**Project Time/Fee Estimating Form**

## Project Time Estimate

Client: Dr. Alan Reyes  Project #: 2026-01

Date: October 26, 2026  Designer: Anna Kuczmanski

| | Designer | Designer | Project Manager | CAD | Support | Est. Total Hrs. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| PROGRAMMING | | | | | | |
| Interview client | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| Inventory | 8 | | | | | 8 |
| Measure job site | 12 | | | | | 12 |
| Verify site conditions | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| Codes check | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| Develop project schedule | 3 | | | | | 3 |
| Meetings | 4 | | | | | 4 |
| | **45** | | | | | **45** |
| SCHEMATIC DESIGN | | | | | | |
| Prepare plan footprint | 14 | | | | | 14 |
| Preliminary space plan | 10 | | | | | 10 |
| Preliminary furniture/equipment plans | 8 | | | | | 8 |
| Preliminary specifications | 8 | | | | | 8 |
| Preliminary budget | 5 | | | | | 5 |
| Codes check | 4 | | | | | 4 |
| Meetings | 4 | | | | | 4 |
| Reviews with client | 4 | | | | | 4 |
| | **57** | | | | | **57** |
| DESIGN DEVELOPMENT | | | | | | |
| Finalize floor plan | 10 | | | | | 10 |
| Finalize furniture/equipment plans | 8 | | | | | 8 |
| Finalize specifications | 12 | | | | | 12 |
| Finalize budget | 5 | | | | | 5 |
| Prepare presentation materials | 12 | | | | | 12 |
| Shop drawings | 14 | | | | | 14 |
| Meetings | 4 | | | | | 4 |
| Reviews with client | 4 | | | | | 4 |
| | **69** | | | | | **69** |
| CONTRACT DOCUMENTS | | | | | | |
| Working drawings and schedules | 30 | | | | | 30 |
| Specifications for bidding | 10 | | | | | 10 |
| Specifications for direct purchase | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| Obtain approvals and permits | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| Assist in bidding process | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| Qualify vendors | 4 | | | | | 4 |
| Meetings | 4 | | | | | 4 |
| | **66** | | | | | **66** |
| CONTRACT ADMINISTRATION | | | | | | |
| Assist with bidding process | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| Procure FF&E | 12 | | | | | 12 |
| Site visits and inspections | 20 | | | | | 20 |
| Meetings | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| Meetings with client | 6 | | | | | 6 |
| Project finalization and evaluation | 8 | | | | | 8 |
| | **58** | | | | | **58** |
| TOTALS | **295** | | | | | **295** |

© Christine M. Piotrowski, 2007

## Billing Rate (Based on Salary, p. 151)

| Step | Amount | Note |
|---|---|---|
| Annual designer salary | $65,000 | Sole proprietor's own salary |
| Fringe benefit rate | 30% | Book's common factor is 25 to 30 percent of salary (151) |
| Fringe benefits | $19,500 | |
| Salary plus fringe | $84,500 | |
| Working weeks per year | 50 | |
| Cost per week | $1,690 | |
| Billable hours per week | 30 | 75% of a 40-hour week (151) |
| Cost per billable hour | $56.33 | |
| Multiple | 3.0 | Covers overhead and profit (150) |
| Calculated billing rate | $169.00 | |
| Billing rate used | $170.00 | Rounded for client presentation |

The book recommends the DPE method as more accurate (152), but DPE requires actual overhead and expense figures, so this estimate uses the salary-based steps shown on p. 151.

## Fee Estimate: Three Methods

### Method 1: Hourly

| Item | Amount | Note |
|---|---|---|
| Estimated hours | 295 | Grand total from Time Estimate above |
| Billing rate | $170.00 | |
| Estimated fee | $50,150 | Client is billed for actual hours worked. This figure is an estimate, not a cap, so the risk of going over sits with the client. A not-to-exceed limit could be set in the contract (159). |

### Method 2: Flat Fee

| Item | Amount | Note |
|---|---|---|
| Base (estimated hours x rate) | $50,150 | |
| Contingency | 10% | Piotrowski notes it is common to add a reasonable amount to cover contingencies (160). |
| Contingency amount | $5,015 | |
| Flat fee (calculated) | $55,165 | A fixed fee puts the risk of going over on the designer. No existing drawings mean field verification carries real unknowns. |
| Flat fee quoted | $55,200 | Rounded up for client presentation |

### Method 3: Cost per Square Foot

| Zone | SF | Rate per SF | Fee |
|---|---|---|---|
| Re-planned (reception, 4 offices, break room) | 1,500 | $17.00 | $25,500 |
| Finish only (exam areas and back of house) | 3,500 | $8.00 | $28,000 |
| **Total (blended rate)** | **5,000** | **$10.70** | **$53,500** |

## How the Square Foot Rates Were Set

| Item | Amount | Note |
|---|---|---|
| Working drawing hours for reception millwork details | 6 | Share of the 30 working drawing hours |
| Re-plan-only hours | 84 | Space and furniture plans, shop drawings for the custom reception desk, furniture specifications, vendors, procurement, furniture bidding, and 6 of the 30 working drawing hours for reception millwork details |
| Re-plan-only rate per SF | $9.52 | |
| Base hours (all other tasks) | 211 | Spread across the full suite |
| Base rate per SF | $7.17 | |
| Re-planned zone rate (calculated) | $16.69 | Rounded up to $17 |
| Finish-only zone rate (calculated) | $7.17 | Rounded up to $8 |

Piotrowski states that there are no industry-standard square foot fees, and that the rate should come from similar past projects and go up for more complex work (161-62). With no past projects to draw experience from, these rates are built from this estimate's hours and split by zone, because the re-planned rooms take more design time per square foot than the finish-only areas. Scope is reflected in the zone split, profit is built in through the billing rate's multiple of 3, and expenses are billed separately (assumption 8), the three adjustments the book calls for (162).

## Comparison

| Method | Fee to Client | Effective Hourly Rate | Who Carries the Risk |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hourly | $50,150 | $170.00 | Client |
| Flat Fee | $55,200 | $187.12 | Designer |
| Cost per SF | $53,500 | $181.36 | Designer |

## Assumptions Behind the Hour Estimate

1. One designer performs all tasks, including CAD and administrative work, so the Designer column carries the full estimate.
2. No existing drawings exist, so 12 hours are allowed to field measure the full 5,000 SF suite and 14 hours to draw the as-built plan footprint.
3. Space planning is limited to the reception, four private offices and the break room, estimated at about 1,500 SF. The exam areas and back of house, about 3,500 SF, keep their existing layout.
4. New finishes are specified for the entire suite, which drives the specification and contract document hours above what a partial re-plan alone would require.
5. The custom reception desk accounts for most of the 14 shop drawing hours, including coordination with a millwork fabricator.

6. All existing dental equipment is reused. Disconnecting and reinstalling it around the new flooring and finishes is coordinated with the equipment vendor and falls under the inventory and site visit hours. The furniture/equipment plan hours are for the new furniture.
7. Site visits assume a construction period of about 3 months with weekly visits, about 13 visits at 1.5 hours each including travel.
8. Reimbursable expenses such as printing, mileage and permit fees are billed separately at cost under the hourly and square foot methods. A flat fee normally includes them, so this flat fee assumes they are passed through at cost by agreement with the client (160).

## Works Cited

Piotrowski, Christine M. *Professional Practice for Interior Designers*. 6th ed., John Wiley & Sons, 2020.