

**COUNTY GOVERNMENT CENTER BUILDING MEETING ROOM  
PUBLIC USE POLICY**

**1. Equal Access**

This Policy applies to all groups and individuals applying to use meeting rooms in the County Government Center Building. No group or individual shall be excluded from access because of considerations of race, sex, religion, or political persuasion, or because of the political, religious, or social aims expressed by the individual or group, or by any group's members.

**2. Use of Government Center Meeting Room**

- A. This policy governs general public use of meeting rooms in the County Government Center Building.
- B. It is established by the County Administrator under general authority granted by the Board of Supervisors, and it shall be administered by the County Administrator or his designee.
- C. The primary use of the meeting rooms is for the conduct of County Government business. Consequently, groups that are a part of or associated with Washington County government have priority use. This includes: the Board of Supervisors, formal and standing Subcommittees of the Board of Supervisors, individual members of the Board of Supervisors, Planning Commission, County Administrator, boards or commissions appointed by the Board of Supervisors, and County staff for purposes of County business.
- D. Once a group has confirmation of a reservation to use a meeting room, no other user or entity, including those listed in 2C, above, may pre-empt usage of the space, subject to emergency use required for County Government purposes.
- E. The following groups shall be permitted to use the meeting rooms in the County Government Building to the extent permitted by law and in accordance with this Policy for Use of Government Center Meeting Rooms:
  - a. Non-profit citizen groups that are located in or do business in Washington County; and
  - b. State political parties (as defined by the Virginia State Code as any political party that meets the qualifications stated in Section 24.2-101).
- F. Use of meeting rooms by profit-making groups or for profit-making purposes is prohibited.
- G. Such use must not interfere with County government functions, operations, and business.
- H. No admission fee can be collected for any event.

**3. Meeting Rooms & Occupancy Limits**

The following rooms are available on a reservation-only basis in accordance with this Policy for Use of Government Center Meeting Rooms.

<u>Room</u>	<u>Occupancy Limit</u>
• Board of Supervisors Auditorium	194
• Meeting Room 1 – First Floor	30, recommended 20
• Meeting Room 2 – Second Floor	30, recommended 20

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**4. Availability**

- Monday through Friday only.
- Not available on Local Government Holidays.
- 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. – Free of Charge other than Reservation Deposit
- 5:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. – Security Fee Applies (2 Hour Minimum Fee)

**5. Security Fee Deposit (Applicable after 5:00 p.m.)**

- \$26.00 per hour; Minimum two-hour reservation.
- Security Fee plus one-hour Security Deposit (\$26) must be paid in advance for all bookings for use after 5:00 p.m.
- Security Deposit will be refunded if use does not exceed reserved and prepaid time. Fees for use beyond reserved and pre-paid times will be deducted from deposit(s) and billed at twice the usual hourly security rate.
- No Security fee will be paid if local law enforcement officer is present and responsible for the security of the Government Center Building.

**6. Application and Approval**

Meeting room(s) may be reserved for up to three (3) months (current & two consecutive months) in advance. Reservations must be made using the Room Reservation form available from the County Administrator Executive Assistant or on the County website. Applicant will be notified by telephone or email of approval or denial of request. Failure to pay Reservation Deposit as well as Security Fee and Deposit, if any, within five (5) business days of receiving notice of approval of application may result in loss of room reservation. Permission may be granted for continuous bookings for multiple meetings not to exceed a three month period. Before processing any application for meeting room use, the County Administrator may require the applicant to pay any amounts owed to the County for previous use of County meeting rooms that remain unpaid 30 days or more after billing.

**7. Cancellation**

Notice of cancellation of reservation should be made as soon as possible. Cancellation less than two business days in advance of reserved time will result in loss of the Reservation Deposit.

**8. Cancellation due to County Office Closure.**

In the event the County Government Center is declared closed, due to inclement weather or other reasons, permission to use the facility or grounds is automatically withdrawn during the closure period. County Government Center closure information is available on local radio and TV stations or by calling the County office. In such an event, the County shall not provide notice of cancellation – users shall be solely responsible for notifying event participants. All deposits shall be refunded in the event of cancellation due to County Office closure.

