



Stearns County Sheriff's Office  
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DATE: November 14, 2016  
TO: Stearns County Sheriff's Office Campus Security Staff  
FROM: Sheriff John Sanner, by Lt. Robert Dickhaus  
RE: **Security Screening Procedure for Administration Center and Westside Service Center**

### **Introduction**

In order to ensure a safe environment for employees, customers and guests at Stearns County governmental buildings, and in accordance with Stearns County Ordinance No. 547, the Sheriff of Stearns County has authorized the following Security Operating Procedure for staff members tasked with conducting screening procedures at the Administration Center and the Westside Service Center. The Courthouse Complex and Law Enforcement Center are covered by separate policies and statutes. Security screening is not being implemented at other Stearns County buildings at this time.

The safety of our employees, customers and guests is foremost in the creation of these procedures. Security for the aforementioned buildings will be enhanced through the use of electronic safety screening devices and systems to include walk-through style metal detectors, hand held devices, as well as other means of screening as determined necessary by the Sheriff.

### **Statement of Nondiscrimination Policy**

Stearns County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, age, religion or religious creed, physical or mental disability or handicap, sex, gender, gender identity or gender expression, sexual orientation, marital status, family or

parental status, income derived from public assistance, political beliefs or affiliations, military or veteran status or any other characteristic protected under applicable federal, state or local law, regulation or policy. This policy shall apply equally to all persons in accordance with law.

## **Public Education and Information**

As part of the overall enhanced Security Screening procedure plan, Stearns County will conduct a public information campaign to notify and educate the public of the new procedure. Current staff, regular visiting staff and new employees, as part of orientation, shall receive information about the security screening procedure. Signage will be readily visible for those conducting business at Stearns County buildings notifying the public of the procedure. This policy shall be accessible for review by the public in accordance with law.

## **Designation of Public and Nonpublic Spaces**

Public spaces and areas are defined as those areas customarily accessible to the public during regular business hours and during specific public events, whether or not occurring during regular business hours. Nonpublic spaces are those spaces not customarily accessible to the public during business hours or public events and which require key card access, permission, or an escort to enter. The public and nonpublic spaces are depicted on the diagrams attached hereto and incorporated into this policy by reference. Copies of these diagrams shall be posted at screening stations and in such other locations as the Sheriff deems advisable and desirable.

## **Security Screening**

Location and Hours. The Security Screening stations will be located at the designated public entrances to Stearns County Administration Building and the Stearns County West Service Center. Screening stations will be in operation thirty minutes prior to regular business hours and remain open throughout the day and until the end of the business day or close of the buildings to the public. Security screening stations may be operated during evening and weekend hours as needed.

Staffing and Duties. During Security Screening operational periods, each station will be staffed by at least one officer and supported by a second officer who will be considered a "rover." The rover will provide additional support and assistance to the primary screener during peak times and during rest breaks. A minimum of one rover will be assigned at the West Service Center and one at the Downtown Campus locations during operational periods. The County Sheriff reserves the right to re-allocate or reassign security staff as needed during an operational period.

Prohibited and Dangerous Items. Except as otherwise provided by law and Stearns County Ordinance No. 547, the following is a list of dangerous weapons and/or unauthorized items that are prohibited from Stearns County buildings:

- Firearms including Pellet, BB and paintball guns;
- Explosives;
- Martial Arts Type Weapons;
- Batons, Clubs, Slung Shots or other blunt force weapons;
- Mace, Pepper Spray, Tear Gas or Personal Defense Sprays or Aerosols;
- Ammunition;
- Electronic Control or Incapacitation Devices, Stun Guns or Tasers;
- Brass Knuckles;
- Slingshots;
- Flammable Liquids or Substances;
- Automatic (Switch Blade), Spring-Assisted or Gravity (Butterfly) Knives, regardless of length;
- Knives or Edged Weapons or Tools with a cutting surface greater than 3 inches;
- All other items not listed which meet the definition of a "Dangerous Weapon" as provided by Minnesota Statutes, § 609.02 or reasonably determined by Sheriff's personnel to be a dangerous weapon, item or substance.

This list is not intended to be comprehensive. Sheriff's Deputies and screening staff are authorized to use their discretion when excluding items which an officer determines to pose a risk to public health, safety, or welfare.

