

# **THE 519 CHURCH STREET COMMUNITY CENTRE**

## **SPACE USE POLICY**

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amended: Oct. 1995

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Throughout this document, "The 519" refers to The 519 Church Street Community Centre.

"the Board" refers to the Board of Management for The 519 Church Street Community Centre.

## **ARTICLE I**

### **GENERAL STATEMENTS AND POLICIES**

#### **PURPOSE:**

The purpose of this document is to describe the policies and priorities for space to be allocated among different community groups and activities at The 519. An addendum to the policy outlines processes and procedures.

#### **POLICY IN RELATION TO STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESSES:**

From time to time the Board of Management or its committees may review or amend this policy to reflect emerging community needs. The review process will respect and seek input from the community.

#### **WHO STARTS ACTIVITIES AT THE 519:**

The 519 sees itself as a resource to be used by the community as well as a creator of activities for the community. Therefore activities can be started by individuals and/or groups approaching The 519 staff with their ideas and needs. The Board and staff at The 519 may also promote and create new activities.

#### **RESPONSIBILITY FOR SPACE USE:**

The Board is ultimately responsible for programming use of space at The 519. The Board delegates the operational responsibility to staff.

#### **CONTEXT:**

This document is grounded in the mission statement, strategic plan and policies of The 519. Here are some of the important points from those documents:

##### **Mission Statement:**

The 519 is a meeting-place and focus for its vital and varied downtown community. Within a supportive environment, it responds to community issues and needs by supplying the resources and opportunities to foster self-determination. It is committed to principles of accessibility, voluntarism, individual dignity and value, participation, and celebration.

### **Strategic Directions (from 2003 Strategic Plan):**

The 519 is community-oriented and community controlled with priority for use given to residents of the local neighbourhood. The local neighbourhood includes the second largest Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgendered, Intersexed, 2-Spirited and Queer (LGBTTI2Q) community in North America. Programmes and activities for this local community welcome LGBTTI2Q people from across the Greater Toronto Area and beyond.

The 519 provides a leadership role in the LGBTTI2Q community, developing innovative programming that can be a model for other organizations worldwide.

### **Policy on Non Discrimination**

The 519 Church Street Community Centre adopts and upholds the City of Toronto policy statement which prohibits discrimination and harassment and protects the right to be free of hate activity based on age, ancestry, citizenship, creed (religion), colour, disability, ethnic origin, family status, gender identity, level of literacy, marital status, place of origin, membership in a union or staff association, political affiliation, race, receipt of public assistance, record of offenses, sex, sexual orientation or any other personal characteristics by or within the organization.

### **Objective of this policy**

All persons are welcome and encouraged to make use of The 519, its facilities and services, subject to applicable by-laws, The 519 Constitution, other 519 policies, and administrative guidance.

## **ARTICLE II**

### **RESPONSIBILITIES**

Responsibilities of The 519 Church Street Community Centre to Organizations and Individuals using The 519:

1. The 519 supplies the resources and opportunities to foster self determination.
2. The 519 has clear and transparent procedures for allocating space.
3. The 519 provides free space to programmes (Article III, parts 1, 2 and 3) which serve our priority communities, to the best of its ability, given competing demands and limited capacity. It also provides free organizational meeting space (Article III, part 4) and provides space for rental activities and individuals (Article III, parts 5 and 6).
4. The 519 resolves disputes between groups regarding space, when conflicts arise.
5. The 519's anti harassment and anti discrimination policies, and their implementation, ensure that all users enjoy safe space, free from discrimination.
6. The 519 has safety procedures in place, including procedures for fire safety. These procedures are posted and otherwise available to facilitators and programme leaders.
7. The 519 promotes programmes that take place at The 519 through the web site, The 519 Newsletter and other means.
8. The 519 communicates with programme leadership and fosters communication between groups and throughout the community.
9. The 519 has a co-operative working relationship with all partnership programmes.

10. The 519 may advise programme leaders and facilitators regarding recommended meeting guidelines, leadership changeover, governance, and other issues.
11. Programme leaders and facilitators are given a free membership in recognition of their contribution as volunteers, and to facilitate communication between The 519 and the programme.

### **Responsibilities of Organizations and Individuals to The 519 Church Street Community Centre:**

1. Activities taking place at The 519 enhance and promote the purposes of The 519, as stated in the Mission Statement, Strategic Plan and Anti Discrimination Policy.
2. All groups, including those which are chapters of larger organizations, remain fully subject to The 519's policies, constitution and administrative guidelines.
3. All users of The 519 co-operate with the staff in keeping the building clean and safe. This includes, out of courtesy, stacking furniture and leaving a room neat and clean for the next user.
4. The leadership in every organization using space at The 519 is encouraged to become familiar with safety issues, such as fire exit procedures, and communicate regularly with their members about safety.
5. After each meeting, the number of attendees at the meeting should be reported to the front desk staff for The 519's records.

