

INSIGHTS

## New USPTO Dallas-Fort Worth Regional Satellite Office Finds Home in Downtown Dallas Location

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The US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) [recently announced](#) that downtown Dallas will serve as the site for its Dallas-Fort Worth regional satellite office. The office is expected to be a place where small businesses and entrepreneurs can learn how to navigate the patent process, meet with examiners, and access USPTO's comprehensive search databases. It will also serve as a patent examination office for technology developed in the region and throughout the South. It is also expected to provide an economic boost of over \$400 million dollars to the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex.

### **Purpose of the Satellite Office Program**

As a part of the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act of 2011, Congress required the USPTO to establish three satellite offices by September 2014, allowing the USPTO to increase outreach activities, enhance examiner retention, improve examiner-recruiting, decrease the patent application backlog, and improve patent examination quality. The satellite offices are part of the Department of Commerce's ongoing effort to create new economic opportunities by getting regional entrepreneurs the patents they need in order to attract investment capital, activate their business plans, and help create more well-paying jobs.

The creation of satellite offices marks the first time in the USPTO's 200-year history its operations have expanded outside Washington D.C. By bringing portions of the USPTO closer to its customers, the USPTO believes the satellite offices will serve as "hubs of innovation and creativity, helping protect and foster American innovation in the global marketplace, helping businesses cut through red tape, and creating new economic opportunities in each of the local communities" and will focus on more regional technologies as it becomes more established. With new regional offices and several hundred additional examiners, the USPTO hopes to reduce the time it takes an inventor to get a patent approved, currently averaging three years, as well as address the backlog of roughly 620,000 pending patents. This backlog relief and other regional benefits will be welcomed throughout southwest regions of the US.

### **Selection of the Terminal Annex Federal Building**

According to Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO David Kappos, the Dallas-Fort Worth metroplex "is exceedingly rich in engineering talent, patent applicants, and patent grants, and boasts an above average population of potential Veteran employees. We are already underway identifying leadership who know the unique contours of the business landscape to staff the new satellite offices. The USPTO is committed to making certain that American businesses and entrepreneurs have all of the resources they need to grow, create jobs and compete globally."

When selecting the location for the satellite office, the USPTO worked with the General Services Administration (GSA), considering locations which were centrally located, affordable, and well suited to the USPTO's needs. They ultimately selected the [Dealey Plaza](#) location, because the Terminal Annex Federal Building met all federal regulations for leasing space and was the most affordable. The Dallas-Fort Worth satellite office will be modeled after the USPTO's Detroit satellite office, which opened in July 2012 and is scheduled to employ more than 100 patent examiners and 20 administrative patent judges by next summer.

As always, should questions about the legal issues discussed in this article arise or implications about how the new USPTO satellite office locations will affect you, please contact your Bracewell & Giuliani LLP technology attorneys.