Screening Procedure. The following procedures will be strictly enforced by members of the Stearns County Sheriff's Office at all times during operational periods at the screening stations:

- Except as otherwise provided by this policy and law, including Stearns County Ordinance No. 547, persons who are not employees of the County of Stearns that wish to do business within the buildings designated in the policy must pass through a screening station. Access to the buildings by Stearns County employees will be governed by Stearns County employment and personnel policies.
- A person passing through the screening equipment and triggering an alarm will be asked to empty their pockets, remove, or identify any and all objects that may be on their person. They will then be allowed to pass through the screening equipment a second time. If they do not trigger a second alarm, they will be allowed to collect their belongings and proceed to their destination. If a second alarm is triggered, then the process will be repeated.
- If a person triggers a third alarm and they wish to continue to their destination, then that person must consent to being taken aside and subject to search via a handheld instrument or a pat down search. The person may also choose to leave and return at such times as they wish to be screened again. If a person passes the search, they will be allowed to collect their belongings and proceed to their destination. If they fail the search and cannot clearly articulate the reason for the alarm activation, they will be denied access to the building. In all instances, nonconsensual personal searches may be conducted upon a reasonable

articulable suspicion that a crime may have occurred and the person is armed and dangerous.

- All personally carried bags or containers are subject to a visual search. If any objects that appear suspicious in nature are discovered, the officer will conduct a more thorough search of the bag or container. Persons who do not consent to a search of their bag or container have the option of returning the bag to their vehicle or leaving and not proceeding to their destination.
- At any time a person may refuse to consent to a search of their person, bag, or container. If a person refuses to provide their consent, they will be denied access to the building. Nonconsensual searches of a person, personal bag or container may still be conducted upon a reasonable articulable suspicion that a crime may have occurred and the person is armed and dangerous.
- If any items determined to be illegal in nature, or otherwise prohibited within the county buildings by this policy and Stearns County Ordinance No. \_\_\_\_, are discovered, the person in possession of the items will be denied access to the building. Illegal items will be seized by the Stearns County Sheriff's Office and persons possessing illegal items may be subject to arrest.

Amnesty Box. A Dangerous/Prohibited Items drop box will be placed outside the Screening Station to allow for persons to deposit otherwise legal items, including dangerous weapons and/or unauthorized items prior to entering the building. All items deposited within the Dangerous/Prohibited Items box immediately become the property of the Stearns County Sheriff's Office. All items will be removed from the Dangerous/Prohibited Items box at the conclusion of the business day (or at such earlier intervals as may from time to time be necessary) and turned over to the Property/Evidence Room for disposal. Illegal items and contraband may not be placed in the box, but are subject to immediate seizure and persons possessing the same may be subject to immediate arrest.

Lockers. Lockers may be provided for those that wish to store bags or personal items during their visit to Stearns County buildings. As a condition of using County provided lockers, Stearns County Sheriff's Office reserves the right to search any locker, and its contents. Written notice that lockers are subject to search shall be visibly posted. When feasible, Stearns County Sheriff's personnel shall inform persons wishing to use County provided lockers that items within the locker are subject to search, but are under no obligation to do so. Items left in the lockers at the close of the business day will be placed in the Property/Evidence Room of the Law Enforcement Center. Persons placing items in County provided lockers do so at their own risk. Stearns County is not responsible for personal items placed in County provided lockers.

Law Enforcement Officers. Uniformed law enforcement officers will not be required to pass through the Security Screening Station, but they are subject to employment verification by producing a valid, law enforcement identification ID if they are unknown to the screener. Non-uniformed law enforcement officers, who are armed, will be required

to produce a valid, picture law enforcement identification card if asked to do so by Sheriff's Office personnel.

*Lawful Possession of Firearms Under Permit.* Persons who possess a valid "permit to carry" under Minnesota State Statute § 624.72 may possess firearms in "public areas" of the Administration Building and Westside Service Center. The permit holder must declare the firearm at the Screening Station and present a valid identification and valid permit for verification. (Public and nonpublic areas are designated on the attached diagrams.) Sheriff's personnel who encounter persons, who are non-law enforcement officers, wishing to pass through a Screening Station with any firearm shall verify the validity of permit to carry through the National Crime Information Center (NCIC). Additionally, Sheriff's personnel shall verify, through NCIC, that the person in possession of any firearm is not a prohibited person under law.

*Lawful Possession of Chemical Spray and Electronic Incapacitation Devices.* Persons may lawfully possess authorized tear gas compounds (personal defense chemical spray) or electronic incapacitation devices (tasers/ stun guns) in "public areas" of the Administration Building and Westside Service Center in accordance with Minnesota Statutes, §§ 624.731 – 624.732. (Public and nonpublic areas are designated on the attached diagrams.) A person in possession of such items must declare the item and present a valid identification.

*Persons With Disabilities.* Persons with disabilities will be thoroughly screened while being sensitive to each person's condition. If a person with disabilities is unable to walk through the metal detector, they will be subject to search via a handheld device and/or a pat down search. Persons with children in child carriers are subject to the same above listed procedures.

*Uncooperative Persons.* Persons who fail to comply with the Sheriff's Security Staff and/or the above listed procedures will be denied access to the county building and may be subject to criminal prosecution pursuant to Stearns County Ordinance No. 547 and/ or applicable state law.

