



U.S. General Services Administration

# Enhanced Utilization Rate for Greater Occupancy

GSA's Approach to Effective and Efficient Use of Space

GSA Public Buildings Service  
*Center for Workplace Strategy*

# A Pivotal Moment for Work

## **The increased adoption of hybrid work has influenced space requirements significantly.**


Hybrid work is not new, but the demand is. In response to this, workspaces are relying on increased technology, meaningful collaboration, and variety to support a dynamic office.

## **A dynamic approach to determining utilization is essential.**

Evolving mobility requirements make it challenging to accurately determine space needs. By updating our approach to utilization rate, we can account for mobility and lessen the likelihood of underutilized space.

## **Occupancy is a key indicator of successful space.**

By measuring occupancy of agency workspaces in a meaningful way, we can have more constructive conversations about space and how to improve future requirements.



## **GSA has developed an updated methodology to better support utilization planning and occupancy measurement.**

### Past approach

- UR by agency or component
- Benchmarked against 180 SF/person standard for general office space
- UR also being used to measure workspace occupancy

### Proposed approach

- Mobility applied as a factor to existing utilization rate formula
- Refinement based on telework needs, patterns
- Occupancy set as a target rate for ongoing workspace measurement

# Relevant Definitions and Terms

**Utilization Rate** is an allocation of space based on square feet per person in the **planning stages of a project**.

**Enhanced Utilization Rate** is an allocation of space based on square feet per person **incorporating expected mobility** in the **planning stages of a project**.

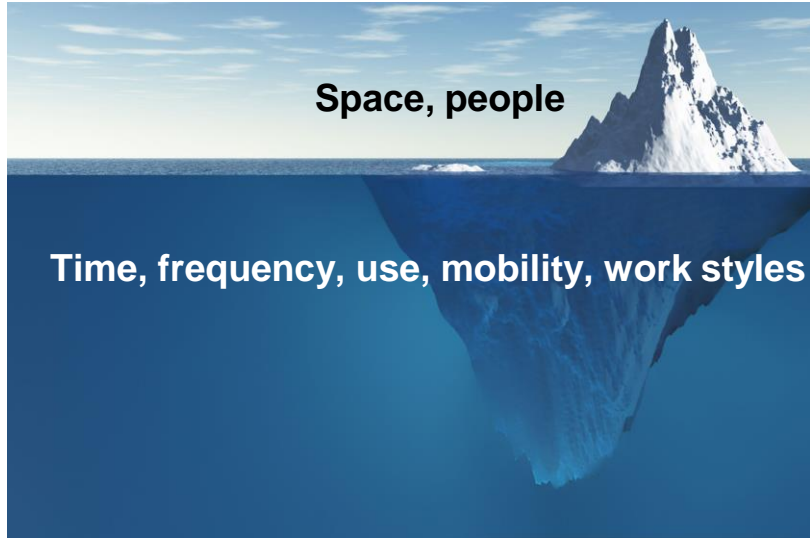
**Occupancy** is how full or empty a space is with people. Occupancy measurement looks at spaces once they are **built and furnished**.

**Administrative Space** is typical workspace which is directly **influenced by the presence** of employees.

**Special Space** **exists regardless** of how many people are present in the office to support the agency mission.

What else do we need to define?

# Utilization Rate: There's Much More to Measure



Current Utilization Rate (UR) looks at the allocation of space per person. **It does not factor in the concepts of time, frequency of use, levels of mobility, or work styles which impact space allocation.**

