



STATE PROPERTIES COMMISSION

47 Trinity Avenue, S.W., Suite G02 Atlanta, Georgia 30334

POLICY

TITLE: SPC 01 - Asset Management: Proper Shutting Down of Vacant Buildings

ADOPTED: December 11, 2012 (Effective: January 1, 2013)

REVISED:

1. Definitions

- (a) Building with Value: A building that can be repurposed for use by another state agency or local government or federal entity, or sold to a private entity for fair market value.
- (b) Building with No or Minimal Value: A building that detracts value from the overall property, or one in which the cost of repurposing is not economically feasible.

2. Purpose

To protect and maintain the value of the State's real property assets. After vacating and declaring buildings surplus, custodial agencies are required to keep their buildings in proper condition until either change of custody or conveyance of title to the property. Proper condition applies to not only the physical condition and upkeep of the premises, but specifically requires the utilities (power and water) and HVAC to remain in operation to service the limited needs of the shuttered building.

3. Policy Statement

- (a) The policy of the State Properties Commission is to ensure that buildings and premises are left in proper condition by the custodial agency after that agency vacates the premises. Vacating the premises does not alleviate the custodial agency of its responsibility to maintain the building. This serves to ensure the safety of the premises, protect the building from weather extremes and hazardous conditions, and preserve the building, property value and marketability to other state agencies or the succeeding owner.
- (b) This policy will apply to all property types; uses such as offices, classrooms, hospitals, residences and other similar property types are held to a higher standard since building occupancy is a vital component.
- (c) When the custodial agency has vacated the building and appurtenant property, the building must be updated by the custodial agency in the BLLIP database

as “zero” for both Total Occupancy and Percent Occupied. As a result, DOAS will have it insured as a vacant building. If custody is transferred to another State agency, that agency shall update these two BLLIP entries, as well as Custodial Entity when notified by SPC that transfer of custody is complete.

- (d) A building of value should be maintained at a high level, both the interior and exterior, as specified in the following procedures. For a building with no value, the goal is to close the facility and maintain it only to the point of conforming to community aesthetics (landscaping) and to prevent detrimental conditions (vandalism, vagrancy, mold, safety hazards) from occurring.
- (e) The custodial agency will make a recommendation to the SPC Asset Manager of their determination of building value and the Asset Manager will either confirm or make the case for other determination.

4. Policies for Buildings with No or Minimal Value

- (a) Custodial agency will seek SPC assistance in developing a request for an executive order to demolish a building with no value. If the building has historic value, the Historic Preservation Division of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources must be contacted.
- (b) Should the building be determined to have no value greater than the land value, requirements could be limited to: 1) have all utilities shut off except for water and power to the extent of preventing detrimental conditions identified in section 3(d) above; 2) periodic landscaping; 3) prevention of hazardous conditions such as mold to eliminate the possibility that costly remediation may be required at a later date; and 4) secure the facility to prevent vandalism and/or vagrancy.
- (c) The departing agency should remove all agency related documents, files, computer equipment, and furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) owned by the agency and that is not affixed to the building. Anything the tenant/agency does not plan to relocate to their new location should either be stored at an alternate site or properly disposed. All litter and garbage should be removed and the building should be left in broom swept condition.
- (d) No flammable or hazardous materials should remain in the building. Consult the agency Environmental Officer and Georgia EPD for safe handling and removal of such items.
- (e) All lighting should be in the off position unless it is motion-controlled for security purposes.

5. Policies for Buildings of Value

- (a) The departing agency should remove all agency related documents, files, computer equipment, and furniture, fixtures and equipment (FF&E) owned by the agency and that is not affixed to the building. Anything the tenant/agency does not plan to relocate to their new location should either be stored at an alternate site or disposed of. All litter and garbage should be removed and the building should be left in broom swept condition.

- (b) All lighting should be in the off position unless it is motion-controlled for security purposes.
- (c) HVAC should be set to protect the building from cold and hot weather extremes. Heating should be set to prevent water pipes from breaking. Air-conditioning should be set to protect the building from mold during periods of high humidity. Further details are specified as follows:
 - The indoor air temperature should be maintained within the range of 55 to 80 degrees, +/- 5 degrees.
 - The building should be ventilated with outside air to keep humidity levels within 20 to 60% (Relative Humidity). There should be one or two air exchanges an hour in the winter and twice that number during the summer months. Humidity levels below 20% will be detrimental to wood products causing cracking, excessive drying and dry rot. Humidity above 60% will promote the growth of mold/mildew which can develop into a major problem.
 - Monitor humidity and temperature levels in the building at various locations with a minimum of one set of monitors per HVAC system. The ability to remotely monitor the building with set alarm points would be very beneficial.
 - Keep interior doors open when possible to facilitate uniform air exchange.
 - Have an HVAC technician check the building at a minimum of once a quarter, more frequently if possible, to change filters, replace belts as necessary and ensure the proper running of the equipment.
- (d) Landscaping should be maintained on a periodic basis (once per month is recommended) so the property doesn't appear abandoned. This will keep up the appearance of the building within the surrounding area, reduce complaints of unkempt grounds, and will make the property more marketable to prospective tenants or buyers.
- (e) At the main entry point of the building, post a listing of contact information for local police and fire departments.
- (f) As long as the property remains that of the custodial agency, that agency should plan to visit and/or inspect the property a minimum of once per month to ensure that the building remains in fair condition and no unexpected damage or trespassing has occurred.
- (g) These procedures will apply equally to any vacated building of value, several buildings or large campuses.