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THE OFFICE-MOVE TIMELINE

What to decide, and when, so nothing gets decided too late



The decisions that derail a move usually aren't the big ones - they're the small ones that needed settling months earlier, while the design was still fluid. Aquablu's hydration system is an example: a mains water point is easy to spec at the brief stage and expensive to retrofit after the design freeze. Use this as a step-by-step guide, with the decisions due at each stage.

01 DECIDE THE BRIEF

12-18 months before move-in

- [ ] **Vision & brand** - align the space with your identity before any decisions are made
- [ ] **Headcount** - current and projected, so the space is sized to scale (not re-done in two years)
- [ ] **Ways of working** - desk:person ratio, hybrid policy, focus vs. collaboration balance
- [ ] **Accessibility & legal requirements** - any needs that affect layout
- [ ] **Kitchen / pantry / social-hub locations, meeting rooms, silent booths** - how many and roughly where on the floor
- [ ] **Drinks: hydration & coffee** - confirm you want built-in points and roughly how many → flag to the designer now so water, waste and power are designed in from day one
- [ ] **Sustainability goals** - plastic reduction, water use reporting; agree what you'll measure
- [ ] **Budget ownership** - leased items (hydration, coffee) often sit outside the fit-out budget; agree who owns that line early so it doesn't fall through the cracks

02 CONFIRM CONCEPT DESIGN

9-12 months before move-in

- [ ] **Layout & space plan** - desks, meeting rooms, breakout, reception, social hub
- [ ] **Pantry / tea-point locations** - confirmed on plan
- [ ] **Acoustic strategy, light and ventilation** - treatment confirmed in key areas
- [ ] **Services rough-in** - indicative routes for water, waste and power
- [ ] **Confirm hydration points on plan** - so the rough-in includes them - moving them later means rerouting M&E

03 LOCK THE DETAILS

6-9 months before move-in

- [ ] **Final water + waste + electrical positions** - confirmed per hydration/coffee point
- [ ] **Joinery / countertop cutouts specified** - under-counter or countertop units
- [ ] **Final product specs locked** - unit dimensions and connection types confirmed
- [ ] **Hydration unit specified** - install requirements handed to the M&E contractor

⚠ **After the freeze:** adding or relocating a plumbed point means M&E rework, potential joinery changes, and extra cost — or a post-move retrofit that disrupts the finished space.

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04 BUILD AND/OR FIT-OUT

3-6 months before move-in

- [ ] **Order long-lead items** - confirm hydration lead time and build in buffer for install scheduling
- [ ] **Book install slot** - aligned with the build programme
- [ ] **Furniture delivery** - sequenced with the principal contractor
- [ ] **IT / AV / comms infrastructure** - confirmed and ordered
- [ ] **Staff move communications** - drafted and signed off

05 MOVE IN & GO LIVE

Test **(2 weeks)** and move week

- [ ] **Commissioning & testing** - water flushed, units live and pressure-checked
- [ ] **Test week** - plan a staffed trial week before go-live; follow up with contractor to snag anything noticed in real use
- [ ] **Snagging walk-through** - with contractor; defects list raised
- [ ] **Facilities management briefed** - service contacts, consumables supplier, maintenance schedule
- [ ] **Staff launch communications** - sent, introduce new workspace features and hydration points
- [ ] **Day-one operational readiness** - check complete
- [ ] **Building management contacts** - shared with the facilities team

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WHERE HYDRATION FITS IN THE TIMELINE

Decide at:	Phase 1 - the brief
Lock specs by:	Phase 3 - design freeze
Lead time:	REFILL+ ≈ 1-2 weeks from order to shipping - build in buffer for install scheduling
Needs:	Mains water inlet + waste/drain + electrical (see specs below)

HYDRATION POINT SPECS:

WITH HOT ADD-ON

Water inlet:

G ¾" mains

Power:

2 sockets - 220V AC/600W + 220V AC/1,700W

Drainage:

40mm connector, max 450mm from floor

Drain-free option:

Aquablu Smart Jerrycan (no mains drain required)

WITHOUT HOT ADD-ON

Water inlet:

G ¾" mains

Power:

1 socket - 220V / 600W

Drainage:

40mm connector, max 450mm from floor

Drain-free option:

Aquablu Smart Jerrycan (no mains drain required)

Planning a new office? Get a free fit-out hydration check.

Aquablu can review your fit-out plans and flag any hydration decisions that need to be made before the design freeze, before they become costly retrofits.

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