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**9. Publicizing Meetings & Programs**

Publicity for programs must state clearly the name and address of the organization and the name and telephone number of the organization contact person. County government staff shall not serve as the point of contact for groups using the room.

**10. Rules of Use.**

**A. Supplies**

Groups must provide their own supplies, such as pens, paper, pencils, magic markers, dry-erase markers for use with white boards, etc. The County is unable to supply these items.

**B. Set Up**

Groups are responsible for setting up the meeting room. Note: in the event that a County program takes place in the meeting room immediately before a group has the room reserved, the County cannot guarantee the room set-up will be cleared away. Chairs are limited to the number presently provided by the County for the room. Additional chairs may not be brought in to the meeting room. **Total occupancy limits may not be exceeded.**

**C. Clean Up**

Groups are responsible for all clean-up following the conclusion of the meeting. **All clean-up must be completed by the end of the group's designated use time.** Groups must return the meeting room to its original state. The cost of any clean up by County Staff, required as a result of the user's failure to do so, shall be charged to the user at the overtime rate of the staff used to complete the clean-up. Failure to clean-up the room after two meetings may result in the cancellation of an organization's confirmed reservations and denial of future applications for reservations.

**D. Alcoholic Beverages**

No alcoholic beverage may be served, consumed, or brought onto County property.

**E. Smoking and Open Flames Prohibited**

Smoking, use of candles, and open flames are not permitted in the County Building.

**F. Animals**

Animals (except for guide dogs and other assistance animals) may not be brought into a County facility. Only County sponsored programs using animals may be conducted.

**G. Telephone Messages**

The County is unable to accept or forward telephone messages to the meeting room.

**H. Denial of Access**

1. The use of County facilities is denied to any group which has, at any time prior to any requested use, been responsible for, or caused, any damage to County property through or because of acts of vandalism, violence, or

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rowdiness, or has failed to clean up facilities, by any members of such group, or invitees to an approved meeting.

2. Failure to observe these guidelines or misrepresentation in a room reservation request will lead to cancellation of the group's reservations.
3. Use of County meeting rooms by any group shall not interfere with the normal operation of the County nor shall such rooms be used for any illegal activity. Any activity which is so judged by the County Administrator is cause for the group to be expelled from the meeting room and to deny future use of the rooms.

**I. Food and Beverages**

Food and/or beverages may be served and consumed only if approval is granted in advance of the event.

**J. Electronic and Audio-Visual Equipment**

Electronic and audio-visual equipment in the meeting rooms shall not be used by non-County entities. Any group that is not a County-government entity shall provide its own audio-visual equipment and is encouraged to confirm with the County Administrator the compatibility of such equipment prior to the meeting room use.

**K. Signs**

Signs, emblems, banners, pennants, etc. may not be affixed to any building surfaces, steps, walls or light fixtures. Signs, emblems, banners, pennants, etc. that are self-standing may be put into place one (1) hour before the scheduled start of the meeting and must be removed at the conclusion of the meeting. A copy of any sign, emblem, banner, pennant, etc. to be used shall accompany the application form.

**11. Liability**

- A. The person requesting the reservation and/or the organization represented shall be held financially responsible for any damage to the facility, furniture, and equipment during the period of use.
- B. Any group using a meeting room pursuant to this policy is required to execute a release of liability in favor of the County, releasing the County from any liability to third parties for injury caused by the group, or any persons or groups invited to attend the meeting or session on County property.
- C. The group is liable to the County for any and all damage to the County property or injuries to County employees, officer, or agents caused by the group, or by any of the group's officers, agents, or employees, or by any person attending or seeking to attend the group's meeting, whether or not such damage is the result of negligence, intentional acts, or accident.
- D. Equipment, supplies, or personal effects may not be stored or left in the building before or after use of the room, and the County assumes no responsibility or liability whatsoever for such equipment, supplies, or personal effects in the event of violation of this policy.