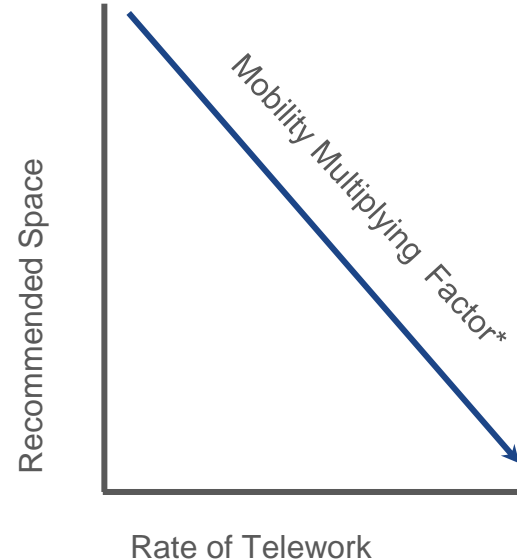
UR is currently also being used to discuss occupancy of spaces, which can be difficult to translate into meaningful, decision-related information. **Our customers look at occupancy in terms of how empty or full their offices are.** We need standards to benchmark success in measuring workspace effectiveness.

# GSA's Benchmarks for Success – Planning Stage

## Planning Stage: Enhanced Utilization Rate

We can't quite predict the future, but we can plan for better utilization in the requirements development phase of our projects. GSA has enhanced the current UR formula with a mobility factor based on an agency's level of telework.

The applied mobility multiplying factor (MMF) scales down the estimated space allocation as an agency increases their use of telework.



\*MMF=1 indicates 100% in office  
MMF=0 indicates 100% remote work

# The Enhanced UR: Applying a Mobility Factor

$$\text{(Assigned Employees*180 USF)*(Mobility Factor)}=\text{Recommended USF}$$

Assigned to Duty Station	Telework Average Days/ WK	Mobility Factor	Agency SF/ Person	SF Recommended	Enhanced UR (USF/ Person)
1000	0	1.00	180	180,000	180
1000	1	0.80	180	144,000	144
1000	2	0.60	180	108,000	108
1000	3	0.40	180	72,000	72
1000	4	0.20	180	36,000	36

## Things to Note

This is applicable to all-in administrative office space.

Special space is not included in the UR calculation.

The factor can be further customized with actual occupancy data via building access or card-swipe data if available.

Customized UR is the goal to better inform space development.

# GSA's Benchmarks for Success – Measuring Stage

## Measuring Stage: Occupancy Target

Setting an occupancy target for office space based on available resources lays the groundwork for a meaningful conversation on space usage.

Once a space is built and/ or furnished, it's important to know **how** it is occupied.

We'll need to know:

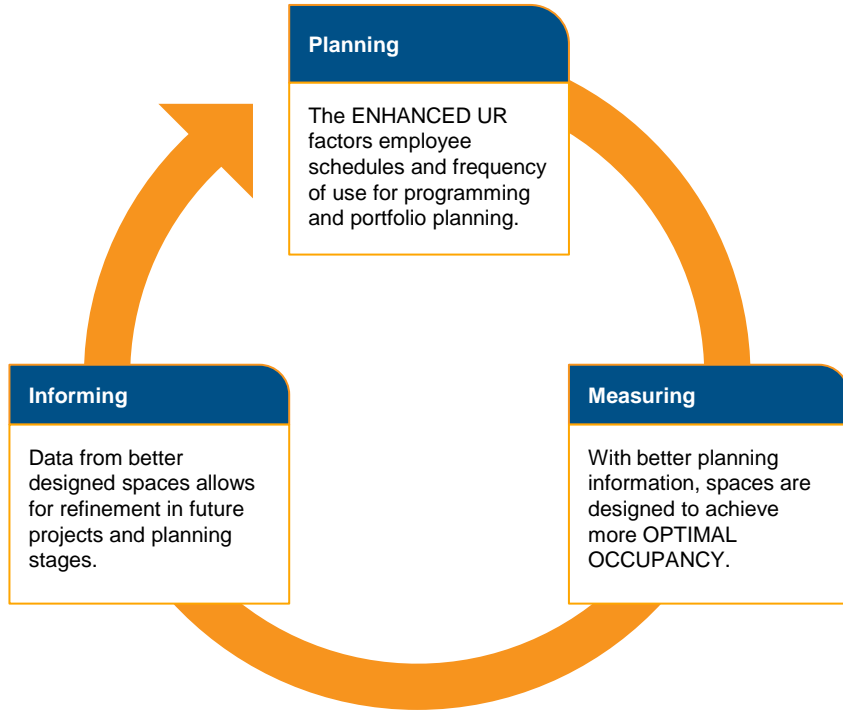
- How many people are in the space
- How many work spaces are available

By doing this, agencies will better understand the use of their investment and how to invest for the future.





