Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Housing and Works**

Government Office Accommodation Standards





Enquiries

Government Office Accommodation

Department of Housing and Works
16 Parkland Road, Osborne Park, Perth WA 6017
Locked Bag 44, Cloisters Square, Perth WA 6850
Email: officeaccommodation@dohw.wa.gov.au
Website: Department of Housing and Works

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Context

Consistent with the key principles of the Government Office Accommodation Policy (the Policy), the Department of Housing and Works has developed the Government Office Accommodation Standards (the Standards) to define best practice in the procurement and management of office accommodation, which will assist agencies in achieving value for money and sustainable outcomes.

Purpose

The purpose of the Standards is to set out requirements, benchmarks and guidelines to assist agencies with planning and establishing office accommodation, acquiring and fitting out suitable office space, and utilising and maintaining the space effectively.

Definition

Government office accommodation is the space used to accommodate staff who deliver government services by performing functions classified as executive, administrative or clerical. Government office accommodation can be located in either leased or government-owned buildings.

Authority

On 31 July 2025, the revised Standards were endorsed by the Government Office Accommodation Steering Committee.

Scope of Application

The Standards, Policy, and the Government of Western Australia *Procurement Act 2020* incorporating the Government Office Accommodation General Procurement Direction 2026/02 apply to office accommodation occupied by all State agencies[1].

All State agencies are to adopt the Standards to assist in achieving best practice and value for money in the management of their office accommodation.

The Standards do not apply to operational facilities, such as hospitals, schools or police stations, however where there is a significant office component within these operational facilities, the Standards' fit-out benchmarks will apply to the office component.

The Standards do not apply to parliamentary electorate offices and ministerial office suites.

[1] State agencies are those defined in the *Procurement Act 2020*.

Section 1: Planning Future Workspace

Office accommodation is one of the largest expenses incurred by agencies. It presents a significant financial commitment which is carefully managed to maximise funds available for the delivery of core services of government.

Standard 1.1: Whole of Government Planning

Strategic office accommodation planning is guided by the Department of Treasury and Finance's Strategic Asset Management Framework. The objective is to ensure that agencies' strategic asset planning and whole-of-government planning are aligned efficiently and cost effectively to deliver high quality services to the public.

Agencies are required to report on their owned and leased premises through the yearly strategic office accommodation plan survey.

Agencies are also required to provide information on all office buildings and operational facilities where a portion of the premises is used for office accommodation and could be used by other staff from the same, or an affiliate agency.

The Department of Housing and Works uses the information provided to inform whole of government[2] planning and ensure the optimal use of existing government assets.

A utilisation study may be required before procuring new premises, or a major fit-out renewal to support the requests.

Utilisation studies are used to determine agencies' workpoint utilisation to ascertain the efficiency of the workplace and present opportunities to better utilise the existing footprint.

To maximise accommodation use, agencies will be required to relinquish space and/or co-locate with other compatible agencies where leased accommodation is under-utilised or an alternative accommodation strategy is identified that contributes to the overall value proposition for the State.

The Department of Housing and Works will consult with the agency relinquishing space to minimise disruption to service delivery, identify and manage the financial implications and ensure a smooth transition.

Agencies will endeavour to adopt flexible work practices (defined in section 3.1) in existing premises and prior to seeking new accommodation, where practicable.

The Department of Housing and Works also works with agencies in the development of funding submissions for individual agencies' future office accommodation and leads the development of whole of government funding submissions, particularly for multi-agency accommodation.

[2] Whole-of-government approach to the management of office accommodation portfolio also applies where there is a significant office accommodation portion within an operational facility, such as medical clinics, schools, warehouses or depots.

Section 2: Procurement of Workspace

The Department of Housing and Works manages the procurement of office accommodation on behalf of the Government. This includes the evaluation of options and application of open and transparent procurement processes, to ensure value for money is achieved across the portfolio.

Standard 2.1: Base Buildings and Tenancies – Performance Ratings

Any leased space above 1,000 square metres (sqm) in new buildings and developments with a term over two years should be procured considering the following minimum sustainability rating targets:

Green Building Council of Australia[3]

- 5 Star Green Star Building v1 for new buildings

National Australian Built Environment Reporting System (NABERS)[4]

- 5.5 Star base build energy rating for new buildings
- 5 Star base build energy rating for existing buildings
- 4.5 Star water rating for new and existing buildings

This does not preclude a 6 Star base build energy rating from being considered for new buildings to support the government's emissions reduction scheme.

