



Administrative Policy
Space Utilization and Furniture Standards

AP 7-4

AP Add No.

Effective Date:

Upon Approval

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to establish consistent and cost-effective procedures for standardizing office space and furniture required to optimize space and effectively provide City services.

2. OBJECTIVE

The objectives of this policy are to:

- 2.1 develop a long-range plan that addresses departmental space and furniture requirements for City facilities and that complies with the City of Houston Workplace Guidelines maintained by the General Services Department;
- 2.2 establish and standardize a City-wide space planning and furniture management system; and
- 2.3 design and implement new configurations and new office space that generally meet the criteria of 85% open office space and 15% closed office space.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This Administrative Policy applies to all departments and employees of the City. This policy also applies to all City funds including enterprise funds and special revenue funds, except Houston Airport System funds.

4. DEFINITIONS

Department Coordinator: A designated employee who acts as the primary liaison for the requesting department and conducts general oversight of all design, purchase, relocation and construction of facilities or space occupied by the employee's respective department to the extent of the authority granted to the employee by the employee's department director.

City of Houston Workplace Guidelines and Standards: Set of guidelines established and maintained by the Director of the General Services Department (GSD) outlining administrative space allocations and furniture standards. These guidelines are available at <https://houtx.sharepoint.com/sites/gsd/gf/>, or other such online location designated by the GSD Director or designee.

Facility Inventory: A list of buildings, property, real property, and warehouse facilities the City owns, leases, or plans to own or lease.

Non-Standard Furniture Request: Furniture to be purchased for areas other than a private office, or furniture for a private office other than desks, chairs, bookcases, or credenzas. Example: sofa, end tables, or stools.

5. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

5.1 The General Services Department (GSD) is responsible for:

- 5.1.1 Compiling and maintaining a Facility Inventory and an inventory of future space needs;

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- 5.1.2 Directing and coordinating City-wide space planning, furniture requirements and facility analysis;
- 5.1.3 Evaluating departmental furniture and space requests against the City of Houston Workplace Guidelines and Standards;
- 5.1.4 Space planning and furniture coordination for leased facilities;
- 5.1.5 Selecting consultants approved in the City's Task Order Contracting Program or other consultants hired pursuant to applicable laws for space planning and facility analysis;
- 5.1.6 Selecting all interior paint colors and finishes for client departments; and
- 5.1.7 Coordinating furniture installation with authorized vendors, contractors, and subcontractors.

5.2 Each department director is responsible for:

- 5.2.1 Providing current and accurate information of the department's owned, leased, and planned facilities for inclusion in the Facility Inventory;
- 5.2.2 Designating at least one employee to serve as the Department Coordinator;
- 5.2.3 At the commencement of schematic design, establishing a new configuration and new office space by implementing an administrative space allocation of approximately 85% open office space and approximately 15% closed office space; and
- 5.2.4 Ensuring project funds are available on each project.

5.3 The Department Coordinator is responsible for:

- 5.3.1 Conducting general oversight of all planning, design, purchase, relocation and construction of facilities or space occupied by the coordinator's respective department, to the extent that the department director delegates these duties to the coordinator;
- 5.3.2 Providing documentation of approval by the department director of layout design and purchases; and
- 5.3.3 Approving plans and purchases prior to work being performed or purchases being made.

6. PROCEDURES

6.1 Inventory Accountability

- 6.1.1 Annually, each Department Coordinator shall provide a current list of the department's City-owned and leased facilities to the GSD Real Estate Manager. This list should include primarily office and warehouse facilities. Water treatment plants, material storage facilities, and utility structures, etc. do not need to be included on the list unless office staff and furniture are present in those spaces.
- 6.1.2 GSD Real Estate will compile and maintain a Facility Inventory. All planned facilities scheduled to be completed in the then-current fiscal year shall be included in the Facility Inventory.

6.2 Departmental Request for Additional Furniture and/or Space

- 6.2.1 Each requesting department shall determine its need for additional furniture and space within the limits of its approved budget.

- 6.2.2 The department director, or his or her designee, will record the need for space and furniture using the Client Request Task Information Form and Furniture Request Form B and submit this information to the GSD Strategic Planning Senior Project Manager for analysis and approval.
- 6.2.3 All Non-Standard Furniture Requests shall be approved by the Mayor's Deputy Chief of Staff unless the request is health related. If the request is health-related, the request shall be handled pursuant to A.P. 3-34: Reasonable Accommodation Policy for Employees and Applicants with Disabilities.

6.3 GSD Request Analysis

- 6.3.1 Upon receipt of a department's request for additional furniture and/or space, GSD will determine the approximate furniture and space required.
- 6.3.2 GSD will determine whether the department's furniture/space requirements can be met with existing City inventory.
- 6.3.3 GSD will provide the requesting department a design of the reconfigured furniture, request proposals from the City vendor, and coordinate the installation of the furniture with all necessary trade-crafters.
- 6.3.4 If the request for additional space or furniture cannot be met with existing inventory, GSD will conduct a cost analysis to determine whether to purchase furniture or for space considerations, whether to build, purchase or lease the additional space and present its recommendation to the requesting department director for consideration.

6.4 Departmental Acceptance of Space Request Plan

- 6.4.1 If the requesting department decides to proceed with the GSD recommendation on its space request, the Department Coordinator will submit the Project Initiation Form, and provide funding using the Supplemental Allocation Form. GSD will initiate design and construction in accordance with the City of Houston Workplace Guidelines and Standards.
- 6.4.2 GSD or a City vendor under the direction of GSD will be responsible for initiating and managing all design.

6.5 Departmental Acceptance of Furniture Request Plan

- 6.5.1 Once the GSD Strategic Planning Senior Project Manager issues an approved Form B to the requesting department, the requesting department shall issue a requisition, based on the final furniture quotation, to the Strategic Procurement Division (SPD) and accompanied by the approved Furniture Request Form B with a quotation that is no older than 30 days from the date of the requisition issuance.
- 6.5.2 GSD shall be responsible for selecting and specifying the furniture in accordance with the City of Houston Workplace Guidelines and Standards. After receiving the requisition and approved Furniture Request Form B, SPD shall place the order and issue a purchase order or service release order, as applicable.
- 6.5.3 When the furniture arrives, GSD will be responsible for overseeing the delivery and installation.
- 6.5.4 If the furniture request plan is associated with a Capital Improvement Plan project, the furniture design, purchase, and installation will be included in the project, and GSD shall be responsible for coordinating all aspects of the furniture request plan.

7. EXCEPTIONS

- 7.1 A department director may submit a request to the General Services Director seeking an exception to this City of Houston Workplace Guidelines and Standards or the requirement to comply with the space allocation of 85% open office space and 15% closed office space along with a justification for the exception. The GSD Director will provide a written decision to the requesting department director within 30 days.

8. RELATED DOCUMENTS AND INFORMATION

- Space Types
- Modular Workspace Footprints
- Client Request Task Information Form
- Furniture Request Form B
- Project Initiation Form
- Supplemental Allocation Form

9. CONFLICT AND REPEAL

- 9.1 This Administrative Policy supersedes Administrative Policy 7-4, effective April 19,2012, which shall be of no further force or effect.

10. POLICY SPONSOR

Department: General Services Department