



JAN 31 2002

TO: Michael Gottesman, M.D.
Deputy Director for Intramural Research

FROM: Associate Director for Research Services

SUBJECT: Occupancy Policy on the NIH Campus

The Office of Research Services (ORS), Division of Engineering Services (DES) has prepared the attached document, "Occupancy Policy for New or Renovated Laboratory Space on the NIH Campus" for your review and approval. The objective of this policy is to establish a standard process for building occupancy following new construction and renovation projects on the NIH campus that can be executed with minimal impact to the NIH research mission. The requirements stipulated in this new policy are designed to ensure that the space designated for occupancy is safe, functional, and can adequately meet the needs of its occupants. This policy outlines technical, management, and logistical procedures that DES has identified as being critical to an efficient and expeditious process for transition into a facility.

Please indicate your concurrence by signing below.

/Signed/
Stephen A. Ficca

Attachment

Concur:

/Signed/
Michael Gottesman, M.D.

2/11/02
Date

National Institutes of Health
Office of Research Services
Division of Engineering Services
Design Construction and Alteration Branch
POLICY STATEMENT

SUBJECT: Occupancy Policy for New or Renovated Laboratory Space on the NIH Campus

POLICY: The NIH, through the Division of Engineering Services (DES) of the Office of Research Services (ORS), is dedicated to providing, operating and maintaining facilities to provide the physical environment necessary to support world class biomedical research. The NIH policy is to provide facilities and services which are complete and fully operational as determined through functional testing before any occupancy phase can begin. This policy applies to all new construction and renovation projects on the NIH campus. Any deviations or requests for waivers from this policy must be submitted to and approved by the Assistant Director, DCAB/DES and Director, DES prior to initiating transition into the facility or phased occupancy area.

1. One hundred percent (100%) of the central support elements and the regional distribution for mechanical, electrical, plumbing, fire protection and life safety systems, telecommunications and special laboratory systems (e.g., containment devices, air, vacuum, gas, etc.) must be installed, tested and certified for use prior to the proposed occupancy of any areas of the building. All major/critical systems serving the proposed occupied areas of the building and that affect occupant safety, comfort and the ability to accomplish the NIH mission must be fully operational at the time of occupancy. This certification process will assure that the systems are complete so that the scientist can conduct research. When subsequent regional branches are added to a system, it must be done without disrupting the service to the occupied area. Prefinal and final certification of these systems must be finalized prior to scheduled occupancy. Certification must be accomplished under a variety of operational scenarios, including normal, emergency, opposite seasons, and test and failure mode. All major punch list items must be completed prior to occupancy.
2. Minor balancing and system adjustments following certification are inevitable. The construction schedule and the occupancy schedule must both be sensitive to the time required to fine-tune the building after certification. Completion of these activities is acceptable following occupancy provided that it will not have any impact on critical elements or services that affect ongoing research within the occupied areas. The punch list for an occupied area is further limited to only minor items once transition and occupancy commences. Completion of these items after occupancy is acceptable provided it is scheduled with the occupants and does not affect ongoing research. Prior to any scheduled move, the occupants of the transition area must be made aware of the nature of all work activities which are proposed to be completed after occupancy, including work that will follow final certification. The schedule to complete these items must be agreed upon by all affected parties.

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3. Where phased occupancy is proposed before the entire facility is complete, fire protection and life safety systems must be in place prior to partial or complete occupancy of an area, floor or building and should be determined on a case-by-case basis. All critical elements and services necessary to conduct research within that area must be 100% complete before transition begins. Critical elements and services are program driven and should be determined on an occupant specific basis. Specific critical elements must be identified in writing and approved by the IC. When construction of those specific critical elements has been completed, the user will accept the phased occupancy area. Essential modifications to the space and systems within the phased occupancy area which affect the ability of the occupants to conduct research must also be 100% complete prior to initiating transition into that space, provided the modifications fall outside the moratorium guidelines defined in paragraph 4 below. The Project Officer must insure that all facility systems are supported 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, once any occupancy begins and until the entire facility is turned over to the DES Public Works Branch.
4. Project Scope Change Management: The complexity, construction conditions and schedule are different for each project and will affect the transition and move sequencing. Occupancy cannot be managed effectively if project scope changes continue right up to occupancy. Therefore, a moratorium period must be defined for each project that begins at a specified period of time before each move and ends at a specified period of time after the move, during which no more scope changes to the move-in area will be made. This moratorium period must be defined well in advance of actual occupancy in consultation with the IC occupants. For B&F whole building projects, that moratorium period will be defined and agreed to in conjunction with the project Executive Steering Committee. Generally, six months before occupancy and two months after occupancy should be considered the moratorium period. Smaller projects will be handled on a case-by-case basis using DES guidelines to define the moratorium time frame. Scope changes proposed during the moratorium period will be compiled and developed through standard DES work order procedures as a follow-on contract.

NIH DESIGN POLICY AND GUIDELINES: The NIH Design Policy and Guidelines is currently under revision. Once revised, the Guidelines will include a chapter on Occupancy. The Occupancy chapter will expand this policy to assist DES staff and project teams in developing a comprehensive transition plan as well as a certification/verification process for major and critical elements/systems as referred to in this policy statement.

APPROVALS:

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| /Signed/ | 2 / 10 / 2002 |
| George Williams, Assistant Director, DCAB/DES | Date Signed |

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| /Signed/ | 2 / 15 / 2002 |
| F. Anthony Clifford, Director, DES | Date Signed |

2 / 28 / 2002
Effective Date of Policy