

GSA Can Better Assess the Effectiveness of Its Disposal Efforts

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A report to congressional requesters

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What GAO Found

Federal agencies disposed of over \$10 billion of unneeded personal property from July 2023 through fiscal year 2025. Generally, when a federal agency determines it no longer needs an item of personal property to fulfill its mission, the agency must report the item to the General Services Administration (GSA) to be disposed of through GSA's online Personal Property Management System (PPMS). The unneeded property reported within this study's time frame varied across a range of characteristics, from new bandages originally worth under \$1, to airplanes in usable condition originally worth over \$20 million.

GAO found that about 9 percent of this property was reused, meaning it was transferred to another federal agency, donated for use by state or local governments, or was sold to the public. Certain factors may have affected whether this property was reused. For example, items with a higher original acquisition cost and those that were reported along with online photographs were more likely to be reused.

Unneeded Federal Personal Property Items in GSA's Northern Virginia Warehouse



Source: GAO. | GAO-26-108521

GSA has three core efforts to help agencies dispose of unneeded property but has not fully assessed their effectiveness consistent with key performance management practices. These efforts include (1) online platforms to help facilitate unneeded property disposal; (2) educational resources, such as guidance and on-demand training; and (3) direct assistance to agencies to help dispose of unneeded personal property. GSA has developed a scorecard to help measure performance, but the measures it includes are not aligned with GSA's desired outcomes, such as timely disposals and providing a return on investment to taxpayers. The scorecard also excludes measures related to GSA's core efforts of providing educational resources and direct assistance. Due to these gaps, GSA may not be collecting or using information that could help the agency fully assess those efforts' effectiveness. As GSA aims to optimize the federal building portfolio, the amount of unneeded personal property is likely to grow. Assessing the effectiveness of its efforts can help GSA make decisions that improve its management of the personal property disposal process and stewardship of taxpayer dollars.

Why GAO Did This Study

GSA facilitates and manages the disposal of tens of millions of federal personal property items annually—a process that aims to reuse as much of that property as possible.

GAO was asked to review the outcomes of the federal personal property disposal process and GSA's role in ensuring the effectiveness of the process. This report (1) examines the amount of personal property federal agencies disposed of through GSA, and the factors that may affect their reuse; and (2) evaluates the extent to which GSA has assessed the effectiveness of its property disposal efforts consistent with key performance management practices.

GAO analyzed GSA data on federal personal property disposals from July 2023—when GSA's PPMS began—through fiscal year 2025 (the most recent data available at the time of GAO's request); reviewed GSA guidance documents, training materials, and outreach efforts to educate agencies on the disposal process; evaluated GSA's performance information related to the disposal process; compared GSA's efforts to key performance management practices; conducted interviews with GSA officials; and conducted a site visit to a GSA warehouse in Virginia.

What GAO Recommends

GAO is making two recommendations that GSA (1) develop and incorporate into its scorecard performance measures that are aligned with its core efforts and (2) identify, collect, and use the data it needs to assess the effectiveness of its personal property disposal efforts. GSA agreed with the recommendations.