

Client Enrichment Series – Overtime Utilities Q & As



Question #1: Where may I find more information on the GSA approval needed for personal electrical appliances (refrigerators, microwaves, etc.) in tenant agency space?

Answer:

The question in the presentation was pulled from page 29 of the Customer Guide to Real Property:

http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guide_to_Real_Propertybookmarked2002_R2E-c-pK_0Z5RDZ-i34K-pR.pdf.

Section § 102–74.190 of the Federal Management Regulation states that Federal agencies are prohibited from operating portable heaters, fans, and other such devices in Government controlled facilities unless authorized by the Federal agency buildings manager.

Question #2: What is the most appropriate way to pay for overtime utilities? Do you use RWA or maybe for emergency situations, a credit card or other similar vehicle?

Answer:

Overtime utilities may be paid via RWA or Occupancy Agreement (OA). A credit card may be used to pay for a RWA. The OA procedures are in the attached document, “Reimbursable Services on OA Bill.”

Question #3: If all cleaning is taking place during the regular 10 hour day, why and how is it determined that some would be considered "overtime"?

Answer:

Any services or utilities required beyond the standard operating hours are considered overtime. With the 24-hour land ports of entry (LPOEs), facilities costs are broken down into standard and overtime costs. For janitorial services, most LPOEs have second shift cleaning, a day porter, and call outs if something happens beyond the standard hours. In the northern LPOEs, snow removal is also included for standard and overtime services.

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Question #4: Can agencies have these charges put into our rent if we are in federal space? This way we don't have to do an RWA.

Answer:

Yes, the overtime utilities can be placed on the OA under the reimbursable services section. The OA would need to be approved on an annual basis based on the latest overtime utilities estimate. The OA procedures are in the attached document, “Reimbursable Services on OA Bill.”

Question #5: Can overtime utilities for items such as computer rooms and supplemental HVAC units (CRAC units) be included in the initial rental rate?

Answer:

Overtime utilities may not be included in the initial rent rate, but it may be added to the OA in the reimbursable services section. The initial rent is just for the standard level of service, which is the same rate for all tenants. The OA procedures are in the attached document, “Reimbursable Services on OA Bill.”

Question #6: Are the same RWA fees applied when paying through an OA?

Answer:

On the OA, there is a \$100 fee per service: electric, gas, oil, janitorial, mechanical, etc. The RWA fee is \$100 per RWA.

Question #7: Can we include the Custodial Services and OTU on the same RWA?

Answer:

These services may not be combined on one RWA. The costs for above standard custodial services are billed to GSA via a contractor's invoice. Overtime utilities are estimated based on usage, load, and run time of the building's mechanical equipment.

Question #8: Why isn't GSA more pro-active and telling agencies about energy options to save money?

Answer:

GSA should be working more closely with customer agencies on the initiatives that are aimed at reducing the amount of energy being used in federal buildings. GSA is working on new building operations and maintenance (O&M) specifications and other Smart Building initiatives to address Executive Orders 13514 and 13423.

With customer outreach opportunities, such as the Client Enrichment Series, GSA is providing customers with updates on the work that GSA is doing to deliver better value and savings to customer agencies, better serve our partners, make a more sustainable government, and lead with innovation.

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Question #9: Can you repeat those government regulations relating to energy efficiency, recycling, etc.

Answer:

Executive Order 13514

- 30% reduction in vehicle fleet petroleum use by 2020
- 26% improvement in water efficiency by 2020
- 50% recycling and waste diversion by 2015
- 95% of all applicable contracts will meet sustainability requirements
- Implementation of the 2030 net-zero-energy building requirement

Executive Order 13423

- Energy efficiency and reductions in greenhouse gas emissions
- Use of renewable energy
- Reduction in water consumption intensity
- Acquisition of green products and services
- Pollution prevention, including reduction or elimination of the use of toxic and hazardous chemicals and materials
- Cost-effective waste prevention and recycling programs
- Increased diversion of solid waste
- Sustainable design/high performance buildings
- Vehicle fleet management, including the use of alternative fuel vehicles and alternative fuels and the further reduction of petroleum consumption
- Electronics stewardship

Question #10: Since RWAs are time consuming what is the fastest way to pay for overtime utilities? Is there a benefit to either funding mechanism (OA vs. RWA)?

Answer:

Depending on the amount of the request, it may be faster to pay for ad hoc overtime utilities requests via RWA and annual requests via OA. It may be easier for customer agencies to track one OA for rent and above standard services that are requested annually rather than an OA for rent and a RWA for overtime utilities.

Question #11: What trends and/or future changes does GSA see regarding overtime utilities?

Answer:

GSA is expecting the volume of overtime utilities requested will decline over the next few years. This is due to budget cuts, Executive Orders 13514 and 13423, and the sustainability scorecards.

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Question #12: Has the new OU Estimating Tool resulted in any benefits for customers? If so, what are the benefits?

Answer:

The biggest benefits to both customers and GSA are improving the estimate process and national consistency for the estimate process. A better understanding of overtime utilities cost and usage can help agencies better manage their operational costs and improve the way GSA manages building operations. In the end, the American tax payer will benefit from the government's smarter spending.

Question #13: Why has my agency not seen a significant decrease in OU costs, even though GSA has spent a significant amount of money to make more Smart Buildings?

Answer:

The decreases will be noticed on the building equipment, so the decrease in cost will be more noticeable with the operating cost in the rent and not on the costs for overtime utilities. The operating costs in the rent are routinely evaluated in the building appraisal process.

Question #14: How will I as a tenant benefit from those Smart Building investments?

Answer:

As federal buildings are evaluated in the appraisal process, the operating costs will be adjusted to reflect a "smarter" building. Return on Investment (ROI) buildings charge operating costs based on actual usage. The operating costs for ROI buildings are updated every two years based on past utilities usage.

Question #15: What is different about the OU process if you are in Leased Space?

Answer:

In leased space, GSA negotiates a set rate for overtime usage. In federal space, GSA estimates the costs based on the equipment being used for the space.

Question #16: Now that you have given my agency an overview of OUs, who do I contact for a more detailed analysis of my agency's space and what will they be able to tell me?

Answer:

Please contact your GSA Property Manager. If that doesn't work, please contact your Regional Account Manager (RAM). If you do not know your RAM, please contact Jacqueline Suen at 415-522-3615 or at Jacqueline.Suen@gsa.gov and she will connect you with your Regional Account Manager.