



# governmentattic.org

*"Rummaging in the government's attic"*

Description of document:	Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) Return to Office Plan 2025
Requested date:	24-March-2025
Release date:	21-May-2025
Posted date:	02-June-2025
Source of document:	FOIA Officer FOIA Request Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board 1750 Pennsylvania Ave. NW, Suite 910 Washington, DC 20006. <a href="#">U.S. CSB FOIA Public Access Portal</a> <a href="#">FOIA.gov</a>

The governmentattic.org web site ("the site") is a First Amendment free speech web site and is noncommercial and free to the public. The site and materials made available on the site, such as this file, are for reference only. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals have made every effort to make this information as complete and as accurate as possible, however, there may be mistakes and omissions, both typographical and in content. The governmentattic.org web site and its principals shall have neither liability nor responsibility to any person or entity with respect to any loss or damage caused, or alleged to have been caused, directly or indirectly, by the information provided on the governmentattic.org web site or in this file. The public records published on the site were obtained from government agencies using proper legal channels. Each document is identified as to the source. Any concerns about the contents of the site should be directed to the agency originating the document in question. GovernmentAttic.org is not responsible for the contents of documents published on the website.

04/29/2025

This letter is an initial and final response from the United States Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) to your Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request. The CSB FOIA office received your request on 03/24/2025 and assigned it control number CSB-2025-0086. Please cite this number in any future communications with our office regarding your request.

#### Requested Records

You requested the following:

A copy of the CSB Return to Office (RTO) Implementation Plan required by the OMB and OPM Memo dated January 27, 2025 which is posted here: <https://www.opm.gov/policy-data-oversight/latestmemos/agency-return-to-office-implementationplans.pdf> and which CSB submitted by email to OMB and OPM.

#### Disposition of Request

Your request has been granted. In accordance with the OMB-OPM memorandum entitled "Agency Return to Office Implementation Plans", dated January 27, 2025, attached please find the CSB's RTO Implementation Plan.

#### The CSB

The CSB is an independent federal agency whose statutory mandate is to investigate incidents/accidents at stationary sources (fixed facilities) that result in both a chemical release into the atmosphere, and a fatality, serious injury, or substantial property damages. You may wish to visit our website ( [www.csb.gov](http://www.csb.gov) ) to view our videos or read our investigation reports or other documents available to the public. Additional information regarding the federal government's administration of the FOIA, including a listing of FOIA contact information, is available at [www.foia.gov](http://www.foia.gov).

#### Appeals

You may appeal this response to the CSB's FOIA/Privacy Act Appeals Officer. Such an appeal must be made in writing and must be postmarked, or electronically transmitted, within 90 days of the date of this response letter. An appeal should include: a copy of your initial request; a copy of this letter; and a statement of the circumstances, reasons, or arguments

supporting your position. The appeal should also clearly identify the adverse determination/s that is/are being appealed and the assigned request number. To ensure proper handling, you should mark an appeal letter and its envelope as a "FOIA Appeal." FOIA appeals should be submitted electronically, e-mailed to [foiaappeals@csb.gov](mailto:foiaappeals@csb.gov), or mailed to: ATTN: Office of the General Counsel/FOIA Appeals, Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board, 1750 Pennsylvania Ave, NW, Suite 910, Washington, DC 20006.

#### Office of Government Information Services

The 2007 FOIA amendments created the Office of Government Information Services (OGIS) to offer mediation services to resolve disputes between FOIA requesters and Federal agencies as a non-exclusive alternative to litigation (in other words, using OGIS services does not affect your right to pursue litigation). You may contact OGIS in any of the following ways: Office of Government Information Services, National Archives and Records Administration, 8601 Adelphi Road - OGIS College Park, MD, 20740-6001. E-mail: [ogis@nara.gov](mailto:ogis@nara.gov). Web: <https://www.archives.gov/ogis>. Telephone: 202-741-5770. Fax: 202-741-5769. Toll-free: 1-877-684-6448. Please note that using OGIS services does not affect the timing of filing an appeal with the CSB's FOIA & Privacy Act Appeals Officer.

This response completes the CSB's processing of your request, which is now closed. Steven Messer, FOIA Officer, is responsible for this response. If you have any questions about this response, feel free to contact me by telephone at: (202) 815-8019, or by e-mail at [Steven.Messer@csb.gov](mailto:Steven.Messer@csb.gov). Additionally, if you have any questions about our response to your request, you may contact our FOIA Public Liaison, Hillary Cohen, by phone at (202) 446-8094 or email at [Hillary.Cohen@csb.gov](mailto:Hillary.Cohen@csb.gov).

