

Library Space Booking Policy

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Policy Category:	Operations
Approved by:	OPL Board
Accountability:	CEO or Designate
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Supersedes:	Library Space Booking Policy effective November 22, 2024

Purpose:

This policy is intended to support equitable access and fair use of library spaces, to ensure a welcoming and inclusive environment for all library customers, and to outline the priorities, conditions of use, and fees (where applicable) for community use of spaces, in accordance with Oakville Public Library's values and policies.

Scope:

This policy applies to all library customers, including individuals, groups, or organizations reserving or renting designated spaces within an Oakville Public Library (OPL) location. All reservations and rentals are subject to the applicable Terms of Use Agreement.

Policy Statement:

Oakville Public Library (OPL) spaces are community assets intended to facilitate access to information, learning, creativity, connection, culture, and civic participation. Spaces may be designated for library services, collections, programs and events, meetings, technology and equipment, staff operations, general public use, or other purposes that support library business.

OPL retains sole authority to determine how spaces are allocated, configured, prioritized, and utilized in response to evolving community needs, service demands, operational requirements, and strategic priorities.

Decisions for the use of library spaces are guided by OPL's mission, values, policies, and strategic plan to support effective library operations and service delivery.

Community use of OPL spaces does not imply any endorsement of the aims, beliefs, policies or activities of any individual, group, or organization.

Complimentary Reservations

Complimentary use of library spaces may be permitted when the spaces are not required for the service or administrative functions of the library. OPL spaces available for complimentary reservations are as follows:

- **Featured Spaces:** designated spaces offering access to specialized services, equipment, or resources (e.g. Creation Zone, Sound Studio, Multisensory Room) may be reserved at no charge. Some supplies may be available for purchase for use with OPL equipment, or there may be fees for programs with provided materials.
- **Work and Study Spaces:** designated work and study spaces (e.g. Meeting Rooms) may be reserved for collaborative or individual work or study at no charge. Other areas may be open for shared use by all library customers and cannot be reserved (e.g. Quiet Study Rooms)
- **Public Areas:** open public areas are intended for shared and respectful use by all library customers. Formal use of public areas (e.g. pop-up information tables promoting external community services) may only be permitted with explicit prior authorization. Informal use of public areas for group meetups (e.g. book clubs, game cafés) may only be permitted if the activities do not impede others using the space and align with OPL policies.

All complimentary reservations are subject to OPL policies and the applicable Terms of Use Agreement for the designated OPL space.

Event Space Rentals

Paid rentals of library spaces may be permitted when spaces are not required for the service or administrative functions of the library. Only designated event spaces (e.g. Auditorium, Program Rooms) may be rented by individuals, groups, and organizations.

Priorities for community use of library spaces are as follows:

- a. Library-related groups (e.g. Friends of the Library);
- b. External programs, events, or other activities that are endorsed by OPL;
- c. Non-profit community groups and organizations;
- d. Town of Oakville staff, the Mayor, and Members of Council;
- e. Others (e.g. commercial organizations).

To support transparency and informed participation by library customers, OPL will ensure that signage is posted outside of an event space when it is being used for an authorized rental to clarify that it is not an OPL event.

Event space rentals are subject to all applicable fees set by the approved OPL Rates and Fees, which include two categories of rental fees:

- a. **Non-Profit Rental Fee:** applies to rental activities that will not directly generate a profit, are undertaken by a registered charity or other not-for-profit community group, and are open to everyone for participation.
- b. **Profit Rental Fee:** applies to all commercial organizations and rental activities that are intended to generate a profit, require a registration fee to be paid prior to participation, require the purchase of other goods or services, and/or are restricted to a private group or select individuals.

Additional fees may be applicable as determined by OPL staff, including but not limited to After Hours Facilities/Security coverage.

Rental fees may be waived, at the sole discretion of OPL, when event space rentals are intended for:

- External programs, events, or other activities that are endorsed by OPL;
- Meetings involving members of the public convened and attended by Town of Oakville Councillors, excluding election-related purposes except as identified in the [Political Use of Space and Resources Policy](#);
- Departments of the Town of Oakville at which Town staff are in attendance;
- Meetings of Oakville Public Library Workers' Union Local 5348 - CUPE;
- Meetings of agencies, boards and commissions of the Town of Oakville;

All event space rentals are subject to OPL policies and the applicable Terms of Use Agreement for the designated OPL space.

Approvals

Reservations and rentals will be approved in accordance with OPL policies and the priorities set forth in this policy, and otherwise on a first come, first served basis.

Interested parties can contact an OPL location or visit OPL.ca to view spaces available for reservation or rental, subject to the applicable Terms of Use Agreement. All requests are subject to review and formal approval by library staff.

OPL operational needs and strategic priorities may change over time. Approvals for reservations and event space rentals are time-bound and do not reflect an ongoing commitment.

Conditions of Use

Reservations and rentals are subject to the applicable Terms of Use Agreement, which outline the specific conditions of use appropriate to each designated OPL space, and are aligned with the following conditions of use:

- a. OPL requires all requests for event space rentals to disclose the purposes of the rental, including any topics of discussion and the names of speakers and their affiliations, at the time of the rental booking.