6. When there are leadership changes, the front desk staff must be notified of the contact information for the new facilitator or programme leader.
  
7. Programme leaders and facilitators are asked to encourage participants to become members of The 519 and to participate in other 519 activities
  
8. All programmes are open to new members. Facilitators and leaders are asked to encourage people in the local community to join or participate in their programme.
  
9. Community Programmes are non profit in organization and operation.
  
10. Community Programmes have an inclusive decision making process, with members able to participate in activities as organizers and co-ordinators, not merely as observers and supporters.
  
11. Partnership and community programmes should demonstrate the ability to successfully administer their own affairs, including keeping accurate financial records. These records may be reviewed by 519 staff on request.

### *Article III*

## Priorities and Definitions

### **Priorities:**

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In all of the categories defined below, groups serving the local community and groups serving the GLBTTI2Q communities, are given precedence according to the Strategic Planning document of 2003.

The following types of groups and activities are given priority for use of space at The 519:

- 519 Programmes and 519 Partnership Programmes , as defined below, have the highest priority for use of space.
- Community programmes have the next priority for use of space.
- Groups holding organizational meetings, rental groups and individuals have a lower priority for use of space.
  
- Once space is booked a group is not cancelled to accommodate a group from a higher priority category, unless there are exceptional circumstances.
- In exceptional circumstances, The 519 may clear the building by moving scheduled programmes off site or by canceling regularly scheduled meetings.

**Definitions:**

## **1. 519 PROGRAMMES**

- Are started by the board to provide:
  - o recreation,
  - o education,
  - o community service,
  - o professional support
- May include courses or workshops offered by 519 staff or contracted out by staff.

- Serve the local community and/or the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities in Toronto.
- Provide services to the community on site, and may provide outreach or education activities off site.
- Are co-ordinated by programme staff of The 519
- Have volunteers who are recruited through The 519's volunteer programme.
- Are funded through The 519's self-sustaining budget lines.
- Receive administrative and communications (design) support from the front desk / information centre staff of The 519.
- 519 programmes have free use of space at The 519.

## **2. 519 PARTNERSHIP PROGRAMMES**

- Are created by another agency in partnership with The 519 to provide:
    - o recreation,
    - o education,
    - o community service,
    - o professional support
  - May include courses or workshops offered by partner agency staff.
  - Serve the local community and/or the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities in Toronto.
  - Provide activities at The 519.
  - Activities are co-ordinated and provided by the partner agency's staff. The partner agency is a social service agency, non governmental organization (NGO) or government department with staff expertise in the programme they are offering.
  - Volunteers are recruited through the partner agency.
  - Activities are funded by the partner agency.
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- Relationship with The 519:
  - New partnership arrangements may address emerging problems, as identified by the Board.
  - New partnerships are negotiated by 519 staff in consultation with the executive director.
  - Contract arrangements with partnership agencies are negotiated based on what the agency is offering The 519, the agency's policies, and The 519's requirements. These factors may vary widely in each case, and contracts reflect these differences.
  - Rental fees for ongoing space, if assessed, are based on the cost to provide the space and utilities, and not on market value rents.
  - Rental fees will be charged for fundraising events, LLBO permitted events, conferences, parties, and for space booked outside of regular 519 hours.
  - The partner organization is responsible for its own fundraising. This does not preclude the possibility of a joint funding application with The 519.
  - A designated 519 staff liaises with agency staff to ensure smooth operations.

### **3. COMMUNITY PROGRAMMES**

- Are proposed to The 519 by volunteers in the community to provide:
  - recreation,
  - education,
  - community service,
  - self help and mutual support
- May include courses or workshops offered by volunteer instructors. Volunteer instructors may receive an honorarium from fees collected.

- Serve the local community and/or the lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans communities in Toronto.
- Core meetings and activities take place at The 519.
- Services are provided by volunteers who are peers and who have come together to form an independent group within The 519's structure. Volunteers are therefore recruited within each group.
- Have an inclusive decision making process, with participants involved as organizers and co-ordinators.
- Are organized on a non profit basis. Any fees charged are for expenses of the programme offered on site. Fees are approved by 519 staff. Financial records are open to 519 staff if requested.
- 519 front desk/information centre staff liaise with volunteer leaders and may provide support to these independent volunteers depending on needs and available resources.
- Space for Community Programmes is provided free of charge. Rental fees will be charged for fundraising events, LLBO permitted events, conferences, parties, and for space booked outside of regular 519 hours.

