



Space Optimization

DATE: April 8, 2025 CAMPUS PLANNING & REAL ESTATE

Space Optimization at OHSU

OHSU has a projected 3% annual employee growth however we are unable to grow space at a 1:1 ratio to match employee growth. We must, therefore, look at space optimization measures such as increased teleworking and desk sharing to accommodate OHSU's planned growth.

Tactics for Optimizing Office Space
Telework Space Guidelines
Healthcare District guidelines
Flexible Use Space Program
Lease Space Guidelines

<https://o2.ohsu.edu/policies-and-compliance/ohsu-policy-manual/chapter-3-human-resources/ohsu-policy-03-30-140.cfm>

<https://o2.ohsu.edu/telework/getting-started/flex-work-guidelines.cfm>

<https://o2.ohsu.edu/telework/teaming-remotely/meet-remotely.cfm>

<https://o2.ohsu.edu/telework/getting-started/visit-campus/use-a-flexible-workspace.cfm>

Our new standard operations – an update on in-person gatherings and masking

OHSU lifted the long-term state of Modified Operations on Jan. 3, 2022. And, as a refresher, what that really means is that members can come to campus, if needed. However, just because you can come to OHSU's campuses, doesn't mean you should. As a reminder, OHSU has embraced [these guiding principles for flexible work](#). In the past two years, we have learned to work effectively in new ways, and this should and will continue, independent of COVID-19. [Meetings should primarily continue to be virtual](#) as well, even for those who might be at an OHSU campus. There are a number of resources and FAQs now available on the [OHSU Onward page](#). Our ways of working will never return completely to where they were two years ago – in many ways for the better.

Cases and hospitalizations from the omicron surge are declining, but it is important to keep in mind and be thoughtful about the fact that while the peak is behind us, OHSU Hospital remains at full capacity. Many of our colleagues, patients and community members may also have underlying conditions or personal preferences for protecting themselves, so we must be respectful to all.

As we begin to move forward, there are several updates around events and masking that we wanted to be sure you were aware of. And, of course, to remind you that we'll continue to update you if there are any changes.

Meet Remotely

During the pandemic, OHSU experienced first-hand the benefits of flexible work and learned that many employees are more productive and can achieve better work-life balance with virtual meetings. With that in mind, the following guidelines are meant to broadly help employees and managers navigate meetings, both in the transition out of modified operations and beyond.

Meeting

Method

Use me for...

100% Virtual

Most OHSU employee-focused meetings, trainings, seminars and events attended by remote employees. Using video is the preferred default for group meetings, however, this may vary between teams and workgroups. Schedule 50 or 25 minute meetings to allow transition time.

100% In-Person

Special circumstances with a specific need to be in-person (e.g. hands-on trainings, employees needing to collaborate). To improve space efficiencies and to address patient parking shortages, remote employees should not be asked to regularly come onsite solely for team meetings.

Hybrid virtual/in-person

Use should be limited. Hybrid meetings can create equity issues, and they require increased administrative and technical support. OHSU has limited conference rooms capable of providing a good experience. See "Hold a Successful Hybrid Meeting" page for best practices.

Resources

[Flexible Work Guiding Principles](#)

[Collaborate Effectively](#)

[Hold a Successful Hybrid Meeting](#)

<https://o2.ohsu.edu/flexible-work/meet-remotely>

Meeting Remotely to the extent possible

1. Improves accessibility for all meeting attendees
2. Reduces risk of infection for patients and employees
3. Reduces demands on parking
4. Reduces demands on conference rooms that could be repurposed to other work space to meet the highest and best use of OHSU.

