



Chestatee Regional Library System

Facilities Use Policies

Approved by the Regional Library Board of Trustees
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Chestatee Regional Library System Policies
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SECTION IV: FACILITIES USE POLICIES

Part 1. Availability of Facilities

1.1 Availability of Facilities

Library buildings are intended to provide the general public with access to a wide range of information. Anyone may use the public library regardless of origin, age, background, or views. Any restrictions on the use of libraries are for the purposes of ensuring the public's free access, the safety of patrons and staff, and/or the protection of library resources and facilities.

1.2 Meeting Rooms

The primary function of library meeting rooms is to provide space for library-related activities such as story hours, film programs, discussion groups, and other activities sponsored or co-sponsored by the library. These activities will receive priority in the use of the rooms.

Library meeting rooms may be used for non-commercial purposes by individuals and groups, including but not limited to those engaged in educational, civic, cultural, and governmental pursuits. No sales are permitted on library property, nor may any exhibit be advertised for sale. Library-sponsored events shall be exempt from this requirement.

The library meeting room is not intended to be a regularly scheduled meeting place for any non-library group.

No admission or attendance fee may be charged for any program or meeting held in a library meeting room. All meetings must be open to the general public, and groups using the library facilities may not exclude from the meeting any member of the public on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, political affiliation, age, sex, or physical ability.

The Chestatee Regional Library Board reserves the right to review and reject any and all requests to use the room. Failure to adhere to the rules governing the meeting room will result in denial of the privilege to use the facility.

The user of the meeting room is responsible for leaving it in the same condition in which it was found; otherwise, a maintenance fee of \$25 may be assessed. Group activities involving more than normal wear or tear on the room will not be permitted, nor will activities that might disturb regular library operations. If a meeting in progress does disturb library operations, the library reserves the right to immediately terminate the event. The group, upon notification of a disturbance, shall immediately discontinue the disturbance or vacate the premises.

Applications for the use of the room may be obtained at any branch of the library system. The application must be filled out in full, signed by the applicant, and approved by the Branch Manager. The applicant must sign a statement affirming that he/she is aware of the library's policy on the use of the room and that the group will abide by the policy. If audiovisual equipment is required, it should be reserved at the time of the application. In accepting reservations for the use of a meeting room, the library will not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, national origin, religion, political affiliation, age, sex, or physical ability.

Any damage to or loss of library property resulting from the use of the room will be the responsibility of the group using it. Users are also responsible for any equipment or supplies owned by any group or individual brought into the meeting room, and such material must be removed at the conclusion of the meeting. The library is not responsible for items left in the room.

When it is necessary for a key to be issued to the adult in charge of a meeting or event, that adult shall pick up the key prior to library closing time immediately before the scheduled meeting. This same adult shall also be responsible for returning the key to the library by the first day it is open immediately following the scheduled meeting. If a key is lost, the organization is responsible for the cost of having the locks changed.

When the room is to be used by organizations or groups with members under the age of 18, applications for use of the facility must be made by adults, and the adult in charge should arrive before the young people and must stay until the departure of all young people.

No smoking or tobacco use is allowed in the meeting room or in any area of the library.

The Chestatee Regional Library System does not endorse or support any program or meeting held in a library meeting room unless the program is specifically sponsored, or sponsored in part, by the library.

Part 2. Use of Facilities

2.1 Patron Behavior

In order to provide a suitable environment for the use of library facilities, the following types of behavior are not permitted in any public area of the library:

Loud conversation or creating any noise disturbing to other patrons, including:

- Cell phone use
- Fighting
- Possessing dangerous weapons
- Harassment of other patrons or staff
- Soliciting, petitioning, or distributing literature

- Using abusive or obscene language
- Theft, mutilation, defacement, or destruction of library property, including books
- Entering unauthorized areas of the library
- Exhibitionism or indecent behavior, voyeurism
- Remaining in the building after closing
- Loitering or sleeping
- Listening to the radio or other electronic player (except with earphones)
- Blocking or interfering with the free movement of individuals
- Animals in library buildings, unless approved (e.g., seeing-eye dogs)
- Eating, except for groups using the meeting room
- Drinking beverages near or when using computers
- Use of rest rooms for meetings, loitering, or solicitation for immoral purposes
- Consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal substances
- Parking automobiles on library property when the driver is not using the library or attending a scheduled meeting in the building
- Skateboarding or rollerblading in library parking lots and on library grounds
- Smoking or use of tobacco products in or near library buildings

Persons violating any of the above rules of behavior may, after warning by library personnel, be asked to leave the library premises. Persons who persist in violating these rules or who refuse to leave the library premises when requested will be subject to arrest and prosecution.

