

Bertillion Offices at Eastern State Penitentiary



PROJECT

Bertillion Offices at Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

CLIENT

Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site, Inc.

DATES

2008 Design & Documentation, Construction Administration

DESCRIPTION

Opened in 1829 as part of a controversial movement to change the behavior of inmates through "confinement in solitude with labor," the massive stone structure became one of the most expensive and most copied buildings in America. More than 300 prisons worldwide are based on the Penitentiary's radial or "wagon-wheel" floor plan.

CHALLENGE

The challenge of the Bertillion conversion was to design a fully functional, modern office within the existing shell. New mechanical, electrical/data and plumbing systems; fire protection; archive storage; office furnishings; kitchenette; and lavatory were designed and installed without moving the existing masonry walls or removing the scaling plaster finishes. Preserving the existing state of the space was critical and innovative materials and methods were used to refurbish the existing finishes.

SERVICES

Office Renovations

Prepared schematic documents of office layout options for review by the staff.

Reactivated and refurbished historic lavatory locations to minimize costs and restore the original use of space.

Specified surface mounted fixtures, furnishings and finishes to make efficient use of limited funds and to provide the option for reversibility in the future should the use of the space change.

Provided specifications for the abatement of the asbestos pipe wrap.

Provided design documents for the rehabilitation of steel entry doors and the reglazing and painting of steel windows.

Provided full Construction Documents and Construction Contract Administration and project oversight services.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Eastern State Penitentiary is a National Historic Landmark.

