United States Department of the Interior
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
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EMS TRANSMISSION 06/12/2023
Instruction Memorandum No. 2023-046
Expires: 09/30/2026

To: Assistant Directors, State Directors, and Center Directors
Attn: Real Property Managers, State Engineers, and Leasing Contracting Officers

From: Assistant Director, Business Management and Administration

Subject: Space Authorizations and Design Standards

Program Area: Space Management, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Owned Facilities, GSA Delegated Direct Leased Facilities, General Services Administration (GSA) Provided Space.

Purpose: This Instruction Memorandum (IM) provides policy for all bureau office and warehouse space (leased and owned) in the acquisition, size, design, and assignment of space.

Administrative or Mission Related: Administrative.

Policy/Action: The BLM authorizations for space acquisition, size, design, and assignment of space are changed as indicated below.

All BLM facilities that initiate new GSA-delegated direct lease, GSA-provided space, or owned space projects (space projects) that involve whole building remodel, reconfiguration, lease (new or renewal), construction, or acquisition must adhere to all policies contained in this IM if the project initiates on or after the issuance date of this IM.

All space projects that involve partial remodel, reconfiguration, or lease extension should follow as much of the policy contained in this IM as possible within cost and scope constraints.

All space projects, including new and reconfigured space, in BLM-owned facilities shall comply with the most current edition of the *BLM Building Codes and Standards*, where applicable.

Office space allowances.

All new space projects must have the amount of allowable office square feet (SF) determined by the Bureau Senior Property Manager (SPM) before committing any funds to the project or interacting with the GSA to acquire space. Space projects that are only partially office space may have larger allowances for the mission need as long as the office space portion of the building follows all allowance policies contained in this IM. The space project local management and the SPM will coordinate to fill out and approve a *Space Reduction Calculation Worksheet* for project space authorization.

Office Space Allowance and Reduction Target (RT).

All new space projects must follow the allowances and reduction factors listed below.

- To align with current Department of the Interior (DOI) policy terminology, the BLM will no longer use Net Usable Square Feet (NUSF) when referencing the allowable square feet for space management and will replace it with Usable Square Feet (USF).

- Usable Square Feet per Person (USF/p) allowance.

    - District and below level offices (field offices, work sites, corrals, dispatch centers, fire stations, etc.) shall follow the published DOI USF/p standard, currently this standard is 180 USF/p. The allowed USF/p will be calculated according to Attachment 1 of the *Department of the Interior Acquisition, Assistance, and Asset Policy 0049, Office Space Utilization Design Standard* (AAAP-0049). These offices must also use the below remote work and telework reduction factors when determining allowable space.

    - Headquarters offices, the National Operations Center (NOC), the National Interagency Fire Center (NIFC), and State offices shall follow a two-step process to determine the allowable space for projects.

        - Step One: Follow the same process as district and below offices (above), if the resulting USF/p allowance is more than 150 USF/p then go to step two. If the resulting USF/p is 150 USF/p or lower use that allowance and do not go to step two.

        - Step Two: The office shall use 150 USF/p as the standard and will not use the remote work and telework reduction factors.

        - This process ensures that higher level offices within the BLM are at or below 150 USF/p. These offices have missions that better support the use of remote work and telework and are larger which allows them to achieve better economies of scale in space use.

- For owned and direct leased space, the AAAP-0049 Gross Square Feet and Rentable Square Feet (respectively) allowances above the USF shall remain unchanged.

- When offices are co-located, the higher-level office at the location will determine what process is used to determine USF/p allowances.

- Reduction Factors for Remote Work and Telework.

  - The DOI Memorandum *Implementation of the Department of the Interior's Future of Work Space Strategy* (FOW Memo) dated November 10, 2022, provides additional guidance for allowances for new office space. Attachment 2 of the FOW Memo provides the calculation guidance for the following reduction factors.

  - Remote Work. The Remote Work Reduction Factor (RWR) will be applied to the allowable USF/p as follows.

    - The RWR is set by multiplying the number of remote workers by 180 SF multiplied by a Risk Mitigation Factor (RMF) (# remote workers x 180 x RMF = RWR).

