

# Can Mary Kay or VITA use the Meeting Room?

Crafting Equitable Policies for  
Community Use of Library Facilities

# Considerations for Policy Writing

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- Library Mission Statement
- Community Expectations

# Who Can Use Library Meeting Rooms?

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- Commercial Entities
- Non-Profit Groups
- Religious Organizations
- Individuals

# What would you do?

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Deep Pockets Mega Corporation is building a new multi-million dollar facility in your town. They would like to conduct preliminary employment interviews in your library meeting room.

# When can the rooms be used?

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- Library events take precedent
- Only during Library hours
- When the library is closed

# How Often Can a Room Be Used?

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- How frequently can the group book space?
- How far in advance can they book space?
- Are they setting up shop in your library?

# For What Purposes can the Room be Used?

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- Training
- Sales
- Parties
- Board Meetings—other than library board
- Testing
- College classes
- Babysitting

# Charge\$

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- Is there a charge for room use?
- Is there a different charge for commercial groups?
- Are they allowed to charge for their programs?
- Can you collect donations? Can they?



# What would you do?

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The Mary Kay lady wants to do an educational program on skin care for the women in your community. Though she won't be selling her products the day of the program, people will be welcome to take catalogs and place orders with her.

# Rules of Room Use

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- What do you allow in the room?
  - Food
  - Wine
  - Glitter

# Rules of Room Use

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- Can they use the equipment?
  - Coffee pot?
  - Kitchen?
  - Projector or other A/V?

# Who is Responsible?

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- Is there a deposit?
- If they break it do they buy it?
- If someone gets hurt are you covered?
- Who cleans up their mess?
- Should they put the chairs back as they found them?

# What would you do?

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- The Brownie leader loves to do craft projects. The day after their meeting you staff spend hours scraping glue and vacuuming glitter off meeting room surfaces.

# Additional Considerations

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- Privacy
- Rules of use for other community facilities
- Disclaimer

# Library Displays

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If you have a display case or area, chances are community groups and individuals will ask to use it from time to time.

How do you create a fair and equitable use policy for these areas?

# Who can use the display areas?

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- Library use only
- Outside groups
  - Non-profit
  - For Profit
  - Individuals



# What is the purpose of the display?

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- Does the display match the Library's mission?
- Does the display conform to community standards?
- Art is in the eye of the beholder

# What would you do?

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- Joe Smith would like to display his collection of World War II memorabilia in the library display case. He's told you many times about his collection of items taken from dead Japanese soldiers while he was stationed in the South Pacific.

# Set your limits

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- Display cases can only hold so much
  - Provide case dimensions before they create the display.
  - Weight limits might be necessary for glass shelves.

# Who is responsible?

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- Lock for display case-- \$20
- Waiver of Liability-- \$0
- Not being responsible for stolen items-- priceless

# Disclaimer

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Just because you allow Mr. Brown to display his collection of international beer coasters doesn't mean the library condones how he acquired them.

# Can I hang up this flyer?

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Library bulletin boards are prime real estate for posting notices for everything from lost animals to soup suppers.

Refereeing this space could claim many staff hours if a system is not established.

# Approval

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- Create the guidelines for posting
- Designate one library employee to approve and post items (and to take them down)

# Who can post items?

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- Non-profit Groups
- For Profit Groups
- Religious Groups
- Individuals



# Size matters

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- Set limits on how large a poster can be
- Set a limit on the number of posters allowed
- Set a limit on how long a poster can be displayed

# Other kinds of material

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Will the library allow nonlibrary material to be distributed in the library?

Many libraries are asked to be drop off sites for local newspapers, apartment hunting guides, and store flyers.

# Considerations

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- The same as for room, display and bulletin board use

# Consistency

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A foolish consistency is the hobgoblin of little minds, adored by little statesmen and philosophers and divines.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

# Consistency II

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Good fences make good neighbors.

Robert Frost

# Policy websites

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- **Meeting Room Policies**
- Camas Public Library, Camas Washington.
- <http://www.ci.cameras.wa.us/library/libpol2.htm>
- Madison Public Library Madison, WI
- <http://www.madisonpubliclibrary.org/about/meetingroom.html>
- Waukesha Public Library Waukesha, WI
- <http://www.waukesha.lib.wi.us/about/mrooms.shtml>

# Policy websites, cont.

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- **Bulletin Board Use**
- Seattle Public Library
- [http://www.spl.org/default.asp?pageID=about\\_policies\\_info\\_distribution](http://www.spl.org/default.asp?pageID=about_policies_info_distribution)
- Fremont Public Library Fremont, NH
- <http://fremontpubliclibrary.org/fremont/policies/bb.asp>
- Cotuit Public Library, MA
- <http://www.cotuitlibrary.org/borrowing-and-library-policies/bulletin-board-policy/>

# Policy websites, cont.

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- **Display Use**

- Thayer Public Library, MA

- [http://www.thayerpubliclibrary.net/about\\_display.html](http://www.thayerpubliclibrary.net/about_display.html)

- Iowa City Public Library

- <http://www.icpl.org/policies/display.php>

- Fall River Public Library, MA

- <http://www.sailsinc.org/fallriver/exhibit.policy.htm>



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