Where the behavior of an individual constitutes a continuing disruption, the patron may be suspended from the Chestatee Regional Library System for a period of time to be determined by the Library Director. In such cases, a written notice outlining the reason(s) for the suspension will be mailed to the patron, who will have ten days to respond in writing prior to the suspension becoming effective. Where the patron files a written request for a hearing within the ten-day period, the matter will be referred to the Chestatee Regional Library Board of Trustees for a hearing and final decision.

Staff may call the appropriate Police or Sheriff's Department for assistance in any circumstances in which they feel such assistance is warranted.

2.2 Photographs

Filming and photographing within library facilities may be permitted at the discretion of the library director. Generally, it is not permissible to photograph individuals or groups in the library except for the sole purpose of promoting the library and its services, in which case patrons will be asked to provide written permission for such use.

2.3 Smoking

All areas of all library facilities, including staff areas, are smoke-free. No smoking is permitted within 50 feet of library entrance doors or in library vehicles.

2.4 Theft

The library is not responsible for articles stolen from a patron or staff member while in a library branch, on library grounds, or in library parking lots. If a theft does occur, however, the staff member who learns of the theft should notify the Branch Manager, Director, or Associate Director. Staff should assist patrons wishing to report thefts to the police in any way possible.

2.5 Unattended Children in the Library

Children under the age of 11 must be accompanied by a responsible adult while on library premises. The library will not be liable for the safety of unattended minors on library premises. Furthermore, all children are subject to library building rules and regulations.

The library will not be responsible for children under 18 left on the premises after regular hours of operation. Parents should be aware of library hours, which are posted near the front entrance. If parents cannot be contacted at closing time, the appropriate Sheriff's Department may be called to pick up the children until parents can be located.

Part 3. Exhibits and Postings

3.1 Exhibits and Displays

Exhibit spaces and display cases in Chestatee Regional Library System facilities are used by the library primarily to promote reading, education, and library usage. Themes for displays or exhibits may be educational, seasonal, patriotic, cultural, or community focused. Community collections and/or artifacts may be featured.

Exhibits are formulated to appeal to the entire community. Selection is based on the widest community appeal and interest, as well as format, space, staff and budget allowances. The library retains priority rights to all exhibit and display spaces for library purposes. Approval for all exhibits and displays rests with the Library Director or appointed designee(s).

Displays are usually content-neutral, since the library does not take sides in political or social controversies. The library generally will not be used as a forum for the presentation and dissemination of one particular viewpoint. Distribution, exhibition, or posting of materials by the library does not necessarily indicate the library's endorsement of ideas or events promoted by those materials.

The library assumes no liability in the event of damage, destruction, or theft of a display. Exhibitors will be required to sign a release form before placing exhibit

items in the library, releasing the library from responsibility for loss, damage, or destruction beyond applicable insurance coverage (if any) while the materials are in the possession of the library.

Exhibitors are responsible for installing and removing exhibits in a timely manner. Exhibits generally will be maintained for one month.

The library does not exhibit commercial products other than merchandise sold to benefit the library, nor may items be displayed with sale prices within an exhibit.

Items or information loaned for exhibit by organizations or individuals will be acknowledged within the exhibit if the organization or individual provides identification material. The library generally will not create crediting labels.

The library does not provide special display equipment (e.g., pedestals, easels, mounting boards). Exhibits meeting the library's criteria but requiring special display equipment will be accepted only when the lender can provide this equipment. The library will not provide storage space for exhibits.

3.2 Public Notices

The Chestatee Regional Library System permits the posting of notices, advertisements, promotional materials, brochures, or flyers advertising activities or services sponsored by non-library groups only in designated areas, specified in each branch. All such literature shall be restricted to these areas. As space permits, the library may accept multiple copies of non-commercial material for distribution. The location of such materials will be in designated areas only, and everyone seeking to place such materials must obtain permission from library staff before doing so. Materials placed without permission will be discarded. Staff will periodically remove out-of-date materials and will immediately remove any materials that violate the law or the rules or policies of the library.

Materials which advocate the election or defeat of a candidate for public office, or which advocate an affirmative or negative vote for or against any proposition, whether political or otherwise, may not be displayed or distributed.

No organization or individual shall be permitted to place in the library a box, receptacle, or canister which solicits donations unless at the request of the library, nor shall any poster or display be permitted which advocates or solicits consideration of any product or item sold.

Part 4. Library Grounds

The grounds surrounding library facilities are county property and are generally subject to the same rules of use as library buildings.

The Lumpkin County Library Garden, featuring native plants, is maintained by the library for educational and public use. No changes to (additions to or removals from) the existing master plan may be made without approval of the

library administration or County Library Board. Groups and individuals are encouraged to enjoy the garden during the open hours of the library. Large groups are requested to schedule visits in advance with the library staff. Children using the garden must be supervised by a responsible adult.