    - The initial RMF is set at 50% by the SPM but can be adjusted through collaboration with the local management (senior manager working in the building or their designee).

    - The RWR will be subtracted from the allowable USF/p for space projects.

  - Telework. The Telework Reduction Factor (TWR) will be applied to the allowable USF/p as follows.

    - The TWR is set by multiplying the percentage of the workforce regularly teleworking (A) by the percentage of time that workforce is teleworking (B) multiplied by a Space Configuration Factor (SCF) (A x B x SCF = TWR).

    - The SCF is set by the SPM in collaboration with the local management and the Real Estate Leasing Services section (OC-651) and can be set between 0.4 and 0.65.

    - The TWR will be subtracted from the allowable USF/p for space projects.

The RT is set by calculating the USF/p allowance and subtracting the RWR and TWR (USF/p allowance – RWR – TWR = RT). The RT is the allowable USF for the space project, exempt space (as listed in AAAP-0049) will be added to the allowable USF to determine the total office USF.

Personnel Counts.

Local office management will collaborate with the SPM to identify personnel working in the office and the status of those personnel (remote worker, teleworker, etc.) to calculate the above office space reduction factors. Personnel working in an office fall into one of two categories, Federal Employee or Federal Contractor. These categories are defined below.

- Federal Employee. Offices should count all Federal employees assigned to the office. Include Remote Workers, Fulltime, Part Time, Seasonal, and Intern employees in this category. Include BLM and other hosted Federal employees as well as those working as collaborators, in space used by another agency through an Interagency Agreement (IA), or any other agreement. Approved, vacant positions shall be counted.

- Federal Contractor. Offices should count all non-Federal Employee personnel working in the office in this category. Include Volunteers, Contractors, Operating Entities, State/Local Government Employees, and Tribal Workers in this category. Vacant positions shall be counted. When counting volunteers, a by-person analysis of amount of time spent in office and type of workspace needed should be considered when determining total amount of volunteer space allowable.

This personnel count guidance shall be used for all space projects and personnel counts for the annual 5-Year Space Management Plan.

Authorized Workspace.

Authorized personnel workspace should align with employment status, remote work status, telework status, and the number of days worked in the office per pay period. Any working conditions defined or required within this IM will be bargained and set in consultation with union representation in offices where union representation exists.

Remote workers must have a BLM office assigned as their duty station to be authorized workspace in an office. If their duty station is their home, they are not authorized workspace in an office and will utilize available empty space when visiting an office.

Any employee with authorized regular telework should be authorized workspace in their assigned office based on equitable distribution of workspace and amount of telework performed per pay period.

Federal Contractors are authorized the same space allowances as Federal Employees. Employees shall be authorized workspace only at their duty station office. Visiting personnel not assigned to an office as their duty station will utilize available empty space when visiting an office.

Workspace Assignment.

Office management shall assign workspace types (cubicles, hotel stations, etc.) in an equitable manner according to the percentage of time worked in the office per pay period. Seasonal work schedule changes, seasonal employment, and type of work performed should also be considered when assigning workspace.

Use of shared workspace is encouraged whenever possible to increase the amount of space available for other needs such as conference rooms and break rooms. Offices are encouraged to coordinate days of the week that office groups are in the office to further reduce needed workspace and increase sharing of workspaces.

Private Offices.

To ensure consistency across the BLM, all new, remodeled, or reconfigured facilities will only provide enclosed offices for the positions listed below. No other employee shall be assigned an office without approval of the Assistant Director, Business Management and Administration (HQ-700).

These positions are authorized an individual office with a visitor space, consisting of one to two chairs with no table, based on their leadership duties, supervisory duties, or the nature of their work:

- Division/Deputy State Director level managers and above at the HQ, State Offices, and National Centers.
- District/ Field Office Manager and Deputy District/ Assistant Field Office Manager level in the field.
- Senior supervisor at facilities such as Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) bases, corrals, field work sites, etc.
- Fire Management Officers.
- Human Resources Officers.
- Supervisory Criminal Investigators.
- Special Agents within the Office of Professional Responsibility.
- Uniformed Supervisory Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs).

