Furniture Used for Seating

1. Purpose / Background
   The purpose of this SOP is to familiarize all MIT personnel with regulations and guidelines as they pertain to the purchasing and relocation of upholstered seating furniture, molded/polypropylene, mesh seating and re-upholstered furniture. This applies to all areas of MIT, including labs and shops (areas that have hazards) and benches that are in the lobbies and corridors.

2. Scope
   This SOP covers all seating purchased or in use in MIT buildings.

3. Prerequisites
   N/A

4. Procedures
   All seating shall meet the test criteria set forth in the Massachusetts Comprehensive Fire Safety Code, 527 CMR 1.00, 2015 and the California Technical Bulletin 117-2013. This includes existing furniture brought into the buildings with the exception of private residential areas.

   4.1 The manufacturer shall affix a label to each article of furniture that indicates:

       (a.) The article of furniture is composed of materials that meet the performance test.

       (b.) The nationally recognized testing laboratory and standards or publications used.

   4.2 For definitions of areas, see Section 10. Definitions.

   4.3 The following articles are exempt:
       (a.) Cushions and pads intended solely for outdoor use.
       (b.) Any article which is smooth surfaced and contains no more than ½ inch of filling material, provided that such article does not have a horizontal surface meeting vertical surface.
       (c.) Articles manufactured solely for recreational use or physical fitness purposes, such as weight lifting benches, gymnasium mats or pads, side horses and similar articles.

   4.4 Labels attached to the furniture, as referenced in section 4.1, serve as notification from the manufacturer that the seating complies with 527 CMR 1.00.
5. **Roles & Responsibilities**  
All persons purchasing regulated seating for use at MIT must ensure that the seating meets the requirements in Section 4. Procedures.

5.1 **Department of Facilities**  
DoF Interior Designer purchases seating for classrooms, auditoriums, lobbies etc. as part of new buildings and renovation projects.

5.2 **Housing Office**  
The Housing Office purchases seating for the dormitories.

5.3 **Campus Activities Center**  
Financial Coordinator, Division of Student Life purchases seating for lobbies and assembly areas that CAC controls.

5.4 **Registrar’s Office**  
Registrar’s Office purchases seating for classrooms and auditoriums.

5.5 **Procurement**  
Procurement Office reviews seating and cubicle panel orders that the DLCs submit to ensure that the seating meets the requirements of this SOP.

Note: The Procurement Office has identified many models/brands that meet California Technical Bulletin Number 117-2013 as well as the EHS Office’s ergonomic recommendations.


6. **Training**  
N/A

7. **Monitoring Requirements**  
N/A

8. **Record Management**  
8.1 Purchasing records, certificates and related documentation shall be kept by the individual DLCs or MIT departments.

8.2 Upon request, the Cambridge Fire Department shall be provided with a copy of the certification that states that the seating complies with 527 CMR 1.00 and a notice that fire
test reports and related documentation which demonstrate the certified compliance are available on request.

9. References


10. Definitions
Assembly area: The use of a building area with 50 or more occupants used for educational, civic, social, recreation, religious, food or drink or transportation functions. Some examples are: classrooms, lecture halls, seminar rooms, reading rooms, informal meeting areas, auditoriums, Stata Student Street, athletic facilities, childcare centers, public corridors and lobbies, lounges, cafés, restaurants, chapels, libraries, museums and common areas.

Residential area: The use of a building area for sleeping purposes. Some examples are: dormitories including public spaces and common areas, fraternities, sororities and public spaces and common areas of apartments.

Private residential area: The private use of a building area for sleeping purposes. Some examples are: private apartments and private areas of President’s House and master’s residences.

Upholstered Furniture: Movable or stationary chairs which are manufactured with leather, vinyl, textile fabric or coated fabric exterior and padding materials including foamed plastic, fiberfill, cotton batting or other natural or synthetic fiber. The following items are examples:

- office task, guest, conference, reception and work station seating
- soft seating: settees, sofas, banquettes, divans, davenports, love seats, ottomans, studio couches
- lab and shop (areas that have hazards) chairs
- booths used in dining areas and auditorium chairs, classroom and large meeting room seating, seating in public areas, lobbies and corridors including wooden and plastic that are upholstered or have removable cushions

**Re-upholstered furniture:** Existing upholstered furniture for which a new cover material or interior components are to be replaced.

**Molded Seating:** Furniture formed by molding resin formulations that may have a textile or coated fabric cover or a padding material between the cover and the molded resin. Molded seating shall include plastic and polypropylene chairs.