

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS- ALTERNATIVE OFFICING MOU: DESK SHARING, OFFICE SHARING, HOTELING, AND HOT DESKING**

### **1. What is the purpose of the Alternative Officing MOU?**

Answer: As part of a Government wide initiative to increase the efficiencies in the use of Federal real estate by creating new alternative office solutions to aid in accomplishing this goal. These new flexibilities are necessary for the effective and efficient achievement of FDA's mission of promoting and protecting the public health. In addition, greater flexibility in space movement will support the FDA's increased hiring demands.

### **2. What are Alternative Officing solutions?**

**Answer:** Desk Sharing, Office Sharing, Hoteling and Hot Desking.

### **3. What is Desk Sharing?**

Answer: An arrangement in which two or more employees share the use of a single work station where each employee has a designated day or time for use of the workspace.

### **4. What is Office Sharing?**

Answer: Two or more employees sharing a workplace. Each employee has a workstation within the same space. One or all employees may utilize the workplace at the same time.

### **5. What is Hoteling?**

Answer: An arrangement where employees use non-dedicated, non-permanent workspace assigned for use by reservation on an as needed basis.

**6. What is Hot Desking?**

Answer: Also known as free address or touchdown workstations- an arrangement in which employees use non-dedicated, non-permanent workspaces available on an unreserved, first come-first served basis (typically drop-in).

**7. Is the Alternative Officing MOU applicable to the FDA Field?**

Answer: No

**8. When did the Alternative Officing MOU become effective?**

Answer: March 18, 2013

**9. Who is the Alternative Officing MOU applicable to?**

Answer: All Bargaining Unit employees represented by NTEU Chapter 282 located in the Washington DC metropolitan area (excluding laboratories).

**10. Are non-bargaining unit employees covered by the Alternative Officing MOU?**

Answer: No. However, the spirit and intent of the MOU negotiated with NTEU was to address the critical space shortage at FDA and further the parties agreed that for the implementation of the MOU to be successful all bargaining unit and non-bargaining unit employees alike would have to fully participate.

**11. Will non-bargaining unit employees be able to participate in the Alternative Officing?**

Answer: Yes, management will decide who will participate and what particular Branch, Division, Office, and/or Center will participate.

**12. What happens to those Office Sharing and/or Desk Sharing MOU's that were in existence before the Alternative Officing MOU became effective?**

Answer: The Alternative Officing MOU supersedes and replaces all previous MOU's and/or agreements between individual FDA Centers and NTEU Chapter 282 that address Desk Sharing, Office Sharing, Hoteling, Hot Desking. In addition, the White Oak MOU and the DHHS Space Utilization MOU are incorporated and remain in effect.

**13. Who determines which of the Alternative Office Solutions to utilize?**

Answer: Management

**14. What factors will management utilize to determine which Office Solutions to utilize?**

Answer: Management may use several factors, including but not limited to: Projected number of employees assigned to the functional unit, nature of the work performed by the employee; space assigned to the functional unit; and budgetary restrictions.

**15. Is participation in Alternative Officing voluntary or mandatory?**

Answer: Voluntary in that management will ask for volunteers first, however, if there are not enough volunteers management may require participation and those employees will be placed according to their score/ranking per the formula as stated in the Alternative Officing MOU.

**16. If I have to Office Share or Desk Share will there be proper safeguards in place to keep the area clean?**

Answer: Hand Sanitizers and disinfectant wipes will be available at work stations for employees who participate in the alternative officing solutions.

**17. Will employees be able to Office or Desk Share across the Centers?**

Answer: No, however, employees from different Centers may be allowed to share enterprise, hoteling and hot desking space.

**18. What if an employee has a reasonable accommodation will he/she be required to participate in the alternative officing be mandatory?**

Answer: No, employees who have an approved medical reasonable accommodation may be exempted from space sharing if doing so interferes with or compromises the effectiveness of the accommodation.

**19. Are there other categories of employees who are exempt from participation in the alternative officing?**

Answer: Yes- management may exempt any employee from participation based on the work being performed and the mission of the organization. Management will provide this information to the union.

**20. Can management exempt certain positions from participating in the Alternative Officing solutions?**

Answer: Management will identify positions exempt from participating in Alternative Officing solutions and provide the list to the Union.

**21. What happens if two employees who are desk sharing are required to be in the office**

**on the same day?**

Answer: Employees will utilize temporary workspace to accommodate an overflow. Management will make every effort to ensure temporary work space to accommodate the overflow such as hoteling, hot desking and other shared space options are available.

**22. Who makes the final determination of which employees will desk share?**

Answer: Management will make the final determination based on the employee's score using the formula in the Alternative Officing MOU.

**23. Will employees who are desk sharing have to share office supplies?**

Answer: Yes, employees are expected to share all permanent /stationary office equipment. (e.g. desk, keyboard, telephone, chair, bookshelves and file cabinets etc.)

**24. May employees be required to Office Share?**

Answer: Yes, employees may be required to office share based on the formula contained in this MOU.

**25. Can new employees and/or employees who have transferred to FDA from other agencies or within a Center be required to participate in Alternative Officing?**

Answer: Yes, new employees may be required to office share regardless of service computation date (SCD) or grade.

**26. Can FDA employees within a Center be required to office share?**

Answer: Yes, however, management will ask for volunteers first and if no volunteers are forthcoming management will select employees for participation based on the formula ranking score of the employees.

**27. What happens if an employee's hoteling arrangement is discontinued?**

Answer: Management will provide the affected employee an office sharing or a desk sharing space or private office if available.

**28. When management decides to implement any alternative officing solution will it provide notice to the Union?**

Answer: Yes, management will provide an Article 3 notice to NTEU Chapter 282, per the parties Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA).

**29. How long will the Alternative Officing MOU be in effect?**

Answer: The MOU will be in effect until March 2016, after which, management or NTEU may reopen the MOU by serving an Article 3 notice to the other within 30 calendar days of the expiration date of the MOU, March 18, 2016.

**30. What happens if issues arise regarding the implementation of the Alternative Officing MOU?**

Answer: Management and the Union have agreed to revisit and discuss any significant issues regarding the implementation of this agreement on a yearly basis.

**31. Why are the White Oak MOU, dated July 2, 2010 and the DHHS Space Utilization Policy MOU dated December 14, 2012 attached to the Alternative Officing MOU?**

Answer: The attached MOU's are incorporated for reference and use in situations, including but not limited to situations where alternative officing solutions have been utilized and offices are still available the White Oak MOU may be utilized. The DHHS Space Utilization MOU is similarly attached as further clarification of the Alternative Officing MOU.