#### 4. Provision of space for Organizational Meetings

- Organizations in the following categories may book free meeting space at The 519:
  - o Off-site Recreation Planning Meetings
  - o Social Activists
  - o Professional Associations & Unions
  - o Tenants' Groups & Housing Co-ops
  - o Political Parties
  - o Community Fundraising Organizations

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- Community Based Research Projects
  - Social Service Agencies
  - Non Government Organizations (NGO's)
  - Government Departments
- Such meetings may serve either the local community or the broader community.
  - Meeting space at The 519 is available to organizations whose major activities take place away from The 519.
  - Organizational meeting space is provided free of charge. Rental fees will be charged for fundraising events, LLBO permitted events, conferences, parties, and for space booked outside of regular 519 hours. In addition, political parties must pay a rental fee during election campaigns.
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## **5. ARTS, COMMERCIAL AND INDIVIDUAL RENTALS**

Organizations not included in the categories above may rent space at The 519, subject to availability and The 519's policies, in the following circumstances.

- The organization will be charging admission or selling tickets for the event.
- The organization or individual is using space for auditions or rehearsals.
- The activity is taking place outside of regular 519 hours.
- The organization is doing fundraising during the event.
- The organization or individual has a Special Occasion Permit.
- The organization is holding a conference where a fee will apply to participants or where a grant has been obtained to run the conference, or where the conference is otherwise funded to include a budget for room fees.

- An organization or individual is holding a special event, such as a birthday party, anniversary or wedding.
- The space is to be used by a commercial enterprise.

Sale of goods or services for personal or corporate profit is prohibited at The 519.

#### 6. Use of space by individuals

When facilities are available, individuals who wish to use The 519's public facilities, such as the piano, are welcome to do so, subject to the discretion of the staff.

## Article IV

### Restrictions

Restrictions are in place for both free use of space and rental use of space.

#### **Religious interests:**

The 519 is a secular organization. All organizations and groups may engage in religious activities only on an occasional and peripheral basis. Under no circumstances are groups using space at The 519 to be involved in recruiting new members for any religion, faith, belief system or spiritual organization.

#### **Commercial interests:**

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The 519 is a community resource. Commercial rentals are restricted to company meetings or parties, and commercial film making.

Commercial activity is strictly prohibited, including commercial advertising, promotional meetings and sale of goods.

### **Health Care and Health Education:**

The 519 is not equipped for the provision of health care. However, community based health service agencies may provide health education workshops on an occasional basis, as long as these activities complement the work of 519 Programmes.

### **Self Help and Peer Support Groups:**

Peer support groups may not hire a professional facilitator. Self help groups with a professional facilitator must show 519 staff that arrangements for appropriate supervision are in place.

### **Counseling:**

All professional counselors operating as such in The 519 must have appropriate supervision either through The 519's counseling programme or through another agency, even if they are volunteers. Fees will not be charged to users of any counseling service taking place inside The 519.

### **Courses:**

Courses must meet a need in the community and may not serve a commercial interest. Therefore, courses serving people in the neighbourhood and/or serving the LGBTTI2Q community will be considered. Instructors' credentials will be examined by 519 staff to ensure the proposed course has educational merit.

Courses may be time limited or ongoing, and must strictly follow the policy on programme fees, below.

## **Article V**

### **Programme and Course Fees**

All programmes (Article III, parts 1, 2 and 3) providing activities or courses at The 519 may charge fees to participants. Fees are for the expenses of the programme offered on site, for example, for materials, memberships, and refreshments.

In addition, programmes may charge a fee to participants in order to provide honorariums to people assisting in the provision of the programme, such as the life drawing model, the square dance caller, or the leader of a tai chi practice group.

Programmes and courses must adhere to The 519's fundamental philosophy that no one will be turned away due to lack of finances. Programmes must have a method,

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approved by the office manager, for accepting members who are unable to pay set fees.

Fees will be reasonable for non profit organizations, and are subject to approval by 519 staff. Groups which

- a) refuse to admit people who can't afford the fees, or
- b) set fees that are at a commercial rather than non profit level,

may have their privileges at The 519 terminated.

The 519 does not monitor fees of groups holding organizational meetings (Article III, part 4).

