



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, DC 20240



Memorandum

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To: Space Management Partnership

From:  Michael C. Wright, Space Management Specialist  
Space Coordination Office

Subject: Space Management Utilization Guidance

With space costs rising, the assignment and utilization of space is an area of increased management focus. This office has prepared a new directive for management concerning utilization. The directive is currently going through the signature process, but given the length of time required to implement this change, this memorandum serves as notice of the change all bureaus should incorporate immediately into their space planning.

The directive will implement the requirements of the June 20, 2010, Presidential Memorandum on reducing the Federal real property footprint and enhancing utilization of existing assets. The President's Memorandum requires Agencies to "take immediate steps to make better use of remaining real property assets as measured by utilization and occupancy rates, annual operating cost, energy efficiency, and sustainability." Following are space standards for bureaus and offices related to these regulations and guidance.

Departmental bureaus and offices are required to provide a quality workplace environment that supports program operations and preserves the value of real property assets. Bureaus and offices must provide assignment and utilization standards that maximize the value of Federal real property resources and improve the productivity of the people who work there.

In these times of austere budgets, bureaus and offices must promote the optimum use of space for each assignment at the minimum cost to the Government. Space should be assigned based on statutes and regulations, mission requirements, and principles of professional space management. Space requirements based on pay grade or maximum area per person are no longer mandated by Federal regulations or stipulated by GSA.

Given the increased management focus on controlling the cost of space, the Department is reducing the utilization standard of 200 usable square feet per person when acquiring new or additional GSA-provided or direct leased space, or when planning requirements for general purpose space in owned facilities. While a quality workspace that supports program operations remains a requirement, to comply with the recent Presidential and OMB directives, the Department must decrease its overall footprint. Therefore, a reduction of 10 percent from the 200 usable square feet to 180 usable square feet per person standard has been determined to be both attainable for the bureaus and sufficient to allow continued mission accomplishment. This figure includes all individual and shared space such as workstations, internal circulation,

storage, and conference rooms. Exclusions include warehouses and special purpose space including but not limited to bureau libraries, laboratories, and evidence rooms.

A few bureaus have already attained this utilization level, and many others have shown significant improvements in utilization over the last four years. Methods used by the bureaus to achieve reduced utilization rates include an increase in the number of employees who telework, combined with hoteling of employees (where a work station is shared by multiple employees), annual office clean-up days, open-space floor plan configurations, minimizing the use of private offices, and collocations of offices. These efforts must continue to ensure that we optimize already limited space and related costs.

Since this change requires immediate actions, this memorandum serves as notification of the pending change to the utilization requirements detailed in 425 DM Chapter 3, Space Management, until such time as the Department manual chapter can be amended. At that time, the Space Management Handbook will also be updated to reflect the new 180 square feet per person utilization rate standard.

Please contact me if you have questions.