Tactics for Optimizing Office Space

1. Every effort will be made to limit operational impacts with the goal of maintaining unit adjacencies if possible.
2. It is the intent to minimize renovation and construction to the greatest extent possible, using the space as currently configured.
3. The availability of space is extremely limited. We will do our best to accommodate units' needs, but cannot guarantee equivalent space in size, amenities, or proximity to their current location.
4. Teleworking is encouraged for those that can perform their job duties off site.
5. Employees that utilize private offices today, regardless of tenure and rank, may be allocated an open workstation in the future depending on the ratio of private offices and open workstations available within existing space. Faculty will be prioritized for offices.
6. To ensure that all space is fully utilized, dedicated administrative space, including single person offices, is reserved for employees that must spend more than 80% of their time on site, such as 5 days per week. For employees on site 4 days per week or less, shared offices and desks will be provided.
7. Privacy and confidentiality are important at OHSU, however, providing all employees with dedicated enclosed space is not feasible. When open workstations are provided, managers should reserve shared meeting space as necessary to hold private conversations.
8. Multiple units may be co-located into a suite of space, where they may be expected to share desks and/or amenities.
9. Units should opt into the OHSU Flex Office Program for employees that telework and aren't provided assigned space within the unit's overall footprint. The Flex Office Program provides access to a growing network of conference rooms and workspaces on Marquam Hill, South Waterfront, and Downtown that can be reserved for flex work.
10. In an effort to maximize OHSU-owned space, external leased space will not be considered.

Unit Workspace Guidelines

OHSU-wide Approach

1. Remote work is encouraged for those that can perform their job duties off-site;
2. In general, dedicated workspace is reserved for employees who work the majority of their time each week at their desks. Time spent in clinic is not considered time worked at desks. All other workspaces will be provided through departmental desk sharing as assigned to the department or through the OHSU Anywhere Flexible Space program. All enclosed space may be shared by more than one occupant;
3. As an outcome of the remote work policy, space must be relinquished for management by the University Space Committee.

Healthcare Approach

1. Remote work is encouraged for those that can perform their job duties off site;
2. Dedicated workspace is reserved for employees who work at their desks 80% or more each day, four days a week. Time spent in clinic is not considered time worked at desks. All other workspaces will be provided through departmental desk sharing as assigned to the department or through the OHSU Anywhere Flexible Space program. All enclosed space may be shared by more than one occupant;
3. As an outcome of the remote work policy, space must be relinquished to support clinical growth with management by the Hospital Space Committee.



Healthcare Space Guiding Principles

1. Faculty offices shall be provided by the respective Academic department.
2. The Hospital shall provide work areas for healthcare employees and healthcare functions.
3. All healthcare offices and work areas shall be shared to the reasonable extent possible.
4. An individual may not have more than one office or assigned workstation.
5. Employees with direct patient contact roles will be given priority for work space within the healthcare district.
6. As a general rule, employees who worked primarily from home during modified operations may not have priority for space on, adjacent to, or proximal to patient care units.

Flexible Use Space Program

The Flexible Use Space Program is currently available to all units that have relinquished all or most of their space and transitioned to 100% telework, there are currently approximately 20 participating units.

As more space is relinquished the Flexible Use Space Program will grow and provide more reservable office space. Currently there are three locations: 3030 Moody, Physical Plant, and Market Square Building. Future locations will include Sam Jackson Hall, Gaines Hall, Marquam Plaza, Mac Hall, and West Campus.

<https://o2.ohsu.edu/telework/getting-started/visit-campus/use-a-flexible-workspace.cfm>

Software limitations allow us to provide access by Org #, not employee ID so an org needs to relinquish most (approx. 50% or more) of their space to gain access to the program.

The goal of the program is to increase space utilization but also to expand the program and add more Flex Use Space to our overall inventory as interest in the program grows. The only way we can expand the program is to have more units relinquish space.

Lease Space Guidelines

1. OHSU's lease accounting standards have changed with the adoption of the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB) leasing standards on July 1, 2021. All leases are now treated like a capital purchase and impact OHSU's debt-to-net ratio and debt capacity. As all leases have moved to the balance sheet, we are actively working to reduce the amount of OHSU's leased space.
2. OHSU-owned space will be prioritized over leased space.
3. Every effort will be made to limit the amount of leased space that OHSU occupies regardless of Mission, location, occupants, or quantity of space.
4. Units are encouraged to relinquish leased space by teleworking and participating in the Flexible Use Office space reservation program.
5. Space should be allocated within leased facilities if the need is strategic due to location, infrastructure, or other stated purposes. Business objectives and a proforma must be approved through the capital allocation process.
6. OHSU's space policies apply to leased space. If the unit doesn't meet the business objectives that were defined in the lease request, the leased space can be reassigned.