The NABERS rating at the time of signing the lease needs to be maintained during the currency of the lease. NABERS ratings are valid for 12 months and a yearly assessment is required to be undertaken by the landlord. The ratings are required to be reported by the agencies through their strategic office accommodation plan survey following each yearly assessment. Achievement of the sustainability ratings should be supported by sufficient documentation demonstrating equivalency to the rating requirements.

In alignment with Green Star and NABERS building requirements, Landlords are encouraged to achieve energy efficient buildings and procure certified renewable energy to allow government to meet its emissions reduction targets.

[3] Green Building Council Australia rate the sustainability of buildings, fit-outs and communities through Australia's largest national, voluntary, holistic rating system – Green Star.

[4] National Australian Built Environment Rating System is a government initiative to measure and compare the environmental performance of a building. Under this rating tool a 5 Star rating signifies 'Excellent Performance', and a 6 Star rating signifies 'Market Leading Performance'. NABERS applies to base build and tenancy performances.

Standard 2.2: Lease Incentive

If leased space is procured, any negotiated lease incentives will be managed by the Department of Housing and Works. The lease incentive may be used to fund any fit-out required, applied against the rent payable or returned to the Consolidated Account.

Standard 2.3: Office Accommodation Fit-out – Performance Ratings

New fit-outs for office accommodation over 1,000 sqm in size should be procured with the following target sustainability ratings:

- a 5 Star Green Star Fit-out
- a minimum of 5 Star NABERS Tenancy Energy

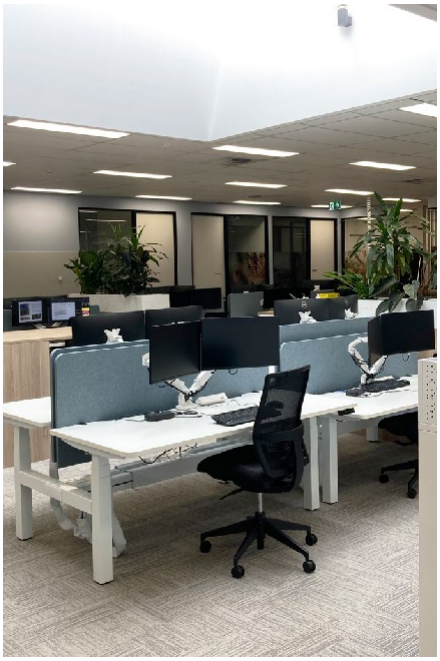
Tenancies are required to be metered by the landlord in compliance with the minimum requirements of the relevant Green Star and NABERS rating scheme rules. Agencies must contact the Department of Housing and Works for consideration of exemptions to these requirements.

Standard 2.4: Acquisition of Fit-out

Under the Policy, the Department of Housing and Works is responsible for the procurement of fit-out works in accordance with approved business cases and project definition plans. Fit-outs and refurbishment works valued between $100,000 and less than $250,000 will require approval by the Director General[5] of the State agency. All fit-out and refurbishment works valued at $250,000[6] and above will require the approval of the responsible agency Minister in accordance with the Government Office Accommodation General Procurement Direction 2026/02.

The Department of Housing and Works, in conjunction with agencies, will determine an appropriate scope, quality and cost for fit-out. This will be based on whole of life, value for money outcomes including the estimated life of the asset, length of tenure, location, agency operational needs and minimisation of maintenance.

The Department of Housing and Works will review and approve plans to ensure the fit-out proposal meets the Policy and Standards. It is the agency's responsibility to submit a Fit-out Works Request form approved by their delegated authority prior to the design being finalised and the works undertaken. In support of the government sustainability initiatives, the Department of Housing and Works endeavours to work with State agencies to reduce waste by re-using or donating fit-outs where possible.



[5] Officer classification is defined in the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* and in accordance with the Public Service and Government Officers General Agreement (PSGOGA). Officer classifications under other awards and agreements used in the Western Australian Public Sector will be considered in line with the PSGOGA officer classification based on the strategic function of the role, not salary.

[6] This is the total project cost (excluding GST).

