

Client Enrichment Series – Q & A



Topic: *Pricing Desk Guide 5th Edition Highlights*

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Additional Pricing Resources

[*CES Session on PDG 5th Edition Recording on YouTube*](#)

[*CES Session on PDG 5th Edition Slide Deck*](#)

[*Pricing Policy Desk Guide - 5th Edition \(Nov 2019\)*](#)

[*Regional Pricing POC Map*](#)

[*Pricing Policy Basic Training - Slide Deck*](#)

Q1. Will GSA send agencies the New 5th Edition Pricing Guide?

- A. You can download a copy of the PDG 5th edition from gsa.gov at www.gsa.gov/rentpricingpolicy.

Q2. Rent on the Web looks like an interesting tool - Where is the link located, and how can I request access?

- A. <https://www.pbs-billing.gsa.gov/> Click on "Register an Account" to request access. Make sure to allow pop-up windows for the site.

Q3. How does the Rent data available on the PBS Customer Dashboard differ from what I can find on Rent on the Web?

- A. Data on the Customer Dashboard and Rent on the Web are similar, however, customers can deep dive into their specific data and sort by different criteria on the customer dashboard. For example, you can download up to 3 years, plus current years worth of monthly rent data at the OA level. Rent on the Web is a resource to look up rent bills.

Q4. How do I request access to the PBS Customer Dashboard?

- A. Please see the following link to request access to the PBS Customer Dashboard: gsa.gov/pbscustomerdashboard

Q5. Is there an anticipated timeframe for responses to the "Release of Space" mailbox?

- A. You should receive an acknowledgement (of your request) from GSA within 3 business days, and receive a response of acceptance or rejection within 10 business days.

Q6. What is the advance notice time frame for release of space in leases?

- A. To release space, customers are required to provide four month written notice to space.release@gsa.gov. In a lease with a cancelable OA, space cannot be released

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within the first 16 months of the OA term. GSA may designate at the outset that an OA is non-cancelable based on limited backfill potential. For these non-cancelable assignments please inform GSA of your desire to release space and your rent obligation will cease when the lease is terminated (i.e. GSA exercising termination rights or negotiating a buy-out), backfill occupancy or the end of your OA term.

Q7. If we want to add space and need to know availability, do we send the email to the same release.space@gsa.gov mailbox address or to our OA manager?

- A. This email is **only** to release space, nothing has changed in terms of who you contact for expansions or space availability.

Q8. For minor SDM changes that are incorrect from the onset of the occupancy, and where a correction would benefit the tenant agency, will the measurement (and associated rent charges) ever be corrected - at OA expiration/renewal or at any other time?

- A. At the start of an occupancy the square footage of the OA and assignment drawings must match. During occupancy the rent bill will be updated for SDM changes that are 50 USF or greater. Please note the rent bill is always updated for customer expansions and reductions.

Q9. For the restoration of the Tenant Improvement build out due to building failure (like the burst pipe example), could you give examples of what items would be covered?

- A. Any build-out considered a tenant improvement, such as carpet or other floor coverings, wall partitions, wall finishes and window treatments, up to the TI allowance. Please note customer agency equipment and furniture cannot be covered.

Q10. Where can I find more information about the FIT Program?

- A. You can learn more about the program at <https://www.gsa.gov/governmentwide-initiatives/total-workplace/fit-program>. For more information, please reach out to your regional workplace specialists or Regional Account Manager/Planning Managers. The Total Workplace FIT program allows agencies to lease furniture over a 5-year term and agencies within the national capital region to lease information technology over a 3-year term, easing the burden of costs while giving agencies the furniture and technology they need to build a more efficient government. To qualify for FIT funding, certain design strategies must be considered.

Q11. What is the FAS fee using FIT?

- A. Fees vary: furniture fee is 8 percent; information technology varies from 3 to 6 percent. There is no interest charged, the cost of furniture can be amortized over 5 years and new information technology equipment can be amortized over 3 years, not to exceed the term of the OA.

