

▶ 2017 OFFICE STANDARD FACT SHEET

BACKGROUND

BOMA International has been the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) Secretariat for the Office Standard since 1915 with the publication of the first “Standard Method of Floor Measurement.” Since 1915, the Office Standard has been revised in 1952, 1955, 1971, 1980, 1989, 1996, 2010 and now in 2017 to reflect the changing needs of the commercial real estate market.

Starting in 2009, BOMA expanded its measurement standards to include the other property types—Industrial, Multi-Unit Residential, Retail and Mixed-Use Properties, plus a standard for measuring gross areas of a building. The BOMA standards are reviewed at least every five years and revised to address changing building design and use.

The purpose of the BOMA area measurement standards are:

- To promote clear communications among all participants in a real estate transaction;
- To provide consistent measurement of rentable square footage;
- To allow accurate comparisons through a clearly understood method of measurement; and
- Starting with the 2017 Office Standard, to align the BOMA measurement concepts and methodologies with the International Property Measurement Standards.

WHAT'S NEW IN 2017

▶ Redesigned, Rewritten, More Illustrations, Expanded Glossary of Terms

The 2017 Office Standard is published in landscape to align the standard’s language with the accompanying illustrations. It is presented in a new step-by-step format to make it easier to follow, and rewritten to make it easier to understand the concepts and methodologies, including helpful hints. The expanded Glossary of Terms includes references back to the related section.

▶ Best Practices

To address ambiguities and inconsistencies found after the publication of the 2010 Office Standard, a series of best practice guidance was developed and incorporated into the 2017 Office Standard.

▶ Compatible with IPMS for Office Buildings

The BOMA 2017 Office Standard is fully compatible with the International Property Measurement Standard for Office Buildings. BOMA is a founding member of the International Property Measurement Standards (IPMS) Coalition, a group of 86 organizations from more than 160 countries. The purpose of the IPMS Coalition is to develop measurement standards that will be adopted globally to ensure consistent measurement methodology for buildings across international markets. BOMA will be incorporating the IPMS standards in all its standards.

► Inclusion of Balconies, Covered Galleries and Finished Rooftop Terraces

With the increasing demand for well-appointed exterior amenities in office buildings, balconies, covered galleries and finished rooftop terraces that are for exclusive use by a tenant may now be included in the rentable square footage calculation.

► Public Pedestrian Thoroughfare

The public pedestrian thoroughfare boundary condition has been removed from the 2017 Office Standard. Although this change results in a slightly reduced rentable area, now all tenant spaces are measured the same. In the previous standard, ground floor tenants with street frontage were measured to the outer surface of the exterior walls, rather than the inside finished surface.

► Major Vertical Penetrations at Lowest Level Included in Rentable Area

Major vertical penetrations at the lowest level are no longer excluded from the rentable area. Although this change results in a slightly higher rentable area, it allows for a single consistent rule to measuring vertical penetrations. In the previous standard, vertical service areas such as a pipe or mechanical shaft were included, but not the vertical circulation areas such as stairwells and elevator shafts. This change supports one of the basic rules of the standard—physical floor space is rentable area and openings in the floor are not included in rentable area.

► Inter-Building Area

Inter-building area provides a standard methodology to allocate amenity and service areas such as conference rooms and loading docks that are in use by a specific group of tenants, rather than simply allocating such spaces to an entire floor or to the entire building. This allows for a greater level of customization to the standard and helps to ensure that tenants are not paying for space in the building that they do not derive benefit. Inter-building area can also be applied across multiple buildings in an office park. Inter-building area does not change the total rentable area of a building, but it does allow rentable areas to be distributed more fairly.

► Capped Load Factor

Capped load factors may now be applied on a tenant-by-tenant basis. The ability to cap the load factor will help landlords and tenants negotiate leases appropriate to their market, while adhering to the standard.

LEARN MORE

For more information and to purchase the BOMA 2017 Office Standard, visit store.boma.org.