Standard 2.5: Accessibility and Inclusivity



The requirements of people with disabilities, both employees and clients, will be considered and addressed in accordance with the *Western Australian Equal Opportunity Act 1984*, the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*, the Disability Standards AS1428 and the National Construction Code.

Universal access facilities will be considered when procuring a lease. Agencies should consider their Disability Access and Inclusion Plans when planning for their office accommodation requirements and communicate their requirements via the Department of Housing and Works Accommodation Request Form.

The percentage of ACROD bays in a car park, as specified by the National Construction Code, is dependent on the class of the building. Subject to availability and funding, agencies may provide, at their discretion, additional parking to ACROD permit holders.

The Department of Housing and Works also acknowledges the importance of inclusivity and accommodating the diverse requirements of staff by providing facilities that support employees with disabilities, Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CaLD) backgrounds, and those with wellness, nursing, or faith-based requirements, where feasible.

Standard 2.6: Car Parking Bay Allocation

Car bays within leased premises are often limited and allocated based on several factors, including the proportion of net lettable area the agency occupies in a building, fleet size or specific operational requirements. The availability and cost for car bays vary depending on location and the property. Therefore, agencies should seek to reduce car bay costs through efficient fleet management and the use of public transport wherever possible.

While the Department of Housing and Works will endeavour to procure car bays for Executive Officers[7], priority will be given to bays to accommodate fleet (including Salaries and Allowances Tribunal vehicles) and it may not always be feasible to accommodate an agency's full vehicle requirements. Depending on the availability of car bays and funding, the agencies may make additional car bays available for government-owned or leased vehicles. Any surplus car bays may be allocated by the agency in accordance with their own internal policies.

The State Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy for Western Australia requires consideration to be given to the provision of safe EV charging infrastructure within buildings, to support the growth of EVs. Each agency's EV charging requirement will be considered by the Department of Housing and Works when allocating car bays.

[7] Executive Officers includes Senior Executive Officers and the Chief Executive Officers as defined in the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* or equivalent.

Standard 2.7: Bicycle Parking and End-of-Trip Facilities

Office accommodation should include bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities, with showers, change rooms and storage. When planning for bicycle parking and end-of-trip facilities, the following minimum provisions[8] should be considered:

- secure bicycle storage space (1:200 sqm per gross floor area)[9]
- accessible showers and change facilities (1:10 bicycle storage spaces or part thereof)
- personal storage facilities for each bicycle storage space

While the Department of Housing and Works acknowledges the increasing use of e-scooters and electric rideable devices, the charging of these devices in government buildings is not currently supported. However, Housing and Works will further assess the risks associated with charging these devices within government buildings.



[8] Aligns with Green Star Design and As Built 2014: Active Transport Facilities.

[9] Austroads' publication – Cycling Aspects of Austroads Guides. Section 11 Bicycle Parking and end-of-trip Facilities.

Section 3: Workspace Design and Efficiency

Government workspaces should be flexible and able to adapt to changes in work practices and technology, while supporting agencies' key operations and designed to accommodate the diverse needs of the staff who use them.

Standard 3.1: Office Designs

Office designs should adhere to the *Building Act 2011*, National Construction Code and *Work Health and Safety Act 2020 (WA)*.

Advances in information technology and evolving ways of working are shaping the workspace of the future. The following elements should be incorporated in the design of new workspaces:

- efficiency
- flexibility
- functionality
- collaboration
- communication
- inclusivity

The traditional cellular office layout has been replaced by open plan layouts. The use of flexible workstation furniture is aimed at enhancing communication between staff, improving productivity and enabling organisational change.





Open plan

Open plan design is a widely accepted modern interior design philosophy. An open plan environment promotes the easy flow of communication and knowledge sharing, and it accommodates different ways of working from autonomous, individual work to collaborative work based on the immediate exchange of information and quick decision-making. Flexibility is a key feature of this design and the removal of physical walls and large storage areas will allow for the adaptable use of space.

Flexible workplace

A flexible and adaptive workplace design supported by enabling technologies and business practices enhances collaboration and efficiency within the workplace. Meeting rooms, collaboration or breakout areas, or even shared kitchen spaces promote meeting opportunities within a flexible workplace. A controlled and conscious shift from allocated to unallocated workpoints, the ability to choose work settings that are most suitable to undertaking tasks, combined with the economic and environmental benefits of more efficient use of space will allow agencies to provide a more dynamic and enlivened workplace.