### **Notification of Public and Nonpublic Areas**

When Sheriff's personnel encounter a person in possession of a prohibited but otherwise legal item, they shall, to the extent feasible, notify the person that: (1) the prohibited item may not be brought into nonpublic areas of the building; (2) provide information and notice of where nonpublic areas are located; and (3) inform the person that possession of a prohibited item in a nonpublic area is a crime for which the person may be prosecuted. Whenever feasible, the County will endeavor to identify nonpublic areas by appropriate signage. This provision is not intended to modify Stearns County ordinance No. 547. This policy provision is not intended to provide a defense to misdemeanor violations of the ordinance.

### **County Employees, Vendors, Contract Workers, Dignitaries**

County employees are not subject to this policy. The conduct and regulation of County employees shall be governed by Stearns County employment and personnel policies. Nothing in the policy shall be construed to prohibit County building maintenance personnel from possession cutting tools or other items necessary in the performance of their work. Nothing in this policy shall be construed as prohibiting persons under contract from performing building maintenance, construction or renovation or from possessing cutting tools or other items necessary to perform such work. Vendors, contract workers, employees, County Commissioners and visiting dignitaries may, as determined by the County in its sole discretion, be exempted from the security screening measures of this policy or subject to alternate security screening measures.

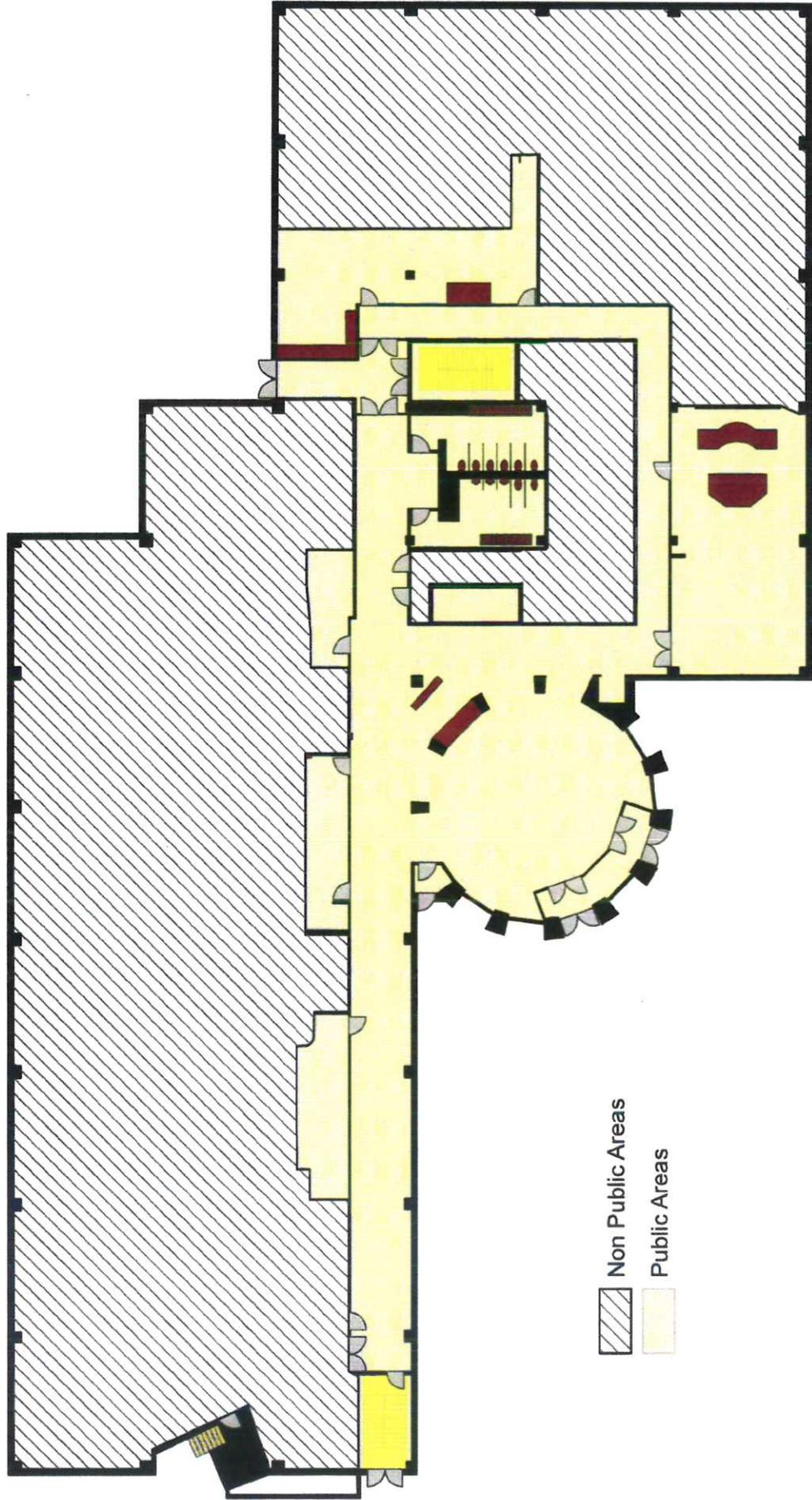
### **Policy Subject to Changes and Modifications**