# An Informed Process



## Assumptions for Success

1

### Place Matters

Duty station assignments will no longer be sufficient to plan for workspaces. More granular telework information will be essential.

2

### Tech Integration

Investment in occupancy measurement tech, such as reservation systems and sensors, will be increasingly common.

3

### Holistic Planning

Synchronized telework and real estate policies will result in better utilization outcomes.

# Modeling Tools for Workspace Innovation



## WIFM Tool

GSA has the WIFM tool for high level planning to demonstrate the impact of telework changes, UR goals, and space requirements in space allocation.



## Industry Partners

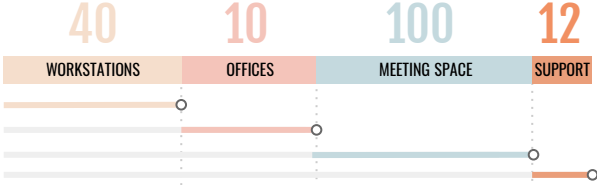
Private industry is also developing models to demonstrate the relationship between telework, work style, and space allocation. (Perkins & Will example)

# Standard UR: Moderate Mobility, Minimally Effective

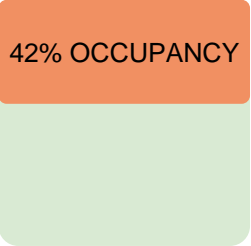
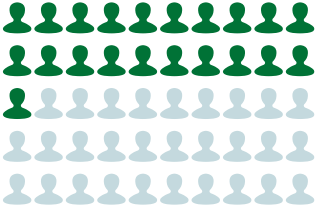
**180 USF/PP**      **8,957 USF**



