10A NCAC 67A .0103  STANDARDS FOR OFFICE SPACE AND FACILITIES

The purpose of this Rule is to establish standards for office space, equipment and facilities for county departments of social services including agency suboffices and special centers that will adequately and effectively meet program, staff and client needs. These requirements are supplementary to, and do not replace, Federal Confidentiality of Information requirements and any provisions in State, county or municipal building codes.

(1) Identification of Office. All social services offices shall be appropriately marked and identifiable in the community as a social services agency:
   (a) Each office shall be identified by an outside sign clearly visible from the road or street.
   (b) If the office is housed within a public building occupied by other agencies or units of government, the agency shall be listed on a standard building directory in a manner similar and equal to that accorded every other agency.

(2) Requirements for Physical Plant.
   (a) Buildings housing social services agencies shall be certified by competent authority to be of sound and substantial construction and in compliance with state and local fire and building codes.
   (b) All buildings for which site clearance began before June 3, 1977, shall meet the equal access provisions specified in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended.

(3) Requirements for Space. Adequate office space shall be provided for each employee. The following guidelines show the acceptable minimum range of space which will vary due to position function, special equipment and furniture needs, fixed existing conditions or the availability of separate private interviewing rooms. The staff category descriptions and recommended minimum square footages of space range are shown below:
   (a) Staff Who Interview Clients In Their Offices  80
   (b) Supervisors  80
   (c) Management  96
   (d) Staff Members Not Required to Conduct Interviews In Their Offices  56
   (e) Separate Private Interviewing Rooms Adequate for Function

(4) Requirements for Privacy:
   (a) Private offices shall be required for the county director and each supervisor.
   (b) Private offices or interviewing room shall be available to all staff who interview clients.

(5) Requirements for Waiting Room and Reception Area. The principal location of each county department of social services shall be arranged to provide a waiting room of sufficient size to accommodate the people availing themselves of its use each day. A separate area is required for the receptionist.
(6) Requirement for Conference Room. A conference or staff training room with seating capacity adequate to accommodate the average number of people usually in attendance shall be provided for use in meetings and training sessions.

(7) Requirement for Storage Space and Confidentiality of Records. Sufficient space shall be provided for conveniently locating files and records, supplies, and forms:

(a) Files and supplies shall be accessible and convenient to staff responsible for their maintenance, use and protection.

(b) Files and records shall be adequately protected from fire, other damage and theft.

(c) Access to confidential information shall be limited to authorized personnel only.

(d) Space shall be available for storing janitorial and maintenance supplies and equipment used in maintaining the building and grounds.

(8) Requirement to Provide Office Space for Persons Who Periodically Visit the Agency on DSS Related Business. Office space shall be provided to persons who periodically visit the agency on DSS related business.

(9) Requirement for Equipment. Furnishings and equipment shall be provided to enable staff to adequately perform its duties.

History Note: Authority G.S. 108A-80; 143B-153; 45 C.F.R. 205.170(a)(b);
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