Q12. Can recurring services be paid as part of Operating rent or is that now done automatically?

- A. For all leases with a Request for Lease Proposal (RLP) issued on or after Oct 10, 2018, recurring services, such as overtime utilities, included in the customer requirement, are part of the standard operating rent. If you would like this for an older existing lease,

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please reach out to your GSA lease contracting officer who can check if the lessor will agree to a lease amendment.

Q13. Why are the recurring services not escalated through the remainder of the term on the OA's for budgeting purposes?

- A. Standard operating costs are escalated annually. Since all new leases include recurring services as part of the standard operating rent, these costs are now escalated.

Q14. If we wanted to add recurring OTU's to our OA, can we request this at any time during the lease period or do we have to wait until the OA is up for renewal? And to whom should we reach out to effect this change, our Lease Administration Manager?

- A. Agencies can request to add OTU's at any time during the lease. For current leases that include separate charges for regular and recurring extended services, Lease Contracting Officers, where appropriate, may negotiate a lease amendment to incorporate the requested charges into the operating rent.

Q15. Why does GSA not always require signature on an OA if they are a financial commitment like an RWA?

- A. The Pricing Desk Guide 5th Edition identifies when customer signature in an OA is required or not required. Keep in mind there are several important distinctions between an RWA and OA. With an RWA, GSA is obligating funds on behalf of the customer agency. At the time of RWA acceptance by GSA, the customer agency must obligate the full amount of the project cost. With an OA, the customer agrees to pay rent for either a federal building under GSA custody and control or a lease procured using GSA funds. There is no requirement that the customer agency certify that current year funds are available to defray future year obligations, rather the customer makes a good faith effort to meet their obligations as they arise. Some rent components have increases or escalations annually that are not known in advance, but are part of rent. In an OA, customers typically have release of space rights. Consequently, GSA only asks for customer signature on an OA in certain situations, such as expansions and amortization of TI.

Q16. Is it still true that customer agencies can only buy down the customization portion of the Tenant Improvement allowance?

- A. While a customer agency cannot buy down the general portion of the TI allowance in first generation space, they can do so in second generation space that already has TIs installed for a prior customer agency. Refer to sections 2.5.10 and 3.6.10 of the Pricing Desk Guide for payment options and timing restrictions.

Q17. Where can I find a copy of the Design Intent Drawing (DID) Guide?

- A. You can find a link to our guide [here](#), and you can view a Client Enrichment Series session "[Demystifying Design Intent Drawings](#)" on YouTube.

Q18. To avoid very small adjustments, what is the minimum dollar amount billing adjustment that GSA will make for a current year?

- A. There is no threshold in pricing policy.

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Q19. Is the new ACM policy retroactive in any way (projects in progress, etc.) or only valid as of November 16, 2019 - PDG5 publication?

A. The ACM policy is not retroactive and is valid as of November 16, 2019 going forward.

Q20. Can TI allowance be implemented in the middle of a lease agreement? In other words, can a lease be amended to add TIA?

A. In Leased space GSA cannot force a lessor to provide additional TI allowance mid-term, but it may be provided if lessor agrees to a lease amendment.

Q21. Will the increase in the General Allowance apply only to Federally-Owned space?

A. The increase will apply to both federally-owned *and* Leased space.

Q22. Different areas of the country have different market and labor rates. Does the General Allowance account for that?

A. Yes, the General Allowance is adjusted by the local construction index, which takes into account costs for different building materials and labor rates in different markets.

Q23. What agencies are transitioning to “Fair Annual Rent” from “Return on Investment” Pricing?

A. Customers in courthouses have made this transition. This primarily impacts the U.S. Courts, U.S. Marshals, and U.S. Attorneys, but also affects any customer agency who also resides in the courthouse.

Q24. Where can I get a copy of the presentation slide deck?

A. You will be able to find this slide deck and a closed-captioned video on our [Client Enrichment Series](#) website.