

Hi all,

Building temperature is one of the most discussed topics in the workplace. Some like it hot; some like it cold; most know their best temp when they feel it and know they don't feel it at least some of the time they are at work. In fact, it's such a controversial topic, the acceptable building temperature range has been [defined by policy](#). The policy defines the range as 68-75° F.

The Property Management Division (PMD) endeavors to make employee office workspaces appropriately comfortable. This isn't always easy. The issue may be an underperforming HVAC system or a leaky building envelope. Some of the issue is office configuration that's been done over the years to fit more people into existing spaces; where new structure walls or higher cubicle walls have been added, the original HVAC designs have been compromised. This is why, when considering re-arranging cubicles, agencies must contact PMD to ensure the new layout does not impact the ability to provide adequate heating/cooling to the affected area as well as other areas around it.

This brings us to the sensitive topic of personal space heating units. When the sweater or blanket isn't working, this may seem like a good next alternative, but it isn't.

As a reminder, you may not bring your own space heater to the workplace. In the past month, there have been several instances of electrical circuit overload and the potential for fire risk associated with space heaters. Besides fire and electrical risks, these units can confuse the temperature sensors – sensors that help control the building's HVAC systems to maintain the statutorily mandated building temperature range in the entire building. A heater too close to one sensor will likely impact the heat/air flow in an entirely separate space. (This is also why we can't open windows. The open window in one area may significantly affect what's happening in another area.)

If the building's system is unable to maintain temperature to the mandated range, there are options. For instance, PMD can evaluate the use of insulated window shades or strategically placed radiant heaters. We can engage engineers for solutions. In leased space, we can work with the landlords for fixes.

If you think your work environment generally isn't within the proper temperature range, please contact your supervisor. The solution may not be immediate, or the answer may be that the temperature is within the statutory parameters. But we do understand the importance of a comfortable workplace, and PMD will do its best to accommodate.

Thank you,

Kirsten LC Figueroa
Commissioner