

Brandeis Workspace Policy

1. INTRODUCTION

The University has developed a campus-wide policy around shared, flexible work environments and we aim to support departments' hybrid work plans while maintaining the quality of a campus experience. This specific policy is focused on administrative staff workspaces. Separate guidelines for faculty workspaces are forthcoming, for example, one dedicated office per faculty, a shared office for emeriti, etc.

2. GOALS AND OPPORTUNITIES

- Reduce the campus footprint, so that we can reduce operating costs, demolish outdated buildings, and focus limited capital resources to modernize remaining buildings.
- Maximize the amount of shared work and social spaces in order to promote collaboration, to optimize the amount of space available for necessary in-person interactions, and to minimize the amount of unoccupied and underutilized spaces.
- A culture of shared workspaces allows a unit to grow within the same footprint, creates a vibrant work environment, and is becoming standard in industry and peer institutions.
- Increase staff retention and recruitment for those that can complete their core job functions in a hybrid work scenario, in order to support work/life balance.
- Hybrid work should allow broader participation in the workforce by reducing barriers, especially in cases where health, mobility, and caregiving constraints are involved.
- Lessen demand for parking on campus, potentially freeing space for buildings or increased green space.
- Lessen demand for commuting to/from campus, reducing carbon footprint and improving air quality, and potentially allowing staff to live in more affordable communities further from campus.

3. WORKSPACE GUIDELINES

Recognizing that various job functions can work from fully remote to full-time on campus, the six guiding principles for this policy are:

- There is limited availability of dedicated office space on campus, and as a result, any employee who already has one dedicated office will not be allocated a second dedicated office (this is defined as one person in a closed space).
- All staff should expect that a workspace where they can be productive will be available to them when on campus.
- Staff who work on campus 4 or 5 days per week should expect to be assigned one dedicated workspace.
- Staff who work on campus 0-3 days per week should expect workspace to be available to them when on campus, but not necessarily dedicated to their exclusive use.

- An inventory of hoteling workspaces, including a mix of enclosed offices, workstations, and soft seating, will be developed and made available to all staff through a centralized reservation system.
- Minimal funding for implementing this policy (e.g., purchase of furniture, equipment, and technology, minor renovations, etc.) will be provided through a central budget.

4. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Policy adherence will be the shared responsibility of division and department leaders with support from the Office of Campus Planning.

- Division leadership will be responsible for introducing this policy to their organizations and for ensuring parity in implementation across departments.
- Department managers will be responsible for ensuring that all hybrid work schedules are documented in accordance with the university's telecommuting policy, coordinating the availability of workspace to all staff, and monitoring workspace utilization.
- The Office of Campus Planning will be a resource in the following ways during implementation:
 - Providing space plans and data to each department manager for the documentation of space occupancy.
 - Making strategic connections between available space and the needs for space, and communicating between multiple stakeholders.
 - Being available for consultation to address any questions or concerns and to brainstorm possible scenarios.
 - Defining the departments and divisions for priority of implementation of 2024.
 - Testing feasibility of plans and concepts for project development as Capital Programs.
 - Working with the Office of Capital Programs to develop project budgets for the implementation of the space policy.

5. IMPLEMENTATION

Policy implementation will be rolled out by the Office of Campus Planning over multiple phases, and likely multiple years. Priority for implementation and supporting funds will be given to:

- Occupant groups in campus facilities targeted for demolition (e.g., Kutz Hall).
- Administrative departments and divisions with fewer staff who work on campus 4-5 days/week and more staff who work on campus 1-3 days/week, thereby presenting co-location and/or space reactivation opportunities.
- Administrative departments and divisions that seek to reduce their overall space and, therefore, charges related to space.

The means and methods for providing workspaces that adhere to policy goals and guidelines will increase over time, as managers develop various solutions for creating vibrant workspaces. At the onset, however, below are a list of ideas for consideration, followed by links to comparable space policies in place at other institutions.

- Ensure consistency in the application of the workspace policy by requiring plan review by division or school leadership at both the individual staff level (telecommuting agreement) and the department level.
- Foster vibrant work environments.
 - Encourage a certain percentage of staff to be on campus Mondays and Fridays so those areas are active throughout the week.
 - Develop a rigorous onboarding plan that recognizes hybrid work schedules by providing regular opportunities for team collaboration and socializing.
 - Develop cross-departmental workspaces to further enhance vibrant work environments.
- Increase the supply of reservable workspaces.
 - Allow some enclosed offices to remain unassigned so that staff can reserve space for use on a daily basis or an hourly basis for confidential calls, quiet work time, small meetings, etc.
 - Allow offices that free up temporarily as a result of occupant vacation or leave to be reserved on an hourly basis, as above.
 - Allow workstations that are already unassigned to be reserved on a daily or hourly basis.
- Increase office occupancy.
 - Create more densely shared office spaces with the expectation that full occupancy will be the rare exception because staff will stagger their days on campus.
 - For offices that are at least 120SF and appropriately dimensioned, replace the furniture to allow one occupant per 60SF (dedicated space or flexible use).
 - Identify staff that may be able to coordinate complementary flexible schedules and, therefore, share a semi-dedicated workspace.
- Amenities and technology.
 - Set up all flexible workspaces with appropriate equipment such as monitor(s), cables for laptop connections, keyboards, etc.
 - Set up storage areas such as lockers, cubbies and/or lockable file cabinets for staff on flexible work schedules to store work materials and personal items.
 - Create a system (e.g., in a shared Google Calendar) for reserving workstation or office space by the hour or the day, with approval based on the type of work to be done.

This policy will be managed in conjunction with the [Remote and Hybrid Working Policy](#) and the [Staff Telecommuting and Alternate Work Policy](#).

Disclaimer

This policy is for general guidance only. It does not create an employment contract or any right to continued employment at Brandeis University. Brandeis University reserves the right to modify, revoke, suspend, terminate and/or change any and all policies and procedures at any time, with or without notice.

Office of Campus Planning
03/2024