

# GSA Should Take Additional Steps to Improve Agencies' Awareness of Meeting Spaces List

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A report to congressional committees

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## What GAO Found

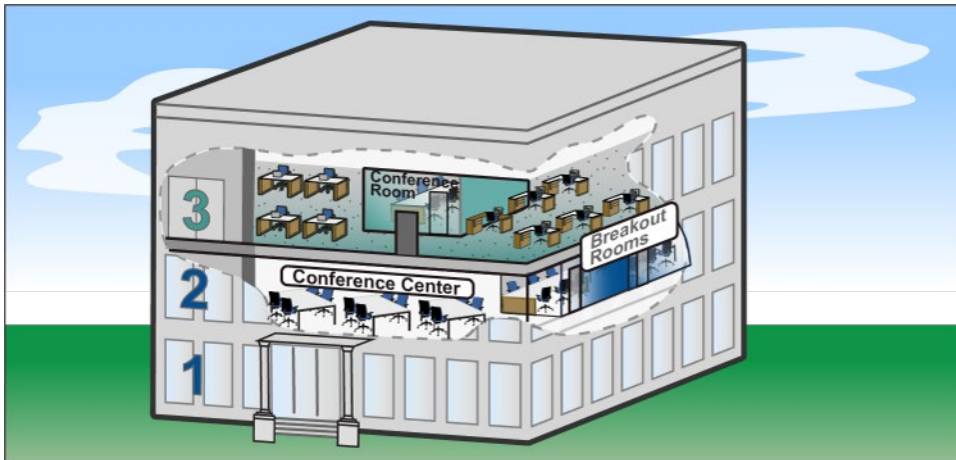
Federal buildings often contain special use spaces like meeting rooms and conference centers, some of which may be shared across agencies. Agencies varied in how they shared these spaces in the selected General Services Administration (GSA)-owned and -leased buildings GAO visited.

Interviewees, including officials from federal tenant agencies in those selected buildings, said that sharing these spaces can provide benefits, including:

- access to useful spaces their agency might not otherwise have,
- reduced costs and more efficient use of space (e.g., agencies do not need to lease or construct individual spaces), and
- increased collaboration between agencies.

However, interviewees also identified challenges to sharing, such as lack of awareness of what spaces are available or how to reserve them.

## Illustrative Examples of Special Use Spaces in a Federal Building



Source: GAO illustration and observation of General Services Administration-owned or -leased buildings. | GAO-26-108669

GSA, which manages federal real property for tenant agencies, publishes an online list of meeting spaces that agencies volunteered to share. The list includes information such as room descriptions and a point of contact to reserve the space. However, the list is not comprehensive—some tenant agencies have not added their space to the list, and some GSA rooms are not on the list. GSA periodically emails agencies to request that they update the list, and it relies on agencies to distribute the list to their staff. However, most agency officials GAO interviewed in selected buildings were not aware of GSA's list. GSA officials noted that federal turnover in 2025 contributed to reduced awareness of the list. They said that starting in 2025, more of their reminder emails were undelivered. Officials said they worked with agencies to update their contacts, and that they may be able to use other mechanisms to more broadly distribute the list. Improving the comprehensiveness of the list and agency awareness of it could help agencies share special use spaces, which could in turn potentially reduce costs by supporting GSA's efforts to ensure efficient use of federal space.

## Why GAO Did This Study

In recent years, GSA and others have taken steps to reduce unneeded federal real property, particularly office space, but building utilization across the federal government remains low.

The Thomas R. Carper Water Resources Development Act of 2024 includes a provision for GAO to report on the use of special use spaces in federal buildings to determine levels of use and identify opportunities for sharing, collocating, and other efficiencies.

This report addresses 1) how agencies share special use spaces in selected GSA-owned and -leased buildings, 2) the reported benefits and challenges related to sharing special use spaces, and 3) GSA's efforts to promote sharing of special use spaces.

GAO conducted in-person site visits at six federal buildings selected for geographic diversity and whether there were multiple tenants, among other criteria. These site visits were composed of 1) a review of data or documentation; 2) observation of special use spaces; 3) interviews with GSA officials; and 4) interviews with officials from federal tenant agencies in those buildings. GAO also reviewed available GSA documentation and assessed GSA efforts against its strategic goals and GAO leading practices for interagency collaboration.

## What GAO Recommends

GAO recommends that GSA take additional steps to 1) improve the comprehensiveness of its federal meeting facilities list; and 2) increase tenant agency awareness of the list. GSA agreed with both recommendations and stated that it is developing a plan to address them.