These positions are authorized an office without visitor space based on the sensitive nature of their work. These positions are encouraged to share offices within their functional area if possible:

- Uniformed LEOs.
- Special Agents.
- Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) employees.
- Employee Relations/ Labor Relations (ER/LR) employees.
- The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) employees.

Branch Chief positions in Headquarters, State, and Center offices are authorized offices if the local office senior manager determines the office can do so without exceeding the office USF allowance. Caution must be used to not negatively affect the size of employee workspaces, conference rooms, or other shared spaces such as break rooms.

Authorized size of workspaces.

Offices. Unless noted below, private offices within a BLM workspace shall not exceed 120 SF.

- Field Office Manager and District Manager offices shall not exceed 150 SF.
- Associate State Directors, Associate Center Directors, and HQ Deputy Assistant Directors offices shall not exceed 200 SF.
- Senior Executive Service (SES) managers' offices should be commensurate with the needs of those positions and the space that is available within the facility to accommodate slightly larger office spaces. These offices may incorporate small (4-8 person) meeting tables in the office in addition to seating for two to four visitors.
- Political Appointee office sizes are determined on a case-by-case basis.

Employee workstations. In all new, remodeled, or reconfigured facilities cubicles shall not exceed 64 SF and hoteling stations shall not exceed 30 SF. Office management may make exceptions on a case-by-case basis for employees who must work with large documents such as maps, construction/architectural drawings, and planning documents, exceptions will be made for the minimum workstations needed.

- Cubicles are defined as any workspace enclosed on three sides with storage space provided.
- Hoteling stations are defined as any workspace that is not assigned to a specific employee, does not provide storage space, and is only enclosed around the desk. Hoteling stations shall not exceed five feet of linear desk space.

Suites. Separated, securable workspaces (suites) are authorized for the Director, Deputy Directors, State Directors, Center Directors, the Director of the Office of Law Enforcement and Security (OLES), Regional Special Agents in Charge (SAC), and human resources groups. Functionally associated personnel, cubicles, offices, appropriately-sized conference rooms, and other necessary space associated with the work of these employees may be located within the suite.

Physical Security.

When planning new space, offices shall reference the BLM Manual Section 9173 - Physical Security Program and the current building Facility Security Assessment (FSA), and include the Bureau Physical Security Specialist (HQ-750) in planning reviews.

If Space Management guidance conflicts with Physical Security guidance in space planning, Physical Security guidance will be followed.

All physical security features installed in the office (Personnel Access Control Systems (PACS), cameras, door locks, vehicle gates, etc.) shall be integrated into one coherent office physical security plan. This plan will be reviewed by the Bureau Physical Security Specialist or their delegated representative. No physical security feature shall be added to the office without review for compatibility and integration into the office physical security plan.

Office Space Design.

The interior design of offices should create a welcoming space with maximum natural light distributed throughout the workspace. Open space within all office areas should be maximized within the constraints of the building architecture. Across the BLM, offices vary greatly in how they look and function as well as design efficiency. To continue to standardize BLM office spaces to modern design practices, provide the flexibility to fit within a specific building, control the cost of interior design aspects of projects, and create efficiencies in the design process, the below guidance shall be followed in all designs.

- To increase natural light (daylight harvesting) in BLM offices the following workspace guidance should be followed wherever possible.
    - All offices and conference rooms shall be located towards the interior of the building wherever possible. Field and District Manager offices may be located to view office entrances/parking areas for situational awareness purposes. Cubicles, hotel spaces, and other employee workspaces shall be located towards the exterior of the building wherever possible. All Conference rooms and offices will maximize light in the room by using glass or translucent material orientated towards exterior walls with windows as much as possible within cost and structural constraints.
    - All cubicle walls are suggested to be a maximum of 72 inches tall. All wall material above approximately 65 inches will be made of frosted glass or another translucent material that allows light to pass through at a level that does not darken the adjacent

workspaces. These heights will be managed on a case-by-case basis to use standard heights of the various furniture manufacturers and avoid custom wall heights.

