



## Facility Use Policy

*This policy is for application to those libraries within the City of Buffalo (Central Library and Buffalo Branch Libraries).*

### 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 that may be available in the library.

Facility spaces can be reserved for use during regular library open hours. Requests for use of facility spaces during closed hours will be reviewed and determined on a case-by-case basis. Additional fees are imposed if the library is closed.

Facility spaces are available for use by non-profit organizations, groups and for-profit businesses. Facility spaces are not intended for personal or private event use.

Reservations may be limited in frequency to ensure fairness to the numerous community organizations and groups requesting space.

#### B. Priority of Use

Library facility spaces are generally 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; and
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 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 an admission fee); and
4. For-profit businesses (charging an admission fee).

#### D. Requirements for Use of Library Facility Spaces

All organizations, groups, and businesses using the library must:

1. Read and agree to adhere to the B&ECPL's *Rules of Conduct Policy* and this *Facility Use Policy*;
2. Complete and submit an *Application for Facility Use*. If a rental and/or security deposit is required, it should be provided when the *Application* is submitted;
3. At least two weeks in advance, secure and provide proof of any performance, health or other required licenses or permits and, if required, proof of insurance in accordance with the B&ECPL's insurance requirements;
4. 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, and 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 deviation from this rule must be approved in advance by the B&ECPL Director or his/her designee. The decision to approve a requested variation is within the sole discretion of the B&ECPL Director or his/her 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's designated contact person in the event the meeting is canceled. Failure to notify the library in a timely manner may result in the loss of facility use privileges;
9. Notify the library's designated contact person beforehand of any plans to record, broadcast, livestream or televise the meeting or any portion of the meeting, including on social media;
10. Adhere to maximum occupancy of facility space and inform attendees of the location of emergency exits and emergency evacuation 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 seven (7) working days in advance of use;
13. Refrain from posting flyers, notices, posters or other materials in the library. The library will post provided materials if they fall within the

B&ECPL's *Distribution Policy* (contact the Development & Communications Department with inquiries at 716-858-7182).

E. General Guidelines and 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 preempt 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, emergencies or other unanticipated closures, such as for repairs or construction. The B&ECPL 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](http://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 space in a B&ECPL facility does not constitute an endorsement by the B&ECPL of a program or point of view expressed.

10. Attendees must follow all health and safety protocols in place at the time of the event.
11. Room capacity is subject to change based on health and safety requirements.

F. Organization or Function Specific Guidelines

1. Partners 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 can be charged.
  - c. No products, services, or memberships may be advertised, solicited, or sold.
2. Partners and non-profit organizations (charging an admission fee), and for-profit businesses:
  - a. Meeting must be open to the public.
  - b. Facility use fees will be charged, 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 as a forum of public debate on public policy, while at the same time prohibiting use of its facilities for purely 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.

Use of a B&ECPL facility at which candidates will discuss current ballot or election issues are permitted provided they are: (1) hosted by a non-partisan, non-profit organization (e.g. 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 or events held by elected officials or candidates for elected positions during the 30 days prior to any general, primary or special election or any applicable referendum shall be presumed to be for purely partisan political purposes unless the applicant demonstrates otherwise.

### III. LIBRARY CONTACT INFORMATION

#### **Central Library**

1 Lafayette Square  
Buffalo, NY 14203

Development & Communications Department at 716-858-7181, 716-858-7189 or 716-858-7182

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

- West Room, 49 person capacity;
- Ring of Knowledge, 50 person capacity, located in an open, wall-less area;
- Central Meeting Room, 100 person capacity;
- Collections Gallery Conference Room, 68 person capacity;
- Mason O. Damon Auditorium, 301 permanent seats including 6 handicapped seating spaces, and an elevated stage.

Other rooms and library spaces may be available for use and fees may be charged, including the outdoor Reading Park and Central Library Ramp.

All rooms at the Central Library are ADA compliant.

#### **Buffalo Branch Libraries:**

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

#### **Crane Branch Library**

633 Elmwood Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14222  
716-883-6651

#### **Dudley Branch Library**

2010 South Park Ave.  
Buffalo, NY 14220  
716-823-1854

- Main level meeting room - ADA compliant, 35 person capacity.

**East Clinton Branch Library**

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

- Main level meeting room - ADA compliant, 25 person capacity.

**Leroy R. Coles, Jr. Branch Library**

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

- Lower level meeting room – ADA compliant, 137 person capacity.

**Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch Library**

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

- Main level Dr. Eva M. Doyle Auditorium - ADA compliant, 150 permanent seats;
- Main level small meeting room - ADA compliant, 30 person capacity.

**Isaías González-Soto Branch Library**

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

- Lower level meeting room and meeting spaces - ADA compliant, 75 person capacity.

**North Park Branch Library**

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

- Main level meeting room - ADA compliant, 30 person capacity.

**Elaine M. Panty Branch Library**

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

- Main level meeting room - ADA compliant, 35 person capacity.

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.

Amended 5/17/2018 per Resolution 2018-11 (administration revised 5/3/2019 – updated name of East Delavan Branch (Leroy R. Coles, Jr. Branch) and Niagara Branch (Isaías González-Soto Branch) and updated Coles meeting room capacity as directed per Res. 2018-11; administration revised 3/2/2020 – updated name of Riverside Branch (Elaine M. Panty Branch); administration revised 6/25/2021 – updated Mason O. Damon Auditorium capacity and name of auditorium at Frank E. Merriweather, Jr. Branch)

Amended 4/21/2022 per Resolution 2022-13.