

**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20250**

November 5, 2015

**SECRETARY'S MEMORANDUM 1076-012  
Lease Accountability and Strategy Division**

1. PURPOSE

The purpose of this memorandum is to implement a Lease Accountability and Strategy Division (LASD) in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). Details of such implementation are provided below.

2. POLICY

The LASD is hereby implemented. This action is being taken as a logical conclusion to the Leasing Center of Excellence (COE) task force established under the *Blueprint for Stronger Service*. The LASD will be located, organizationally, in the Office of Procurement and Property Management (OPPM) in Departmental Management (DM). The LASD will provide lease oversight and accountability services initially to USDA's Service Center Agencies (SCAs): Farm Service Agency (FSA), Rural Development (RD), and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS). Effective immediately, OPPM and the SCAs shall complete work necessary to establish the LASD in accordance with all relevant Departmental directives. The LASD shall be operational on December 1, 2015, or 30 days after appropriate notification of the Appropriations Committee, with regional phase-in and staffing by all parties to this memorandum completed by March 31, 2016.

On May 8, 2014, DM and the SCAs chartered a Leasing COE Governance Board to assist with decision-making across the Leasing COE. Going forward, USDA will establish a Subcommittee under the National Food and Agriculture Council (NFAC) to allow for regular coordination among agency leadership and LASD, and to provide consistent guidance and communication to ensure Departmental leasing objectives are met.

Following the initial implementation of the LASD for servicing the SCAs, the LASD may expand its oversight responsibilities to include other mission areas or agencies as a shared services platform.

### 3. ACTIONS ORDERED

- a. The Assistant Secretary for Administration (ASA) will establish a permanent management structure for the LASD within OPPM no later than December 1, 2015 or the completion of the 30-day Hill notification.
- b. The LASD shall provide oversight and serve as the primary point of contact for SCA lease delegations authorized by the General Services Administration (GSA).
- c. All requests for delegations of lease acquisition will be submitted by the SCAs directly to LASD before submission to the GSA. The Department will establish and manage a quality assurance process to ensure lease delegations are complete and accurate before submission to GSA.
- d. The LASD will perform lease oversight and portfolio management planning services to the SCAs and provide quarterly reports of progress to GSA.
- e. The SCAs will manage all lease acquisition and management responsibilities (actions necessary to develop lease acquisition plans, prepare solicitation documents, conduct negotiations with lessor, award/modify lease agreement, maintain official records, coordinate GSA occupancy agreements) with oversight and coordination from OPPM LASD to ensure lease agreement terms are met and lease actions comply with applicable laws, rules, and regulations.
- f. The existing Governance of the Leasing COE will be transitioned to NFAC and has been revised to incorporate changes from this memorandum and to establish the governance role through the establishment of an NFAC Leasing subcommittee.
- g. The SCAs and OPPM will enter into all necessary service level agreements.

### 4. FURTHER DESIGNATIONS

The Agency Heads for the SCAs are authorized to enter into reimbursable agreements or other appropriate financing arrangements with DM's OPPM for the provision of lease accountability and strategy services.

### 5. EXISTING DIRECTIVES

Prior delegations of authority, administration regulations, and other directives that are not consistent with the provisions of this memorandum shall remain in full force and effect.

6. GUIDANCE

OPPM will issue interim operating guidance for associated functions and services until such time that all final guidance and procedures are completed. The interim operating guidance referenced above and any reimbursable agreements required to implement the requirements articulated in sections 2 and 3 of this Memorandum shall include a mechanism for Departmental components receiving services to provide input to the service provider on service design, operations, performance accountability, quality control, cost allocation, and cost control.

7. EFFECTIVE DATE AND TERMINATION

This memorandum is effective immediately and will remain in effect for one year from the effective date or until such earlier time as OPPM completes the Departmental Regulation 1010 process to finalize permanent establishment of the LASD office.

/s/THOMAS J. VILSACK  
SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE