

# **WEBSTER PARISH LIBRARIES**

## **USE OF LIBRARY EXTERIOR PROPERTY BY OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS**

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The Webster Parish Library System supports community engagement and recognizes that partnerships and outreach efforts may benefit the public by increasing access to educational, informational, cultural, civic, and wellness-related services. This policy establishes guidelines for the use of library grounds and exterior property by outside organizations while ensuring that library operations, safety, and public access remain protected.

Consistent with the Library's mission to promote an atmosphere of community, creativity, and learning, the Library may permit temporary use of library property by outside organizations when such use serves community interests and aligns with the Library's goals and standards.

### **SCOPE**

This policy applies to any non-library individual, group, business, nonprofit organization, government agency, mobile service provider, vendor, or community organization requesting temporary use of library property, including parking lots, lawns, sidewalks, driveways, entrances, or other exterior spaces.

This policy does not apply to:

- Library-sponsored programs and events;
- Meeting room reservations governed under separate policy;
- Political campaigning prohibited by law or existing library policy; or
- Prohibited commercial solicitation

### **APPROVAL PROCESS**

All requests for use of library property by outside organizations must receive prior approval from the Library Director.

Requests should be submitted 30 days in advance and include:

- Organization name and contact information;
- Description of services or activities;
- Requested location(s);
- Requested date and time;
- Space, utility, or parking needs; and
- Any anticipated setup, vehicles, tents, tables, or equipment.

Approval is based on:

- Availability of space;
- Impact on library operations and parking;

- Safety and traffic considerations;
- Alignment with the Library’s mission and community standards; and
- Compliance with applicable laws, regulations, and library policies.

Priority shall be given to organizations, agencies, and activities that directly serve Webster Parish residents and align with the Library’s mission and identified community needs.

Organizations, businesses, agencies, or groups headquartered or originating outside of Webster Parish shall generally not be permitted to use library property unless:

- the activity is initiated, sponsored, or formally partnered with by the Library;
- the organization is providing a needed service not otherwise reasonably available within Webster Parish; or
- the Library Director determines the activity provides a substantial and direct benefit to Webster Parish residents.

The Library reserves the right to determine whether a proposed activity sufficiently serves the interests and needs of the Webster Parish community. Approval of a request does not constitute library sponsorship, endorsement, or partnership unless explicitly stated by the Library.

## **CONDITIONS OF USE**

Organizations approved to use library property must comply with the following conditions:

1. All activities conducted on library property must support or align with the Library’s mission of promoting community, creativity, learning, access to information, and public service.
2. Use of library property must not interfere with regular library operations, scheduled library programs, patron access, emergency access routes, or normal parking availability.
3. All activities must comply with local, state, and federal laws, as well as all applicable library policies and procedures.
4. Organizations are responsible for maintaining orderly conduct and ensuring activities are conducted in a respectful, safe, and lawful manner.
5. Organizations must provide adequate supervision for all activities, participants, equipment, vehicles, displays, or mobile units associated with the approved use.
6. The organization is responsible for setup, breakdown, cleanup, and removal of all materials, trash, signage, tents, tables, or equipment immediately following the approved activity.
7. Any damage to library property, grounds, landscaping, buildings, utilities, or equipment resulting from the activity shall be the responsibility of the organization or individual granted approval.
8. The Library reserves the right to designate or restrict the specific area of use, duration of use, parking arrangements, traffic flow, signage placement, utility access, or other operational considerations as necessary.

9. Approval to use library property does not imply Library sponsorship, endorsement, recommendation, or support of the organization, its mission, products, services, viewpoints, or activities.
10. Organizations may not state or imply Library endorsement in advertisements, promotional materials, social media, or public communications without prior written authorization from the Library Director.
11. Sales-oriented activities, fundraising, solicitation, political campaigning, or commercial activity are prohibited.
12. Depending on the nature of the activity, organizations may be required to provide proof of liability insurance, permits, licenses, certifications, or other documentation prior to approval.
13. The Library reserves the right to deny, revoke, reschedule, or terminate approval for use of library property when:
  - The activity conflicts with library operations or community standards;
  - Safety, security, or traffic concerns arise;
  - False or incomplete information was provided;
  - Conditions of use are violated; or
  - Unforeseen operational or emergency circumstances occur.
14. Library-sponsored programs, services, events, and activities shall always receive priority over outside organizational use of library property.
15. Requests involving partnerships, sponsorships, outreach efforts, educational services, wellness initiatives, or collaborative activities may be evaluated using the same community interest and mission-based criteria utilized in the Library's Programming Policy.

## **CRITERIA FOR CONSIDERATION**

In evaluating requests for use of library property, the following criteria may be considered:

- Expressed community needs and interest;
- Relevance and appropriateness to the Library's mission and goals;
- Space required and operational impact;
- Connection to community programs, exhibitions, or events;
- Community standards;
- Historical, educational, civic, or informational significance;
- Presenter or organizational qualifications when applicable; and
- Required staff time and oversight.

## **NON-ENDORSEMENT**

Permission to use library property does not imply endorsement, recommendation, or support by the Webster Parish Library System, its Board of Control, or staff.

## **PRIORITY OF USE**

Library operations and library-sponsored activities shall always take priority over outside organizational use requests. Approval may be modified or revoked if operational needs, weather, safety concerns, or unforeseen circumstances arise.

## **RIGHT TO DENY OR REVOKE USE**

The Webster Parish Library System reserves the right to deny, cancel, or terminate use of library property when:

- The activity conflicts with library operations or policies;
- False or incomplete information was provided;
- Safety or security concerns arise;
- Prior violations of library policies have occurred; or
- The organization fails to comply with conditions of approval.