



ADMINISTRATIVE MEMORANDUM No. 140

SUBJECT: POLICY ON OFFICE SPACE ADMINISTRATION AND ALLOCATION

CONSIDERING,

That, in an effort to maximize the efficient use of space at all General Secretariat buildings, it is necessary to set out clear guidelines and procedures for the administration and allocation of workspaces, specifically, individual offices,

THE DECISION:

To adopt the Policy on Office Space Administration and Allocation as set forth in Annex A.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jay Anania".

Jay N. Anania

Secretary for Administration and Finance

Original: English
February 23, 2022

ANNEX A

POLICY ON OFFICE SPACE ADMINISTRATION AND ALLOCATION

Secretariat for Administration and Finance (SAF)

Department of General Services (DGS)

February 2022

POLICY ON OFFICE SPACE ADMINISTRATION AND ALLOCATION

1. Scope

This Policy on Office Space Administration and Allocation (hereinafter Policy) establishes the guidelines and procedures under which the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States (hereinafter General Secretariat or GS/OAS) manages and assigns work space.

2. Background

OAS Member States have historically instructed the General Secretariat to maximize rental income to offset deferred and recurring maintenance costs. Prior to the global pandemic, the GS/OAS leased out over 47,000 sq. ft, or about 20% of its footprint, to third parties, and the prevailing standard workspace nationally averaged 218 Rentable Square Feet (RSF), while the GS/OAS allocated an average of 323 RSF/workspace in the General Secretariat Building and 417 RSF/workspace in the Administration Building. Standards have shifted as a result of social distancing, and the needs of the General Secretariat have also changed due to a dramatic drop in rental income.

Similarly, as the GS/OAS modernizes its office spaces over time subject to austerity and budget limitations, workforce members may expect to see increased reliance on remote telecommuting. Some of the more active telecommuters, particularly independent contractors, may be users of a pool of unassigned cubicles on the occasions they are working from GS/OAS properties.

The Department of General Services of the Secretariat for Administration and Finance, the Department charged with directing the assignment, use, and maintenance of office space at all OAS properties under Executive Order No. 08-01. Rev. 7, will endeavor to keep Secretariats, Departments and Offices co-located in contiguous office space. However, this may not always be possible due to rapidly changing requirements and existing office space configuration limitations.

3. Definitions and Abbreviations

- 3.1 Area Footprint: The area within the overall building assigned to a particular GS/OAS dependency (e.g., to a Secretariat or Department).
- 3.2 ADM: Administration Building, located on Constitution and 19th Street.
- 3.3 DGS: Department of General Services.
- 3.4 GSA: General Services Administration.
- 3.5 GSB: General Secretariat Building, located at 1889 F Street, NW.
- 3.6 GS/OAS: General Secretariat of the Organization of American States.
- 3.7 RSF: rentable square footage, which includes usable square footage plus a portion of the building's shared space (lobby, restrooms, hallways, meeting spaces, etc.).
- 3.8 SAF: Secretariat for Administration and Finance.
- 3.9. Workforce member: Staff members and other human resources of the General Secretariat as defined in Article 17 of the General Standards to Govern the Operations of the General Secretariat.

4. Administration and Allocation of Office Space

4.1 The administration of Area Footprints assigned to GS/OAS dependencies and of workspaces assigned to individuals will be the sole responsibility of DGS within SAF. Secretaries and Directors may relocate individuals within their dependency's annually allocated Footprint so long as the allocation guidelines below are followed, and upon advance written notification to DGS.

4.2 Allocation Guidelines

4.2.1 Area Footprint Allocation: DGS will periodically review the Area Footprint assigned to all GS/OAS dependencies and will make adjustments according to the changing needs of the General Secretariat. Consideration will be given to staff growth or attrition in any given dependency and may result in adjustments at intervals throughout the year. If changes are implemented during the year, the Secretary or Director of the affected dependency will be notified in writing.

4.2.2 Cubicles: Cubicle configurations will follow the GS standard of 64SF/person or 35SF/person, depending on the number and grade level configuration of workforce members in the Area Footprint. All workspaces will comply with industry, security, and fire safety guidelines.¹

¹ OSHA, 29 CFR 1910.146, defines a confined space as any space that is "large enough and so configured that an employee can bodily enter and perform assigned work." OSHA does not provide a minimum requirement for the dimensions of a confined space or cubicle, but at minimum each employee assigned to the area should be able to enter, exit and work in the space comfortably.

4.2.3 Individual offices: Staff members of a grade level of P04 or higher, or consultants or Associate Staff Members with remuneration equivalent to or higher than a P04 grade level,² may occupy individual offices, subject to availability. Assignment of individual offices to staff members below the P04 level is subject to the exceptions indicated under Section 5 below.

4.2.4 Assignment by grade level and seniority: In the case where the number of workforce members who are eligible for individual offices within a given Area Footprint exceeds the availability of individual offices assigned in that Area, the offices shall be distributed first according to the grade level and next to the amount of time the staff member has served at that grade level.

5. Exceptions

Within each area's Area Footprint:

5.1 Shared Space: DGS may assign multiple workforce members to share a single office space.

5.2 Special accommodations: DGS will assign an individual office to a workforce member who because of a medically certified disability requires an individual office to reasonably enable him or her to do his or her job, unless doing so poses an undue hardship for the General Secretariat, in which case it will analyze other means of possible accommodation.

5.3 Bonafide Operational Necessity: DGS may assign an individual office irrespective of grade level if the nature of the work performed so demands. These allowances will be reviewed and authorized on an exceptional basis and must be accompanied by a pre-authorization from the responsible Secretary along with a detailed justification.

5.4 Temporary Assignment: DGS may assign an individual office on an ad hoc basis to individuals with a grade level of P03 or below if said allocation is intended to be temporary in nature or transitional, and there is availability within the requesting area's Footprint.

Exceptional assignments of individual offices under provisions 5.1-5.3 above will displace any offices assigned under provision 5.4. Requests will be met first through availability within the Department, and if exhausted, then by the related Secretariat's Footprint.

² In the case of consultants or Associate Staff Members, they must possess a remuneration level that is equivalent to a P04 or higher in order to be eligible for placement in an individual office.