These designs and practices will ensure the workplace is scalable to meet future agency growth or contraction and reduce the need to procure additional, or dispose of surplus space.

It is recognised that a ‘one-size-fits-all’ approach to accommodating agency needs is not always viable and can vary depending on specialised requirements. The Department of Housing and Works will work closely with agencies to explore opportunities to adopt more flexible workplace designs that deliver benefits to staff and customers while supporting their service delivery and ensuring value for money outcomes are achieved.

A key focus for the Department of Housing and Works will be supporting agencies to expand into their existing workplace, before procuring new space to accommodate growth.

Standard 3.2: Workpoint to Person Ratio

At the time of procurement and/or the fit-out of new workspaces, no more than one workpoint per person will be provided. The number of people will be based on the headcount figure[10] reported by the agency as per the Public Sector Commission Commissioner's Instructions No. 6 Workforce Data Reporting Obligations with consideration given to revised headcount information as available.

Standard 3.3: Workspace Density Benchmark

A workpoint includes a desk in open plan or an enclosed office or section of a counter or reception at which it would be reasonable to expect one person to carry out ongoing office work. Additionally, an adaptable workspace will support flexible workpoints which are reflective of a modern setting where ongoing office work can be undertaken while still meeting the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020*.

To achieve the value for money principle in office accommodation, the Government has set an office accommodation workspace density benchmark[11] of 13 sqm per workpoint or below, across the total net lettable area of each tenancy, excluding special operational requirement areas (defined in the next section). This benchmark applies to the procurement of new office accommodation or to fit-out works in both new and existing premises.

$$\text{Workspace density} = \frac{\text{total net lettable area minus special operational requirement areas}}{\text{total number of workpoints minus workpoints in special operational requirement areas}}$$

The 13 sqm per workpoint density target may not always be possible. Where an accountable authority believes exceptional circumstances exist that will impact on the agency's ability to meet the requirements of the Standard, sufficient justification must be documented within the agency's Accommodation Request Form and submitted to the Department of Housing and Works for consideration.

The Department of Housing and Works will work with the agency, in consultation with design professionals, to ensure the area allocated in the workspace meets the agency's functional requirements.

[10] This refers to the number of employees that are paid directly by the entity (i.e., employees on the entity's payroll). Refer to the inclusions and exclusions in the Human Resource Minimum Obligatory Information Requirement Data Definitions, available from the Public Sector Commission website.

[11] The total number of workpoints includes the number of workpoints in open plan and enclosed offices. The number of workpoints in special operational requirement areas is excluded from the workspace density calculation.

Special Operational Requirement area

Special Operational Requirement (SOR) areas accommodate and support agency specific operational requirements. These areas are deducted from the calculation of the workspace density of the tenancy.

SOR areas include, but are not limited to:

- operational or agency specific requirement areas (for example, laboratories, tribunal and hearing rooms, publication and printing rooms)
- general public areas of an operational nature (for example, press conference and media rooms, public galleries, training rooms used to facilitate external training programs, client interview rooms and customer service areas, such as licensing centres, retail counters and associated public reception and waiting rooms)
- storage areas for non-standard office items and long-term onsite storage as required by legislation (for example, armoury, marine research equipment and publications for sale)

Different types of office accommodation, such as call centres, are not considered SOR areas and are therefore included in the calculation of the workspace density.

Agencies should discuss the classification of SOR areas with the Department of Housing and Works.



Standard 3.4: Enclosed Workspaces

Enclosed offices

Enclosed offices are rarely needed to achieve the best service delivery outcomes or value for money for agencies. Open plan design should be maximised, and enclosed offices provided only where an officer's function requires an exceptionally high level of privacy and confidentiality, and must be continually protected from the unauthorised presence of other officers in the same agency.

