

St. Helens Public Library Makerspace Policy

Overview

The St. Helens Public Library Makerspace is a community-driven space for makers of all ages, skill levels, and interests to connect, learn, and create using specialty equipment and tools that might not otherwise be accessible to the public. The Makerspace supports the Library's mission to provide optimal access to the best vocational, educational, and recreational information to the people of the Greater St. Helens area in order to promote and encourage lifelong learning, self-development, and life enhancement.

Accessing the Makerspace

Anyone wishing to use the Makerspace must sign a liability waiver and agree to this policy document. Minors must also have a parent or guardian sign for them. Users must review and sign these documents on a yearly basis.

The first time someone visits the Makerspace, they (or their parent/guardian, in the case of a minor) must present a photo ID and complete the liability waiver and policy agreement. For all subsequent visits, users must present a photo ID or their library card so staff can check to make sure their documentation is current.

The schedule and specific offerings of the Makerspace may change over time, but in general, the Library will offer classes, orientations to specific equipment, open labs, and access by appointment (including walk-in appointments) as staffing allows. The Makerspace schedule will be posted in person and online. Priority for the space will go to Library-led programs and other pre-scheduled activities and then on a first-come, first-served basis for open labs and appointments.

A maximum of 30 people are permitted in the makerspace at once, including staff or volunteers, with exceptions for certain library programs.

Age Requirement

Children ages 10 and under in the Makerspace must be supervised at all times by someone 18 or older, except during some staff-led library programs where children may be in the space without an adult at the staff member's discretion. Adults supervising children 10 and under cannot be working on their own projects in the Makerspace; their focus must be supervising the child.

Children ages 11 through 17 may use the Makerspace independently if they have a current liability waiver and policy agreement signed by a parent or guardian on file.

Certification and Use of the Equipment

Many items in the makerspace can be used without special training, while other equipment requires certification before it can be used. This certification consists of:

- Attending an orientation for that equipment
- Passing a safety check and skills test

Staff may waive the orientation requirement on a case-by-case basis for a user with previous experience with the equipment, but the safety check and skills test are mandatory. Staff will track which equipment certification users have completed. A list of what kind of training or certification is required for each piece of equipment is posted in the Makerspace. When using equipment that does not have a certification requirement, makers guarantee that they can use the equipment in a safe and proper manner.

Staff are not experts, but during open labs, staff will be available to assist Makerspace users with their project as co-learners as time permits. If staff availability is limited, the maker may schedule a one-on-one appointment for further assistance.

Cost of Use

Access to the Makerspace is free. Materials used in classes and orientations are provided free of charge; attendees agree to avoid wasting supplies as far as possible. For all other uses, a fee may be charged only to cover the cost of the materials. Prices for materials are posted in the Makerspace and are subject to change.

Payment for all materials must be made at the front desk of the Library by cash, check, or card. Users may be required to pay for particularly large or expensive projects before starting their project. Failure to pay for materials may result in users being disallowed from using the space. The Library will not offer refunds for materials purchased.

Makers may also use their own materials, subject to staff approval.

The Library also welcomes donations of materials but reserves the right not to accept donations that cannot be used and to remove donations that are no longer useful.

Safety Guidelines and Other Responsibilities

Makerspace visitors must always use the space safely and courteously. This includes:

- Following safe and standard operating procedures for all equipment and using tools only as they were intended to be used;
- Using appropriate safety equipment as needed;
- Wearing fitted attire, removing or tucking in dangling accessories, tying long hair back, and wearing close-toed shoes;
- Not bringing food, drink, or chewing gum into the Makerspace;
- Ensuring equipment that is in use is supervised by a credentialed user at all times;
- Accepting full responsibility for the condition of all equipment used, including the costs of replacements, repairs, or cleaning if the equipment is damaged during use;
- Promptly discontinuing use of anything that is unsafe or in need of repair and reporting all problems, concerns, or accidents to staff in a timely manner;
- Respecting the shared nature of all equipment, materials, storage, and work spaces;
- Keeping Makerspace equipment in the Makerspace;
- Not modifying Makerspace hardware or software or installing any new programs or applications on Makerspace devices;
- Connecting only Library computers to Makerspace equipment;

- Using their own digital storage (such as a USB drive or cloud storage service); and
- Finishing projects, cleaning and tidying workspaces, and returning tools and equipment to their designated locations before programs or open labs end.

The equipment provided in the Makerspace may be used only for lawful purposes. Users will not be permitted to use Makerspace tools to create material that:

- Is prohibited by local, state, or federal law;
- Is unsafe, harmful, or dangerous, or poses an immediate threat to the well-being of others (including guns and other weapons);
- Violates the Library's Rules of Conduct, Public Computer Usage Agreement, or Wireless Network Terms of Use; or
- Infringes on another's intellectual property rights. This includes material that is subject to copyright, patent, or trademark protection.

Laser cutting and 3D printing projects must be reviewed by staff before they go to production to ensure the file format, setting, and materials are correct. The Library reserves the right to refuse any project or to halt projects in progress. Any items left in the Makerspace for more than 30 days may be disposed of or become property of the Library. The Library assumes no responsibility for projects that are defective, destroyed, or do not function as expected.

Computers and tablets in the Makerspace are intended for creative projects. Staff may ask users to leave the Makerspace and use one of the Library's public computers for other uses (e.g., email, social media, general web browsing).

If digital files are left on Makerspace devices, the Library is not responsible if those files are altered, deleted, or viewed by others.

Staff reserve the right to disallow use of the Makerspace if users are not adhering to safety standards, the rules of the space, the Library Rules of Conduct, and reasonable requests or directions from staff. This process of exclusion and return of privileges will parallel Article 4. Enforcement in the Library's Rules of Conduct.