- Cubicles and hoteling stations should be oriented to allow for personnel to concentrate and limit visual distractions whenever possible.

- Workspace that exceeds 1,000 SF of open space (office area with no walls or visible disruptions) may use partitions every 150 linear feet to allow for noise abatement and visual interruption. Offices should not appear tunnel- or cave-like due to a large, open space. Partitions shall not be floor to ceiling and shall maximize building and fire codes allowances. Partitions shall be made of or covered in sound dampening material.

- To meet government-wide energy savings targets, passive daylighting and high-efficiency Light-emitting Diode (LED) lighting shall be used in all workspaces.

    - Task lighting should be used within workspaces to increase brightness for individual employee's needs. Caution should be used when increasing lighting above Illuminating Engineering Society (IES) standards and should only be done through the employee accommodation process.

    - When LEDs are not appropriate, offices should consult with the Branch of Architecture & Engineering (OC-670) for technical direction on alternatives.

- Offices shall utilize High Density Storage Systems (HDSS) for all files and library material. HDSS shall be located centrally at the interior of the building. Programs with secure filing needs will use dedicated, locking file space within the office HDSS. Larger offices may have more than one location for HDSS based on floorplan and ease of access by different organizational groups.

    - Dockets/ Land Records shall be stored in HDSS and be co-located with public rooms.

    - Offices with central libraries shall place the library material in HDSS.

    - A Structural Engineer shall be consulted prior to installation of HDSS systems.

    - Offices shall ensure HDSS installation meets all building and fire code restrictions and requirements (18 inches of clearance between ceiling and top of HDSS, etc.).

- Offices shall combine printer and plotter locations centrally within the interior of the workspace wherever possible and reduce the number of printers and plotters to the minimum needed to successfully complete the mission. Printer/plotter spaces shall have solid walls of 72 inches covered with sound dampening materials. Employees should not have to walk more than 100 feet to reach a printer.

- Conference rooms shall be limited to seating appropriate to the office level of remote work and telework utilization and mission. All new or remodeled conference rooms shall have technology equipment installed that provides inclusivity to all remote workers and teleworkers.

    - Offices with public meeting requirements may have one larger conference room to meet the historical need of public meetings. These conference rooms should be co-located with the public room but securable from both the public room and the rest of the office space.

- Mailrooms, receiving space, and dock space should be co-located and reduced to the minimum needed to successfully complete the mission. Mailrooms and received property space shall be secured with minimal employee access.

- Law enforcement storage space allowances.

    - Uniformed LEO are authorized one climate-controlled, secured evidence-storage room no larger than 150 SF. If more than one LEO is assigned to an office, they shall share evidence storage rooms and an additional 50 SF may be added to the storage room per LEO. LEO evidence storage rooms shall not exceed 300 SF regardless of number of LEOs assigned to office. Storage needs for firearms and equipment of LEO shall utilize a separate secured storage room no larger than 150 SF, an additional 50 SF may be added to the storage room per LEO. LEO storage rooms shall not exceed 300 SF regardless of number of LEOs assigned to office. Further storage shall utilize exterior storage units in ware yards in adherence with General Order 28, Evidence.

    - Special Agents are authorized one climate-controlled, secured evidence-storage room no larger than 150 SF. If more than one Special Agent is assigned to an office, they shall share evidence storage rooms and an additional 50 SF may be added to the storage room per agent. Special Agents evidence storage rooms shall not exceed 300 SF regardless of number of agents assigned to office. Storage needs for firearms and equipment of Special Agents shall utilize a separate secured storage room no larger than 150 SF, an additional 50 SF may be added to the storage room per agent. Special Agent storage rooms shall not exceed 300 SF regardless of number of agents assigned to an office. Further storage shall utilize exterior storage units in ware yards in adherence with General Order 28, Evidence.