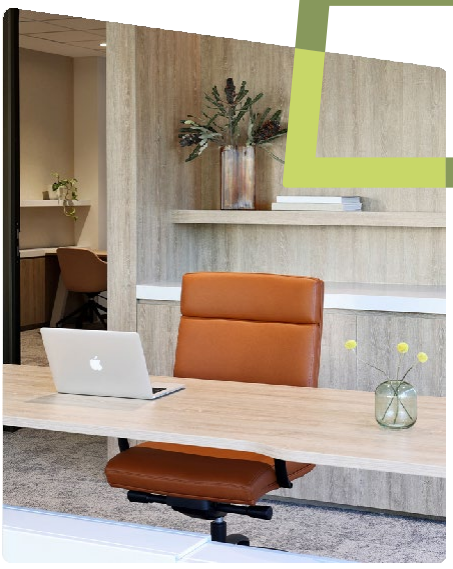
Enclosed offices may also be provided for officers of the following classification:

Officer Classification[12]	Maximum office size
Director General, Chief Executive Officer	30 sqm
Senior Executive Service (SES) Officer – Class 1 and above	12 sqm

Most Executive Officer roles require significant interaction with staff, colleagues and other stakeholders. If they do occupy an enclosed office, it should be located in close proximity to meeting rooms. A CEO may be provided with a six-person meeting table in their enclosed office, if required. Where an officer's role requires a degree of confidentiality, or includes the management of staff, agencies will need to explore value for money alternatives, such as:

- the provision of confidential meeting rooms
- the provision of secure storage
- locating officers with a higher need for confidentiality in areas with limited foot traffic.

The Department of Housing and Works will work with agencies to identify and manage possible exceptional circumstances where agencies are proposing to accommodate other officers in enclosed offices.



[12] Officer classification is defined in the *Public Sector Management Act 1994* and in accordance with the Public Service and Government Officers General Agreement (PSGOGA). Officer classifications under other awards and agreements used in the Western Australian Public Sector will be considered in line with the PSGOGA officer classification based on the strategic function of the role, not salary.

Acoustic comfort

Acoustic comfort is an important element in any office accommodation. When designing a workspace, the impact of acoustic ratings on the functionality of the space should be considered and adjusted to meet the agency's requirements. Effective workspace designs need to coordinate ambient noise controls with appropriate internal surfaces and office joinery, in conjunction with unique workspace layouts and staff groupings.

Privacy requirements[13] are classified as:

- normal – example "can hear loud talking, but not understand".
- confidential – example "strain to hear loud talking".
- sensitive – example "cannot hear very loud talking".

Enclosed workspaces and meeting rooms should target the normal privacy requirement level. Where agencies have other privacy requirements, this will need to be agreed with the Department of Housing and Works.

Specifications associated with construction and materials to be used to meet the classifications are held by the Department of Housing and Works.



[13] Privacy requirements and ratings report prepared by Herring Storer Acoustics (2012).

Section 4: Occupancy and Beyond

Standard 4.1: Sustainable Practice

In accordance with the Government Office Accommodation Policy Principle 6: Sustainability, agencies are encouraged to maintain and improve the sustainability of their tenancies by:

- reporting their NABERS ratings through the strategic office accommodation plan survey following each yearly assessment
- developing strategies to reduce energy consumption, costs and emissions, including monitoring and obtaining their NABERS energy tenancy rating and procuring the highest energy star rating computers, printers and appliances
- developing strategies to minimise water consumption (e.g. Waterwise Building certification)
- develop and implement waste management practices to minimise waste and encourage recycling
- participating in sustainable transport by developing and implementing workplace travel plans

Standard 4.2: Occupancy Reviews

In accordance with Government Office Accommodation Policy Principle 5: Value for Money, the Department of Housing and Works may conduct occupancy reviews 6 to 12 months before and after the completion of office accommodation projects over 1,000 sqm. These timeframes are considered sufficient for occupants to become accustomed to their new surroundings and new ways of working.

Work Health and Safety

While agencies will be responsible for ensuring their office accommodation meets requirements associated with the *Work Health and Safety Act 2020* (WA), the Department of Housing and Works will also closely monitor further development and implementation of the WELL Building Standard (WELL v2[14]) and consider incorporating it in its future procurement only if such procurement can deliver value for money outcomes.

[14] The WELL Building Standard™ version 2 (WELL v2™) is a vehicle for buildings and organisations to deliver more thoughtful and intentional spaces that enhance human health and well-being. WELL v2 includes a set of strategies — backed by the latest scientific research — that aim to advance human health through design interventions and operational protocols and policies and foster a culture of health and well-being. Built upon the pioneering foundation of the first version of the WELL Building Standard (WELL v1), WELL v2 draws expertise from a diverse community of WELL users, practitioners, public health professionals and building scientists around the world.