

**STATE OF COLORADO  
OFFICE OF THE STATE ARCHITECT  
REAL ESTATE PROGRAM - POLICIES AND PROCEDURES  
CHAPTER 7 - OFFICE SPACE STANDARDS FOR LEASED OFFICE SPACE**

**Office Space Standards for Leased Office Space**

Colo. Rev. Stat. § 24-30-1303 (1) (i) states that the Office of the State Architect shall:

(i) Develop, or cause to be developed, with the approval of the governor, specific standards relating to office space, to architectural, structural, mechanical, and electrical systems in such office space, and to energy conservation in such office space, except in higher education as provided in section 23-1-106, C.R.S., which shall be the basis for approving facilities master plans, facility program plans, schematic designs, design development phases, and construction documents relating to the lease, acquisition, or construction of office space; except that such standards shall be approved by the president of the senate and the speaker of the house of representatives when they concern space, systems, or energy conservation in that portion of the capitol buildings group which is under the jurisdiction of the general assembly;

**Inclusive Spaces for Different Work Styles**

In 2020, Governor Jared Polis signed Executive Order D 2020 175: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the State of Colorado outlining directives to foster a healthier, more equitable and inclusive workplace for all of Colorado; a space where employees, community partners and the public alike feel valued and respected. As the State transitions to the post-COVID workplace, agencies have an extraordinary opportunity to address the operational needs for an inclusive working environment that supports and engages all employees.

**Standards for Measuring Overall Space Use Efficiency in Leased Office Space**

The current recommendations include rightsizing assumptions for spaces and assumptions for ratios of collaboration and support space to offices and workstations. Rightsizing refers to the process of identifying and calculating what the actual space need is to meet requirements specific to end-user groups, which may or may not be the same as occupied space usage.

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The current State planning metric is a range of 197 rentable SF / person to 232 rentable SF / person. Each State agency will have different proportions of remote to in-person employees. Actual individual space allocations will be determined on the basis of functional space requirements, the priorities of the organization, and the total space and budget available.

**Category #1 Leases**

Category #1 leases are those leases where the amount of square feet leased is less than 197 RSF per office worker. Leases in the category are deemed to be an efficient use of space.

**Category #2 Leases**

Category #2 leases are those leases where the amount of square feet leased is between 197 and 232 RSF per office worker. Leases in this category are deemed to be in acceptable use of space.

**Category #3 Leases**

Category #3 leases are those leases where the amount of square feet leased is more than 232 RSF per office worker but less than the private sector average of 291 RSF. Leases in this category require approval of the requesting agency/institution division director/president.

**Category #4 Leases**

Category #4 leases are those where the amount of square feet leased is equal to or greater than the private sector average of 291 RSF per office worker. Leases in this category require approval of the agency/institution executive director/president.

**Standards for Individual Offices within Leased Office Space**

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**Individual Offices VS. Open Workstations**

Open office workstations, with their various configuration options, are strongly encouraged. Open offices require less floor space and allow improved heating, ventilating and air conditioning systems. In addition, peripheral circulation (where private offices are located in the center of the building, leaving the window areas open) allows more people to benefit from natural light.

Enclosed offices should be provided on the basis of functional need. By far the most common functional need for privacy is frequent discussion of confidential matters in person or on the phone. Other occasional needs for privacy are as an aid to concentration or for security and for isolation of confidential documents. Need for privacy can also be accommodated by special furniture and equipment on a case-by-case basis. Based on functional justification, these enclosed spaces may be single occupant offices, shared conference/meeting rooms, interview rooms, and/or other space types.

Managers choosing to allocate a high percentage of private offices will likely find themselves in Category #3 or Category #4 leases, which will require the approval of a division director, an executive director, or institution president. In order to encourage the use of open work stations (as opposed to individual offices) the approval of the division director, an executive director, or institution president must include a statement indicating the business justification for the individuals who are receiving private offices.

**Office Sizes**

In order to encourage the equitable sharing of the total office space with an office suite, the guideline for office space is a maximum office size of 120 square feet per assigned office, 120 square feet per hoteling unassigned office, 48 square feet per work station, and 36 square feet per touch down space. See the Design Guidelines for additional information. Exceptions will require a letter of approval from the agency/institution division director/president.