prior to the opening of the library.

M. All reservations are assumed to be for 2 hours unless otherwise arranged for at the time of rental. Reservations lasting longer than 2 hours may be subject to a prorated charge at the discretion of the library staff or Library Trustees.

N. The use of the Library Community Room for the conduct of illegal activity is strictly forbidden and will result in immediate loss of Community Room privileges.

O. People aged 17 and under may not reserve the Community Room, and attendees aged 17 and under must be supervised by an adult who assumes responsibility for the event held in the Community Room.

P. Reservation of the Community Room is not transferable.

Q. The use of library walls or surfaces for the mounting or display of materials is forbidden.

R. The library, its employees, the Library Trustees, and the Town of Sunderland are not responsible for damage to people or property that occurs on library premises.

S. The Library Trustees reserve the right to require users of the Community Room to arrange at their own expense for the hiring of town-approved security personnel. Security arrangements must be approved by the Trustees in advance of the planned use of the Community Room, and failure to do so may result in denial of Community Room privileges.

T. Disputes or questions about the meaning of the *Use of the Community Room* policy statement will be submitted to the Library Board of Trustees for their consideration.

III. Snow Days and Inclement Weather Guidelines.

All events planned for the Library Community Room will be cancelled in the event weather forces the closure of the library. This includes events scheduled for hours after the library would ordinarily close.

Library activities and services will be open as usual unless specific announcements are made to the contrary. Such announcements will be made beginning at 7:30 am on the day in question on the library's website and TV station WWLP (Channel 22). Signs will be posted at entrances if the library closes after it has opened for the day.

It is the responsibility of organizations and individuals reserving space in the library to find out if the library has been closed due to weather.

If the library remains open during a weather event, sponsoring organizations and individuals will be responsible for rental charges even if they elect to cancel their event.

For rescheduling, the sponsoring organization is responsible for contacting library staff on the next day that the library is open. If a satisfactory time is not available, all fees will be refunded.

IV. Use of the Activity Room.

In the event that the Community Room is not available, or the event being proposed includes elements that are inappropriate for the Community Room, the Library may grant permission for the public to utilize the Activity Room. Inappropriate use includes, but is not limited to, art or craft programs or any other activities that could potentially damage the carpet, walls, furniture, technology, or any other items located in the Community Room. **All policies regarding the use of the Community Room apply to the use of the Activity Room, with a few key differences:**

- Fire regulations limit occupancy of the Activity Room to 20 individuals. However, comfortable seating capacity for the room is approximately 12.
- The only technology available in the Activity Room is a television that can connect to a computer via HDMI cable. Participants who wish to use the television must notify the library at least 14 days in advance.
- The Activity Room comes as is. The room is regularly used to host library programs and as storage for program supplies. Any items or furnishings in the Activity Room may be moved to the side, but may not be removed from the room.