- b. OPL grants the non-assignable right to use an OPL space and any supplied equipment solely for the purposes of, and on the dates and times stated, as disclosed at the time of the rental booking.
- c. OPL reserves the right to establish limits on the frequency, duration, or recurrence of bookings to ensure fair and reasonable access to public library resources and to maximize community benefit.
- d. All persons admitted in the space for an authorized rental must comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws, by-laws, policies and regulations, and all OPL policies and the applicable Terms of Use Agreement.
- e. OPL requires all event space rentals to comply with occupancy limits, fire safety regulations, evacuation procedures, and instructions from library staff or emergency personnel.
- f. For large and/or extended events, OPL requires the individual, group, or organization booking the space to provide General Liability Insurance (naming the Town of Oakville and Oakville Public Library as additional insured), at their sole responsibility and expense, as specified in the applicable Terms of Use Agreement.
- g. All activities related to the authorized rental must be fully contained to the enclosed rented space. Activities must not impede others in using other library spaces.
- h. OPL spaces may not be used in a manner that exploits, interferes with, or creates confusion regarding library programs, services, events, customers, or communications.
- i. Any advertisement, publicity, or other promotional materials prepared for the event space rental must not imply OPL endorsement of the event or activities.
 - o The use of the library logo or any mark identified as library-related is not permitted on any promotional materials.
 - o All promotional materials must include the statement: "This event is not an Oakville Public Library event."
 - o The mailing address for the OPL location may only be used as the location of the event or activity.
 - o OPL is not responsible for the preparation or distribution of any promotional materials.
- j. Library staff reserve the right to access the event space at any time during an authorized rental for the purposes of auditing or reviewing compliance with OPL policies and Terms of Use.
- k. Retail sales of any goods and/or services by commercial organizations or individuals are not permitted within OPL spaces unless approved in advance by the CEO or designate.
- l. Alcohol is not permitted in OPL spaces. Exceptions may be considered on a case-by-case basis and must receive prior approval from the CEO or designate. If permitted, the individual, group, or organization shall obtain and maintain all required permits, licences,

certifications, insurance, and security arrangements (where applicable) in accordance with federal, provincial, and municipal legislation and at their sole responsibility.

- m. Charitable fundraising is not permitted unless authorized by the CEO or designate.
- n. No games of chance, including lotteries, are permitted.

Denial of Use

When making the spaces available for use, OPL is committed to ensuring the dignity and safety of the public and staff without disruption to library services, and to maintaining the security of library property.

OPL reserves the right to interrupt, deny, or cancel any reservation or rental when it reasonably believes:

- a. The activities do not comply with all applicable federal, provincial and municipal laws, by-laws, policies and regulations including OPL's policies and Terms of Use; or
- b. The activities conducted pose a risk to the health and safety of the public or library staff, or may put children, youth, or other vulnerable persons at increased risk; or
- c. There is a likelihood that the space or equipment will be misused and/or damaged, or past misuse or non-payment of fees has occurred; or
- d. The pattern of use unreasonably restricts availability for others, creates the appearance of exclusive occupancy, or is inconsistent with the intended shared use of library spaces; or
- e. The activities or event is likely to exploit, interfere with, or create confusion regarding OPL programs, services, events, customers, communications, or otherwise appropriates the credibility and trust that OPL has cultivated with the community; or
- f. Reoccurring use is intended to establish the library as a permanent location for the activities, including listing the library address as a place of business for any individual, group, or organization; or
- g. The reservation or rental booking misrepresented or failed to adequately disclose the purposes of the request.

If the library interrupts, denies or cancels a booking for any of the reasons listed above, it is under no obligation to provide a refund or to permit use of library spaces in the future.

The individual, group, or organization booking the space agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the Oakville Public Library Board, Oakville Public Library, and its employees from and against any and all claims, damages, liabilities, fees, or expenses arising from the renter's use of the space.

Requests for Reconsideration of Space Reservations or Rentals

OPL believes that a free and democratic society requires members of its community to actively participate in an open exchange of ideas and opinions. The content or manner of expressing ideas in event space rentals that meet the purpose of this policy may, on occasion, be considered offensive by other library customers.

OPL recognizes the right of any individual or group to not attend activities related to the authorized rental, but does not accord to any individual or group the right to restrict the freedom of others to express their views or ideas during their event space rental.

Library customers who object to specific activities related to an authorized rental, or who object to the cancellation or denial of their booking request, may submit a written request for reconsideration, if they feel that the content of the event space rental is not consistent with the criteria outlined in this policy, OPL's [Intellectual Freedom Policy](#) or [Inclusion Policy](#), or any other applicable policy.

Reconsideration requests are reviewed and responded to by the Director, Customer Experience (or delegate). Decisions regarding challenged reservations or rentals will be communicated to the individual(s) who initiated the request in writing following the completion of the review. The reservation or rental will proceed while the request is being reviewed.

Appeals to the reconsideration request may be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) within seven days of receiving the review decision. Decisions will be communicated in writing following the completion of the review. The CEO is the final decision-maker on all requests for reconsideration.