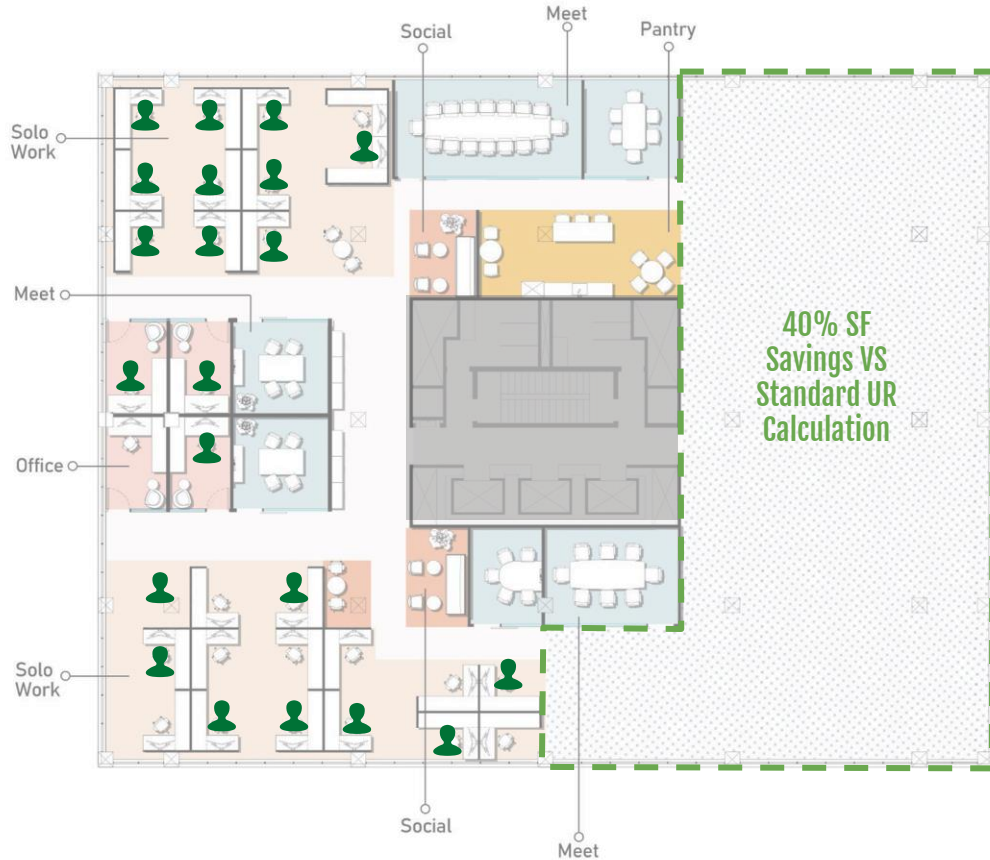
**FLOOR PLATE SIZE:**  
~10k usf



~21 PEOPLE PRESENT

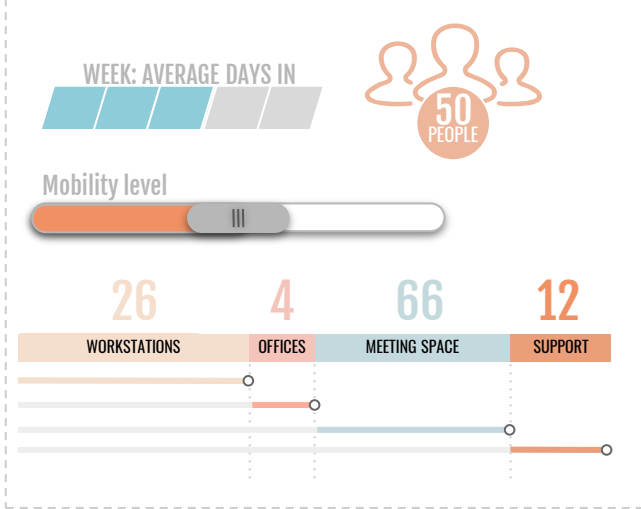


# Enhanced UR: Moderate Mobility, Maximum Use

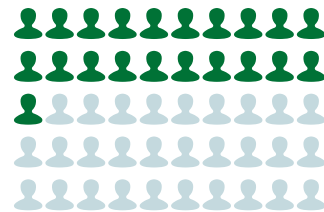


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**108USF/PP**    **5,419 USF**

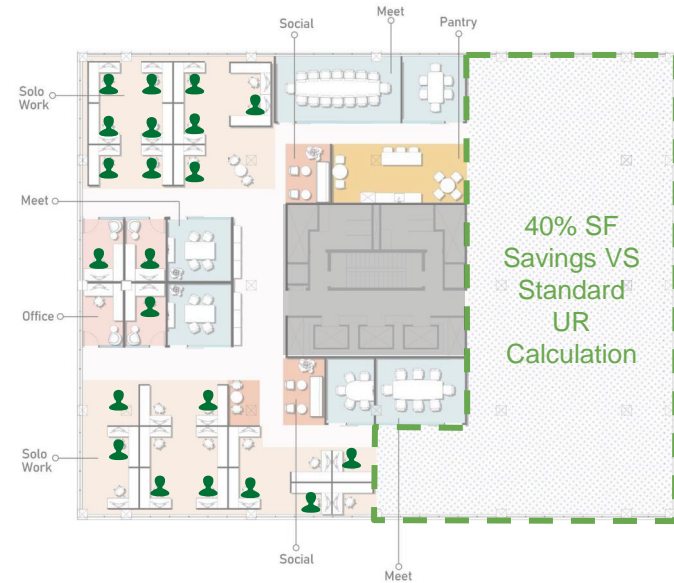


~21 PEOPLE PRESENT



70% OCCUPANCY

## An agency leveraging 2 days per week of telework is consistently underutilizing their space by at least 50%...



... why not plan for it?

**GSA has the experts and resources to assist agencies who are ready to leverage the real estate transformations in hybrid work.**