These Security Operating Procedures are subject to review and modification on an as needed basis. Changes to this policy may be forthcoming and occur with little or no notice.

### **No Limitation to Sheriff's Office Authority**

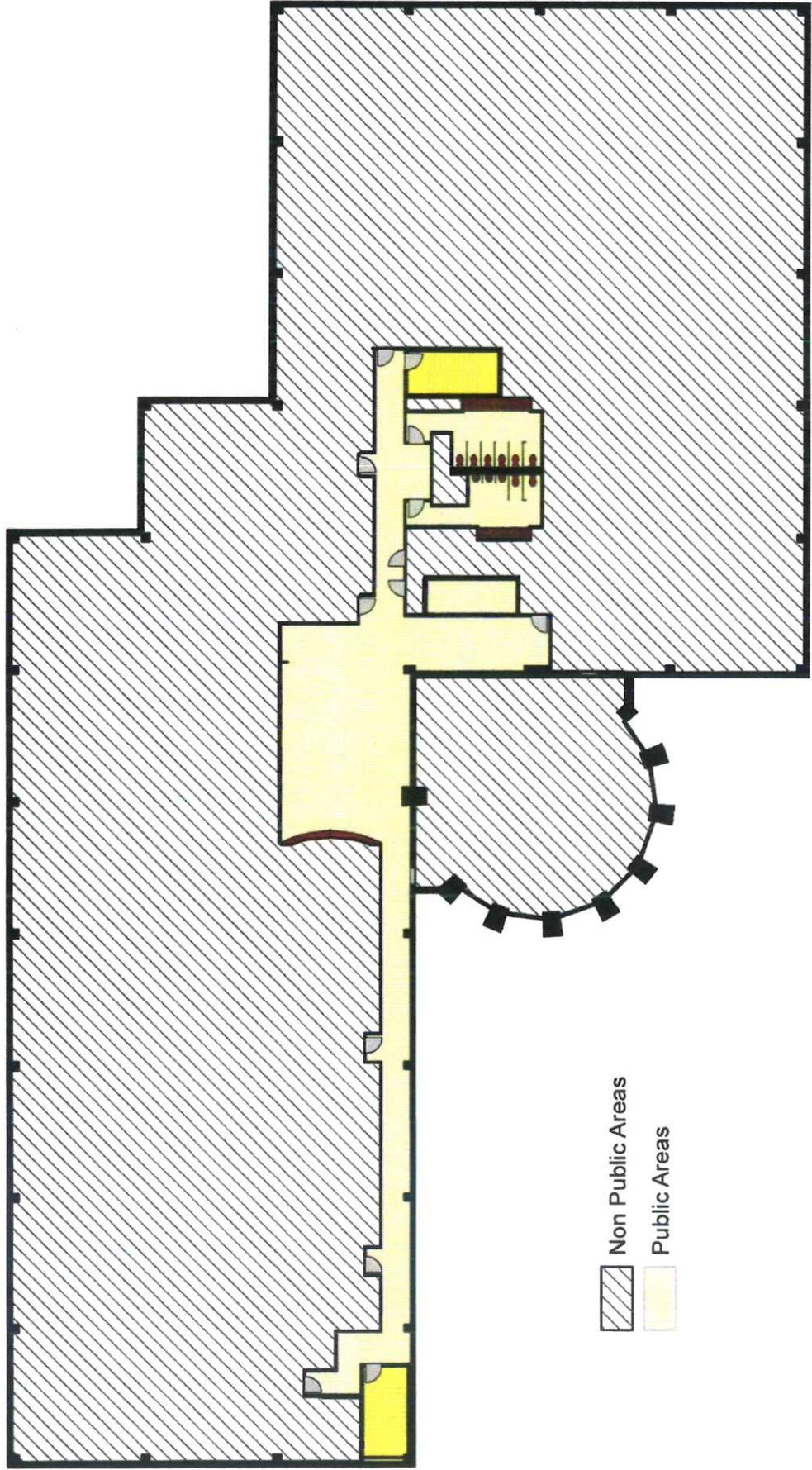
Nothing in this policy shall be construed as imposing any limitation whatsoever on the lawful authority of the Stearns County Sheriff's Office and its personnel.