Sincerely,

//s//

Steven Messer  
FOIA Officer  
Acting General Counsel  
Office of General Counsel



## U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

---

### U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board

#### Return to Office Implementation Plan

**February 7, 2025**

**(Updated March 13, 2025)**

This plan has been prepared by the U.S. Chemical Safety and Hazard Investigation Board (CSB) in accordance with the OMB-OPM memorandum entitled "Agency Return to Office Implementation Plans", dated January 27, 2025.

By March 31, 2025, the CSB will review and revise as needed any telework agreements currently in place.

The CSB has only one office, which is located in Washington, D.C. Supervisory staff assigned to the CSB's D.C. office will return to the office on March 17, to ensure office readiness and functionality. The remaining D.C. staff will return to the office on March 24.

The CSB will be vacating the current D.C. office in the coming months, however. The CSB's office is located in a private commercial building in Washington, D.C., and the lease for the office expires at the end of this fiscal year (September 30). The CSB received an opinion from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) stating that the CSB does not have statutory authority to lease private office space specifically in the District of Columbia, even though the CSB's D.C. office has been located in private space ever since the CSB began operations in 1998. Consequently, the CSB has been evaluating alternative office space options, such as "subletting" space from another federal agency or leasing private space in Virginia or Maryland in the D.C. metropolitan area. The D.C. office staff will be relocated when new office space in Washington, D.C. (or the surrounding area in Virginia or Maryland) is procured.

Many of the CSB's employees have been working elsewhere throughout the country for many years, dating back to the Administration of President George W. Bush. The CSB has begun a process to identify office space for these employees in other federal agencies' facilities (or private office space if no federal space is available). When the D.C. office staff have been relocated, the CSB will work to obtain either federal or private office space in other areas where multiple employees are located so as to maximize the utilization of the space and minimize the number of office locations to the extent possible. Because all of these employees are involved in varying ways with the CSB's investigations of major chemical incidents throughout this

country and are essential to the agency's core investigative function, these employees automatically will be grouped appropriately.

The CSB anticipates that it will take at least 6-9 months to identify available space and enter into the necessary agreements (interagency agreements and/or leases) at reasonable costs. The CSB's outside target date for completion of this entire effort is the end of this calendar year, although some office space may be obtained and occupied before that time.

The CSB's efforts may be impacted by the agency's limited financial resources under the current Continuing Resolution (which expires March 14) or a future Continuing Resolution or a potential government shutdown, and the uncertainty about what the CSB's funding for the remainder of the current fiscal year (and thereafter) ultimately will be. Additionally, the availability of office space – especially in a federal facility – may be impacted by the number of federal employees at other agencies who will be returning to their offices, as well as efforts currently underway to close federal facilities.

Moreover, the CSB is a very small agency with limited staff and a limited budget. The vast majority of the CSB's resources are devoted to the CSB's congressionally mandated public safety mission to investigate chemical incidents around the country that result in fatalities, serious injuries, or substantial property damage. The CSB must ensure that its efforts to identify and obtain office space do not adversely affect the agency's ongoing investigations. The CSB is examining the possibility of terminating the lease for the current D.C. office before September 30 and obtaining alternative space in D.C. (or the surrounding metropolitan area in Virginia or Maryland) at a lower cost as a potential way to conserve resources.

The CSB is working to develop a process for determining exceptions based on disability, qualifying medical condition, and other compelling reasons.

- The CSB will provide an exception for military spouses in accordance with the OMB-OPM memorandum, as well as spouses of members of the U.S. Foreign Service who are on overseas assignments in accordance with OPM's February 12 memorandum.
- For an exception based on disability, the CSB will consider the requirements relating to reasonable accommodation (as outlined in federal law and the applicable internal CSB policy) and may provide an exception if compliant office space is unavailable or the expense of such space is unduly costly in light of the CSB's available resources. The CSB also will consider relevant transportation considerations.
- For an exception based on qualifying medical condition, the CSB will consider the medical and health issues and conditions impacting the employee and/or the employee's family, such as any medical treatment that may be required by the employee or a member of the employee's family, the potential impact on the employee's condition, the impact that the employee's presence might have on the health of other employees, and other relevant considerations. An employee requesting an exception

based on a qualifying medical condition must provide a doctor's statement or other acceptable evidence as documentation for the exception request.

- For an exception based on other compelling reasons, the CSB will consider any unique personal or family circumstances, the availability and cost of appropriate office space, travel time and other relevant transportation considerations, operational efficiency, and other issues that might be unique to the employee or relevant to the agency's ability to obtain appropriate office space.

A request for an exception will be submitted to the employee's supervisor, who will make a recommendation to the Chairperson. The Chairperson will review the request and the supervisor's recommendation and make a determination on the request. For all requests, special consideration will be given to veterans.

The CSB's Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) was finalized and put into effect in March 2024 after negotiations that began under prior agency leadership. The CSB does not anticipate any need to modify the CBA.