

(l) Federal facilities and Federal use of space in rural areas shall serve to strengthen the Nation's rural communities. Federal space shall encourage growth and economic development and redevelopment in rural areas. Consistent with the provisions of section 601(b) of the Rural Development Act of 1972 (86 Stat. 674), each agency shall give first priority to meeting Federal space needs in rural areas.

(m) In meeting space needs in rural areas:

(1) First consideration shall be given to the central business area of incorporated jurisdictions, including adjacent areas of similar character and specific areas recommended by local officials, except where this type of consideration is prohibited.

(2) Serious consideration shall be given to the impact a site selection will have on improving the social, economic, environmental, and cultural conditions of the communities in a rural area. To the extent feasible, plans and programs for meeting space needs shall enhance and support the development, redevelopment, and revitalization objectives and priorities of communities in rural areas, as well as enhance and support the employment and economic base of these communities. Both positive and negative impacts of space acquisition actions shall be weighed with the objective of obtaining maximum socioeconomic benefits from these actions.

(3) In rural areas with more than one incorporated jurisdiction, space assignments shall be made in the most distressed jurisdiction.

(4) Space needs shall be met outside the central business area only when one of the exceptions contained in paragraphs (c)(1) (i), (ii), (iii), or (iv) of this section apply or in the case of county level field offices of USDA when the program requirements and needs of their clientele preclude locations in the central business area. The assignment and acquisition of facilities and space to house the activities of the U.S. Department of Agriculture are further defined in the USDA/GSA agreement in § 101-17-4701.

(n) Consistent with the policies cited in paragraphs (l) and (m) of this section, the site selection criteria con-

tained in paragraph (j) of this section, and the alternative space acquisition methods contained in paragraph (i) of this section shall be considered. In addition, consultation with local officials in rural areas shall be consistent with the requirements of paragraph (k) of this section.

(o) In accordance with the joint White House/Office of Management and Budget memorandum, dated March 9, 1979, heads of executive agencies that acquire or use federally owned or leased space under authority other than the Federal Property and Administrative Services Act of 1949, as amended, shall notify the appropriate GSA Regional Administrator before taking an irreversible action to acquire or use space when this action is inconsistent with the basic policies of paragraphs (a), (b), (c), (d), (f), (g), (h), (i), (j), (k), (l), (m), and (n) of this section.

(1) Notification shall include the:

(i) Description of the nature of the activity to be housed, type and amount of space involved, and number of employees to be housed;

(ii) Discussion and analysis of alternatives studies;

(iii) Documentation of advice received from local government;

(iv) Copy of the environmental assessment of the proposed action; and

(v) Citation of any statutory restrictions that preclude compliance with the above-referenced paragraphs of this section.

(2) Within 30 calendar days of receipt of the agency notification, the Regional Administrator shall notify the agency head in writing of concurrence with the proposed action. If the Regional Administrator does not concur with the proposed action, the Regional Administrator shall explain any objections in writing to the agency. The Administrator of General Services will notify the Director of the Office of Management and Budget of the basis for nonconcurrence.

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§ 101-17.003 Definition of terms.

The following definitions are established for terms used in this subchapter D.