# Administration Building: Floor 1



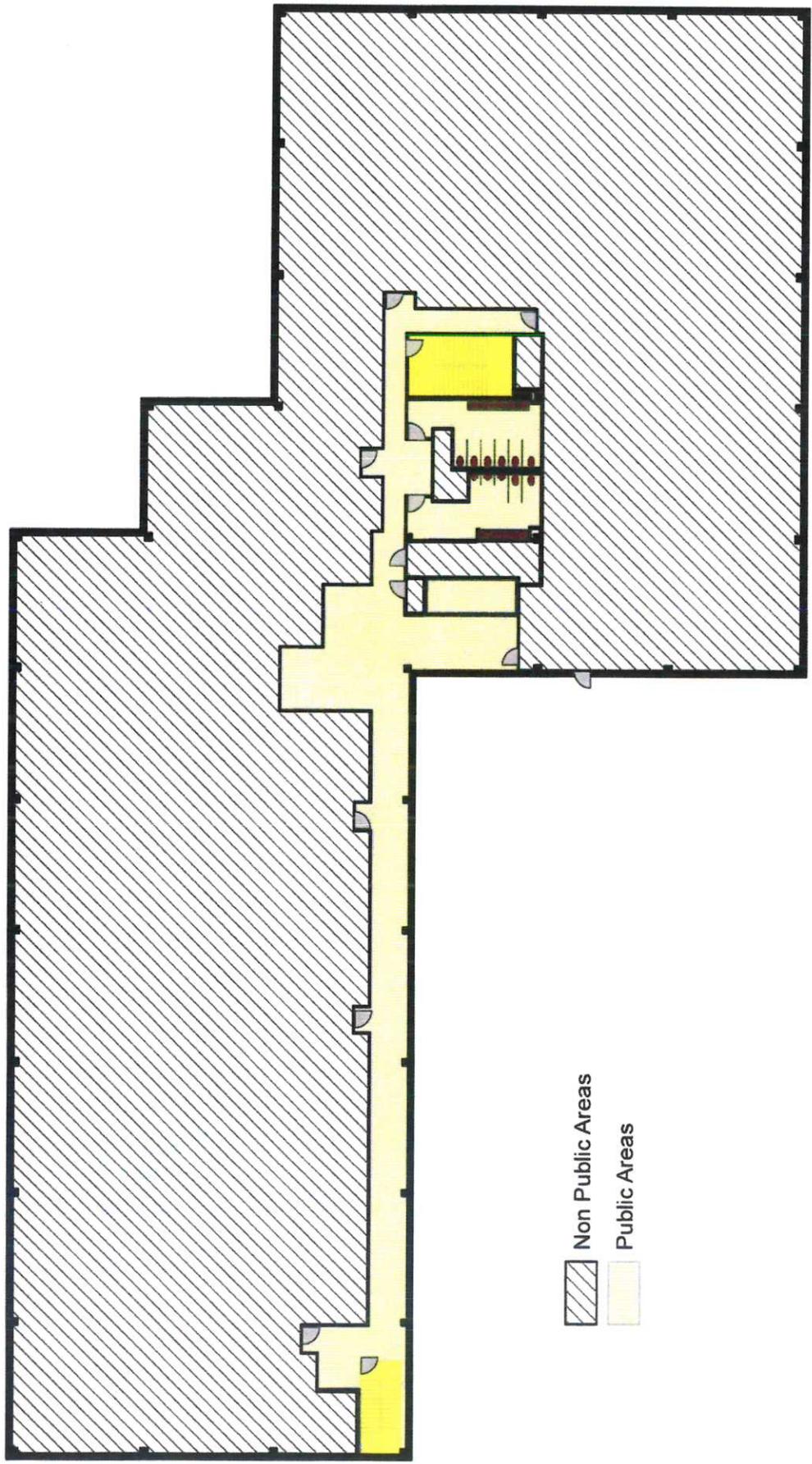
Non Public Areas  
Public Areas

# Administration Building: Floor 2



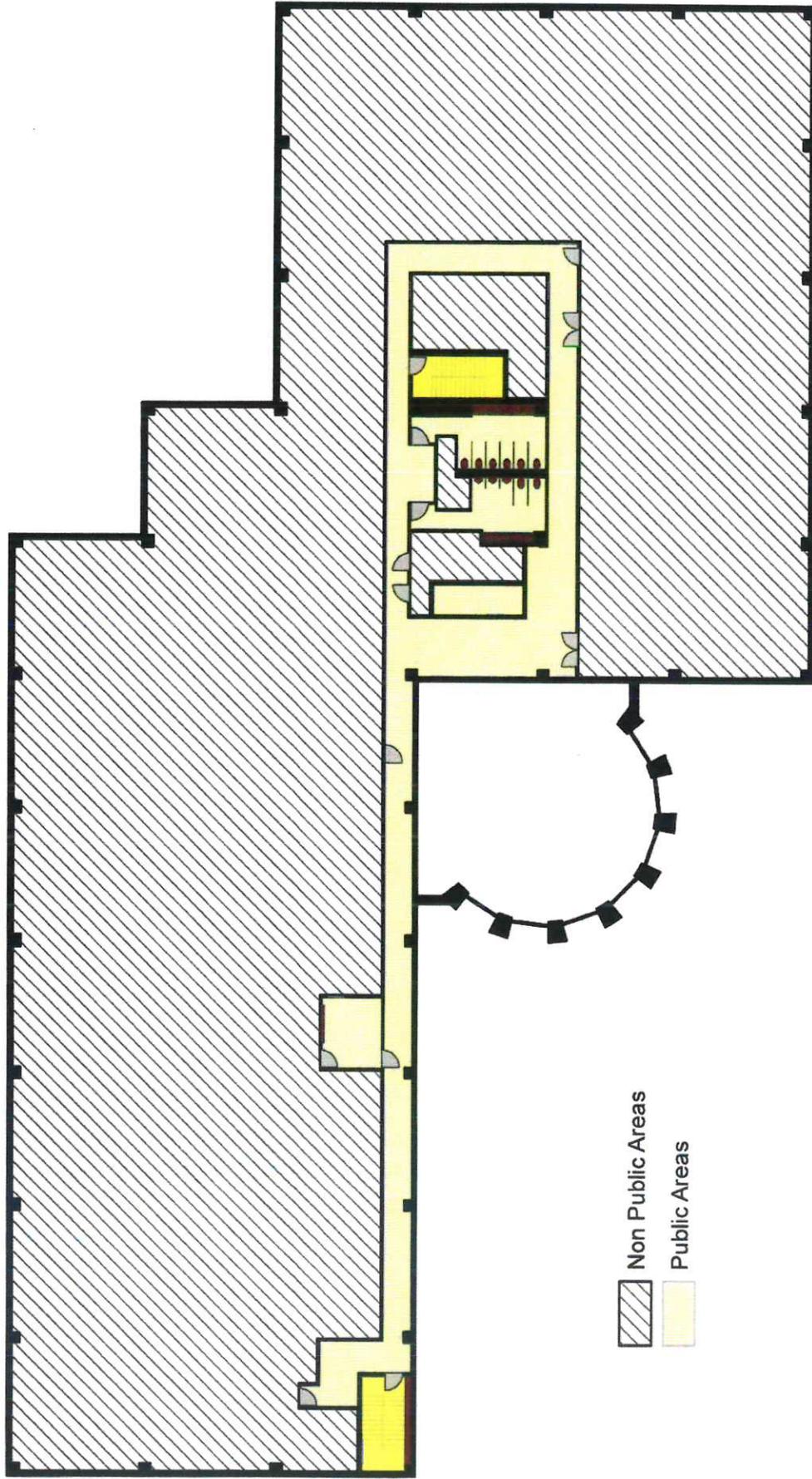
