



HOW BIG IS MY OFFICE? IT DEPENDS.

Changes in the BOMA 2017 Office Standard

The BOMA 2017 Office Standard features significant changes to the methods for calculating area for office buildings. Reflecting changes in tenant requirements, the BOMA 2017 Office Standard improves upon prior versions of the standard.

Since 1915, when the Building Owners and Managers Association International first issued a standard for the measurement of office buildings, BOMA has been recognized for its leadership in standardizing the methods employed in calculating floor area. BOMA has utilized the ANSI process to develop, revise and update its methods as a standard.

The BOMA Office Standard has been used over the years to measure all types of commercial property. In 2007, BOMA updated the office building standard and recognizing the importance of standards for other properties and the limitations of the office building standard, BOMA issued standards for the measurement of industrial buildings; mixed-use buildings; retail buildings; multi-unit residential buildings; and for the calculation of the gross area of buildings.

The BOMA 2010 Office Standard introduced a new method for measuring area. The Legacy Method (Method A) continued the historic area measurement standard that had most recently been updated in the BOMA 1996 Office Standard. Under the Legacy Method, the rentable and useable area were calculated floor by floor, with each floor having a different load factor based upon floor and building common elements. Alternatively, a new method was introduced, Method B (Single Load Factor Method), where the floor and building common elements were calculated building wide to provide an identical load factor for the building.

The BOMA 2017 Office Standard retains the Method A/ Method B approach, however it makes significant changes to address evolving tenant expectations.

Recognizing that tenants are requesting, and landlords are providing, exclusive exterior spaces for tenant use, the BOMA 2017 Office Standard now includes as rentable area: balconies; covered galleries; and finished rooftop terraces provided for exclusive tenant use. Landlords have been increasingly provided such spaces but without a means of measuring them or including them within a BOMA standard measurement. This only applies to exclusive spaces occupied by a specific tenant, so other tenants have assurance that they are not subsidizing another tenant's specific amenities. BOMA 2017 Office Standard, Section 3.1,

Another meaningful change is the recognition that some common improvements, facilities, or amenities are utilized by multiple buildings in an office park or campus setting. The ability to calculate and include "Inter-Building Area" permits the landlord to provide and allocate various amenity or service facilities to tenants who benefit from such, even if they are not in the tenant's building. Although multi-tenant conference centers, fitness centers, and lounges have been common, there has been no specific means to measure and include these facilities. Also, with the increase in certain services serving some tenants, but not all, or serving multiple buildings, the ability to measure such service facilities for shared data, generator, security, and fire command facilities have demonstrated the need for the inclusion of the area of such. BOMA 2017 Office Standard, Section 5.1, pp. 81-93.

Historically, although major vertical penetrations were excluded from the calculation of rentable area, certain penetrations facilitate building circulation, i.e. elevators and stairwells, and should be included within the area calculation for the entire building at the lowest level where they exit. This will slightly increase larger rentable area but ensures that if there is a physical floor it is measured and if there is a void it is not. BOMA 2017 Office Standard, Section 3.2, pp. 27-28.

The new standard also recognizes that landlords and tenants will negotiate a building's load factor. The 2017 Office Standard acknowledges that a capped load factor may be negotiated consistent with the standard. So long as the capped load factor is less than the actual load factor for the building, it is consistent with the standard. BOMA 2017 Office Standard, Section 5.4, p. 97.

While the Office Standard is the first of BOMA's suite of measurement standards to be updated, it is anticipated that these concepts will be carried over as appropriate to the other standards as they are updated. These are but some of the changes found in the BOMA 2017 Office Standard that reflect the types of amenities and services that today's tenants require.



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