    - If both LEOs and Special Agents are assigned to the same office and they agree that combined storage would meet their needs, they are authorized storage space as if they were all either LEO or Special Agents. Specifically, they would be authorized one climate-controlled, secured evidence-storage room no larger than 150 SF. For each LEO or Special Agent above one assigned to an office, an additional 50 SF may be added to the storage room. Under these circumstances, law enforcement evidence storage rooms shall not exceed 300 SF regardless of

number of LEOs and Special Agents assigned to the office. Storage needs for firearms and equipment of LEO and Special Agents shall utilize a separate secured storage room no larger than 150 SF, an additional 50 SF may be added to the storage room per LEO or Special Agent. LEO and Special Agent storage rooms shall not exceed 300 SF regardless of number of agents assigned to an office.

Ware Yards and Parking Locations.

Any location that has BLM vehicles parked overnight (not home to work vehicles) should provide a secure parking area behind fencing that is only accessible to BLM employees whenever possible (if other Federal employees or cooperators are authorized unaccompanied access to the building, they are authorized access to parking areas). When secure parking areas cannot be provided, additional security such as cameras and lighting must be installed to increase the security for the government vehicles.

To support the requirements of *Executive Order 14057, Catalyzing Clean Energy Industries and Jobs Through Federal Sustainability*, all new locations (owned and leased), as well as any current location performing parking area remodel or resurfacing, must perform planning for the supply of Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE, or chargers) and 'future proof' the parking area by installing conduit that will support the installation of EVSE in the future. Refer to *HQ Instruction Memorandum 2023-020, Future Proofing of Fleet Parking Areas for Fleet Electrification and Initial Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment* for further information on this requirement.

Ware yards should be secured separately from parking areas and large enough to support the mission of the office. All resident office programs should be consulted when designing new ware yards.

All fire vehicles should have a minimum of overhead cover to reduce weather related degradation of fire equipment. In areas with freezing winter conditions the preferred parking solution for fire vehicles with pumps is a temperature-controlled garage.

When possible other motorized equipment (motorcycles, UTVs, mowing equipment, etc.) should be provided overhead cover or enclosed storage to reduce weather related degradation.

Ware yards and secure parking locations shall have powered vehicle gates controlled by the office PACS. Ware yard gates shall not be left open.

Warehouses.

Warehouses (stand alone and office integrated) shall use the minimum amount of space needed to support the mission. When designing new space projects, warehouse size shall be reduced a minimum of five percent from existing size to support the DOI and BLM goal of bureau wide warehouse space reduction of three percent.

Whenever possible new and remodeled warehouses shall minimize program dedicated areas (cages) and utilize individually locking shelving and cabinetry.
Warehouses shall incorporate the use of high-piled vertical steel racking wherever possible that is constructed in accordance with Rack Manufacturers Institute (RMI) standards and installed as per building code.

Shared warehouse space (shops, vehicle bays, ATV storage, caches, etc.) should minimize square footage through shared walkways, open areas, and warehouse access points.

Timeframe: This IM is effective immediately.

Budget Impact: The requirements of this IM will control costs in leased and owned space.

Background: This IM implements the policies within the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Memorandum M-12-12, Promoting Efficient Spending to Support Agency Operations, the AAAP-0049, the DOI memorandum Program Improvements for Space Management, and the DOI memorandum Implementation of the Department of the Interior's Future of Work Space Strategy.

Manual/ Handbook Sections Affected: Manual Section 1535- Space Management and Manual Section1530- Real Property will have relevant policies contained within this IM changed when updated. HQ IM 2021-030- Office Space Authorizations is rescinded.

Coordination: This IM was coordinated with the Field Committee (FC), the Business Management Council (BMC), the Office of Law Enforcement and Security (HQ-120), the Branch of Engineering & Asset Management (HQ-754), the Branch of Architecture & Engineering (OC-670), the Branch of Site and Facilities Management (FA-240), the Real Estate Leasing Services Section (OC-651), the Bureau Physical Security Specialist (HQ-750), the Engineering Advisory Team (EAT), State Engineers, and State Real Property Managers.

Contact: For policy-related questions, contact Jason Moss, Bureau Senior Property Manager, Branch of Engineering and Asset Management (HQ-754), at jmoss@blm.gov or 303-236-5413. For project technical assistance, contact Stephen Cole, Section Chief, Planning, Design & Construction Section (OC-671), at scole@blm.gov or 303-236-1158.

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