Non Public Areas  
Public Areas

# Administration Building: Floor 3



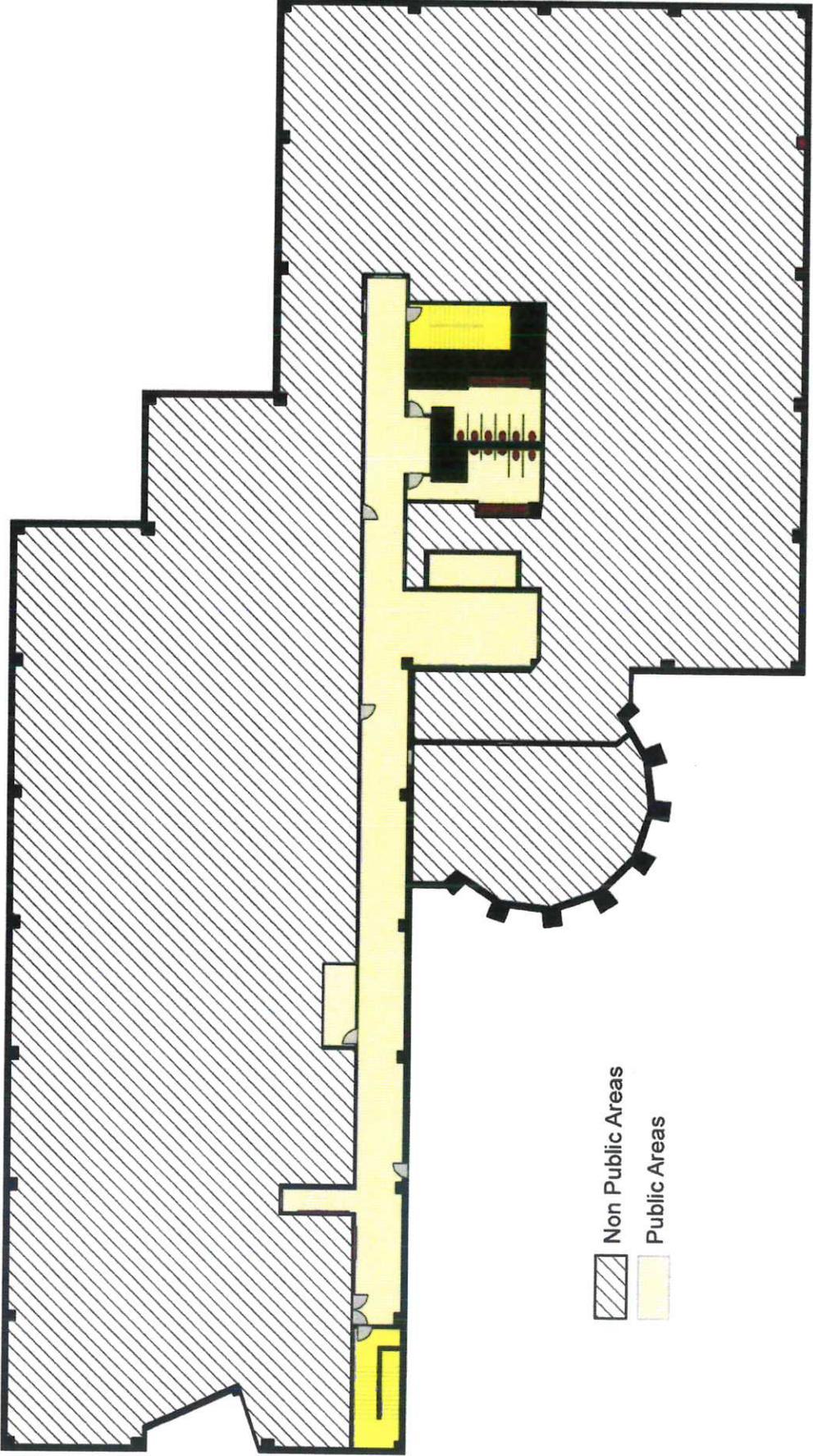
Non Public Areas  
Public Areas