#### *Donations to The 519*

All programmes charging a fee for any purpose are encouraged to make a yearly donation to The 519's general fund, for the purpose of supporting The 519's programmes.

## Article VI

### Review and Appeal

The 519 is not responsible for the content of community programmes, organizational meetings, or rental events (Article III, parts 3, 4 and 5) taking place on the premises. However, complaints can be brought forward to any staff person. Staff will direct the complaint for appropriate resolution.

#### Review

Programmes are subject to periodic review regarding compliance with this and other 519 policies.

The following are examples of serious concerns: undue noise, causing disturbances within The 519, engaging in commercial activities, allowing hate language to go unchallenged in meetings, or giving false information on the space use application form or update form.

For serious and unresolvable breaches of 519 policy, a programme or organization may have their privileges at The 519 terminated with one week's written notice.

#### Appeal

Community members who have an issue with the administration of this policy should discuss possible resolution of the issue with 519 staff.

Community members may appeal a staff decision to the Board through its space use and programme planning committee.



Matters eligible for appeal include:

- denial of a new programme or meeting space request
- termination of a group's meeting privileges at The 519
- conflict over participant fee levels

Appeals must be made in writing, and be submitted within 30 days of the incident in question. Appeals will be considered at the next meeting of the Board's space use and programme planning committee.

## Article VII

### **RENTAL FEES**

Rental fees, based on The 519's rental fee schedule, are charged to groups defined above in Article III, as being engaged in rental activities.

On rare occasions, at 519 initiative, rental fees or a performance bond may be waived.

Rental space is made available in part to raise funds for The 519's programmes.

#### **Setting Rental Rates:**

Rates and requirements for performance bonds will be reviewed by 519 staff from time to time.

### **Performance Bonds:**

A performance bond will be required for most rentals, the level to be determined by 519 staff. The performance bond may be retained, in full or in part, if the conditions of the contract are not fully observed.

If The 519 retains the entire performance bond due to serious breach of contract, then the group will no longer be permitted to use space at The 519. Serious breach of contract may include, but is not limited to, the following: total failure to clean up space, failure to comply with LLBO regulations even when requested to do so by 519 staff, failure to co-operate with staff on other matters, overcrowding, harassment of staff or other users.

### **Categories for rental fees:**

#### 1. Non Commercial Rates

Non-commercial fees for space are set so that non-profit groups have access to space at prices comparable to other community halls. These fees are offered to programmes and organizations, as defined in Article III, when they are involved in an activity requiring rental payments.

#### 2. Theatre and Arts Rates

Theatre and Arts groups are permitted to use space only during off-peak times. (Monday – Friday 9 a.m. – 5 p.m.) Theatre groups and artists may book space by the hour, day or week, if available.

#### 3. Commercial Rates

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Businesses may rent space for commercial film-making, business meetings or private parties.

Minimum commercial rates are set, but commercial enterprises may be assessed for higher fees depending on activities planned, and anticipated general disruption to the building.

Sale of goods or services for personal or corporate profit and / or the promotion of businesses through advertising or sales meetings at The 519 are not permitted.

In exceptional circumstances and for the purpose of fundraising for programmes, The 519 may clear the building for commercial film making by moving scheduled groups off site, or canceling meetings.

***Exceptions to commercial rates and “no sale of good” policy:***

Cultural and educational activities relevant to The 519’s community may have a commercial component. Book launches and art exhibits, for example, may take place as long as the event has a component relevant to our priority communities. Staff approval of the sale must be obtained in advance.

4. Individual Rates

Rates for individuals are set at slightly higher than non-commercial rates but at prices comparable to other community halls. A signed credit card slip will be required instead of a performance bond.

Individuals holding a special event should fall within the following guidelines:

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- Priority is given to residents of The 519's catchment area, users, and members of The 519.
- Individuals must be holding a special event such as: a wedding, cultural event, ceremony, memorial, birthday, or other one-time-only or infrequent event.
- To help prepare staff so that they can provide better service, the individual will give a description of any ceremonies to staff at the time of booking.
- Individuals may not book on a recurring basis
- Individuals may not conduct personal fundraising and/or business activities in The 519.
- If a religious ceremony takes place in conjunction with a special event, the religious activities, banners, etc. will be confined to the room that is booked .

#### 5. Staff Charges

When the building is open beyond the regular hours, additional staffing will be required. Staff charges will be added to any rental fees for space.

#### **Feedback regarding this policy**

If you have questions about The 519's space use policy or have suggestions for new activities, please contact The 519 at 416-392-6874 or [info@the519.org](mailto:info@the519.org).