# Administration Building: Floor 4



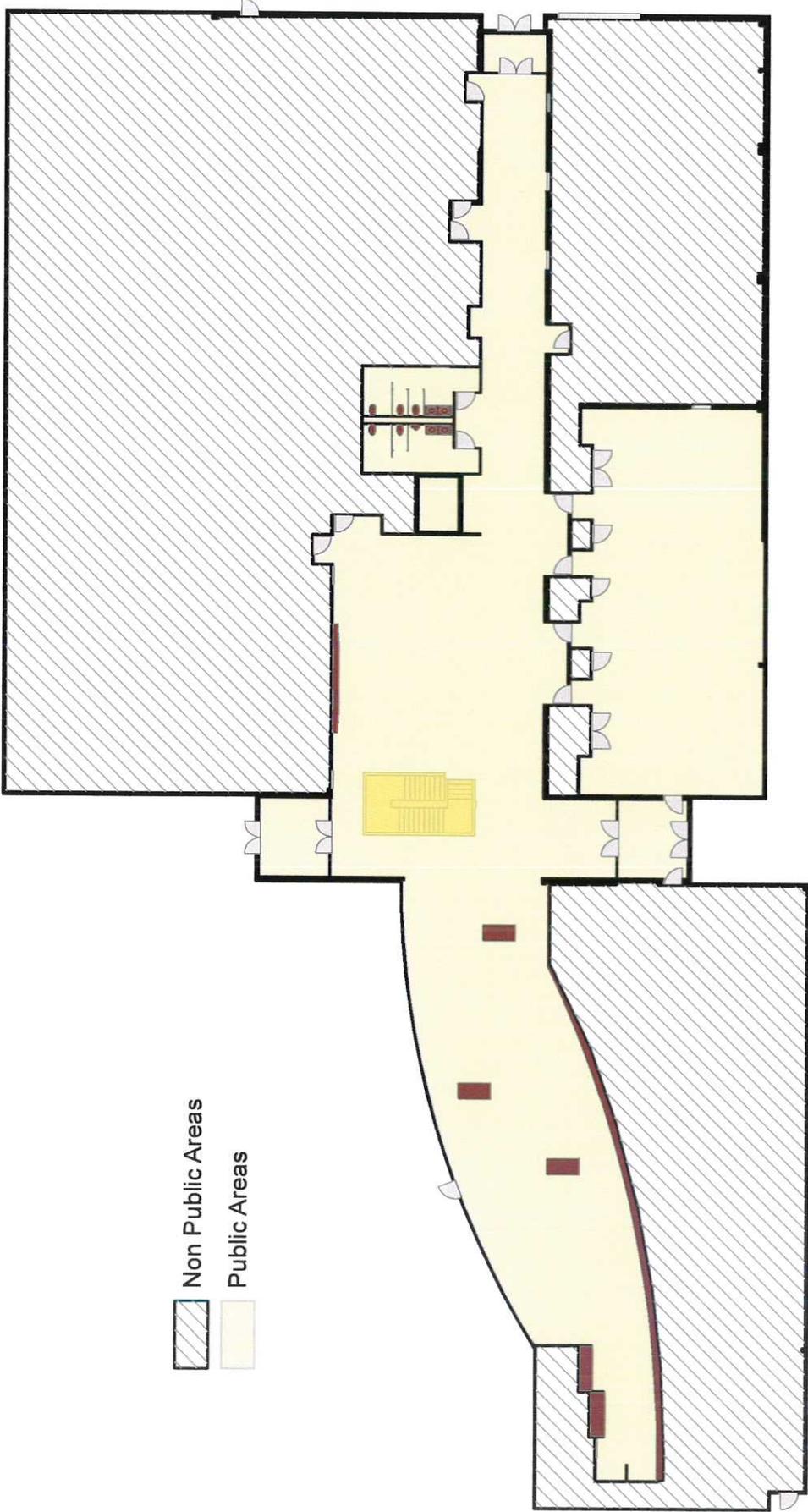
Non Public Areas  
Public Areas

# Administration Building: Lower Level



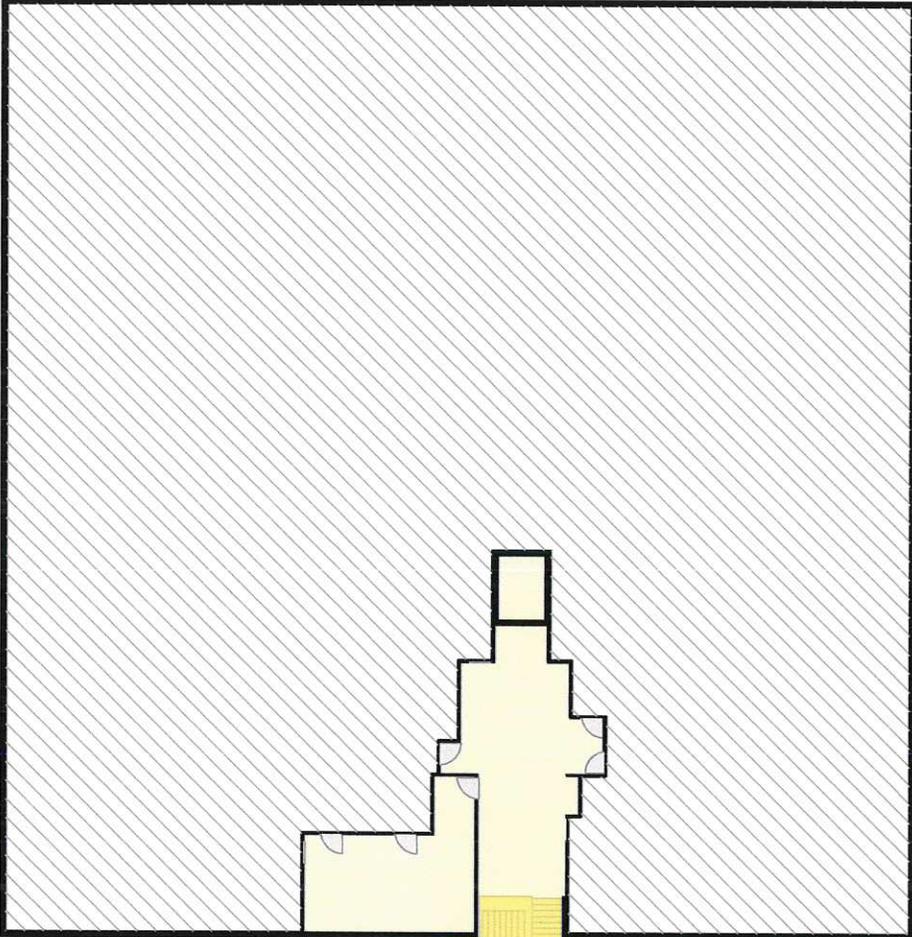
Non Public Areas  
Public Areas

# Service Center: Floor 1



- Non Public Areas
- Public Areas

# Service Center: Floor 2



-  Non Public Areas
-  Public Areas