



Guiding Principles Assessment Handbook

FOR USE WITH THE FEDERAL HIGH PERFORMANCE AND SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS POLICIES

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OVERVIEW

From the EPA to NASA, federal agencies work to abide by the Guiding Principles for Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings <https://www.wbdg.org/references/fhpsb.php>, a set of policies set by Executive Order 13423 and 13514¹ for building, renovating, and operating optimal, efficient buildings – as replaced by the Executive Order 13693: Planning for Federal Sustainability in the next Decade².

In complying with the Guiding Principles, each agency may provide additional guidance to their projects. For example, the Department of Defense (DoD) has incorporated the Guiding Principles requirements into their Unified Facilities Criteria High Performance and Sustainable Building Requirements (UFC 1-200-02³) The DoD initiated the Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) program to unify

¹ Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings Memorandum of Understanding <https://www.wbdg.org/FFC/FED/HPSB-MOU.pdf>

² Federal Leadership on Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability - EXECUTIVE ORDER 13693 <https://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/eop/ceq/sustainability>

³ UFC 1-200-02 <http://www.wbdg.org/ffc/dod/unified-facilities-criteria-ufc/ufc-1-200-02>

all technical criteria and standards pertaining to planning, design, construction, and operation and maintenance of real property facilities.

The Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI) has been working with these federal agencies and the Department of Defense to offer third-party assessments of each agency's work to meet the Guiding Principles. GBCI is the premiere organization for third-party verification of compliance. GBCI can help you evaluate your success, streamline reporting, and guide your efforts toward complying with the principles, using its deep knowledge of green building practices and certification.

This handbook coupled with the relevant Technical Guide published by GBCI will take you through the steps to show your projects' compliance with the following:

Federal Agencies (non-DoD only)

- The High Performance and Sustainable Buildings Guidance published December 2008⁴ (2008 Guiding Principles) specifically for the Guiding Principles for Sustainable New Construction and Major Renovations.
 - GP Assessment Technical Guide by GBCI: New Construction & Major Renovations (Dec 2008)
- The Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings published February 2016 (2016 Guiding Principles). Instructions published include, Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings and Associated Instructions⁵ and Determining Compliance with the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings.⁶
 - GP Assessment Technical Guide by GBCI: New Construction or Modernization (Feb 2016)
 - GP Assessment Technical Guide by GBCI: Existing Buildings (Feb 2016)

Department of Defense

- UFC 1-200-02 High Performance and Sustainable Building Requirements⁷.
 - GP Assessment Technical Guide by GBCI - Department of Defense: New Construction & Major Renovation
 - GP Assessment Technical Guide by GBCI, Department of Defense: Existing Buildings

For simplicity the Guiding Principles and the UFC criteria will be referenced as the "Requirements" of the High Performance & Sustainable Buildings Guiding Principles.

⁴ High Performance and Sustainable Buildings Guidance Final (12/1/08) http://www.wbdg.org/FFC/FED/hpsb_guidance.pdf

⁵ Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings and Associated Instructions https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/guiding_principles_for_sustainable_federal_buildings_and_associated_instructions_february_2016.pdf

⁶ Determining Compliance with the Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings https://www.whitehouse.gov/sites/default/files/docs/determining_compliance_with_the_guiding_principles_for_sustainable_federal_buildings_february_2016.pdf

⁷ UFC 1-200-02 <http://www.wbdg.org/ffc/dod/unified-facilities-criteria-ufc/ufc-1-200-02>

ELIGIBILITY

Before beginning, make sure that your project meets all of the requirements, the minimum characteristics that make a project appropriate for pursuing the assessment. To clarify the correct offering for your project please contact us at GuidingPrinciplesAssessment@gbci.org.

As specified in Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings and Associated Instructions, by the Council on Environmental Quality for Federal Agencies, a new building or modernization where project design was complete before February 2016 is eligible for assessment against the 2008 Guiding Principles for New Construction or Major Renovation. If your project design will be complete after this date your project should follow the 2016 Guiding Principles for New Construction or Modernization. All Existing Building assessment work will be done under the 2016 Guiding Principles.⁵

For Department of Defense, the UFC 1-200-01 DoD Building Code (General Building Requirements)⁸ document provides clarification for projects eligible for assessment against the current version of the UFC 1-200-02 High Performance and Sustainable Building Requirements.

In order to be eligible to participate in the project building or space, all other real property within the project boundary, and all project work must comply with applicable federal, state, and local building-related environmental laws and regulations in place where the project is located. This condition must be satisfied from the date of project registration or the commencement of schematic design, whichever comes first, up and until the date that the building receives a certificate of occupancy or similar official indication that it is fit and ready for use.⁹

All projects must be designed for, constructed on, and operated on a permanent location on already existing land. Projects shall not consist of mobile structures, equipment, or vehicles. No building or space that is designed to move at any point in its lifetime is eligible. Projects must include the new, ground-up design and construction, or major renovation, of at least one federal building in its entirety; or at least one existing federal building in its entirety.

If questions arise as it relates to interpretation of the eligibility of the project GBCI will work with the agency and the agency will determine if any waivers are applicable.

Project Boundary

The project boundary must include all contiguous land that is associated with the project and supports its typical operations. This includes land altered as a result of construction and features used primarily by the project's occupants, such as hardscape (parking and sidewalks), septic or stormwater treatment equipment, and landscaping. The boundary may not unreasonably exclude portions of the building, space, or site to give the project an advantage in complying with requirements. The project must accurately communicate the scope of the project being assessed in all promotional and descriptive materials and distinguish it from any non-assessed space.

⁸ UFC 1-200-01 DoD Building Code (General Building Requirements) <http://www.wbdg.org/ffc/dod/unified-facilities-criteria-ufc/ufc-1-200-01>

⁹ A lapse in a project's compliance with a building-related environmental law or regulation that results from an unforeseen and unavoidable circumstance shall not necessarily result in non-compliance with this requirement. Such lapses shall be excused so long as they are remediated as soon as feasibly possible.

REGISTER

STEP 1:

Tell us about your project and complete the Interest Form

Teams begin the process by completing the [Interest Form](#) with information relevant to the building project. In order to optimize an integrated design process, which is a core part of the meet the Requirements, we encourage you to start the process as early as possible – ideally, during or prior to the design phase. Filling out the Interest Form is the first step in getting your project registered.

Project Team Roles

At this stage, you'll also assemble your project team, which includes at a minimum the owner (or owner's agent) and the project administrator.

The owner is the person (or entity) who holds and controls the real and personal property associated with the project and accepts the Assessment Agreement. If desired, the owner can grant authority to an agent to act on his or her behalf. The project administrator acts as a project manager, overseeing the project as well as which team members are responsible for certain tasks and measures.

Fees

Registration, review and other project fees are the same as LEED certification. Details available for review here: usgbc.org/cert-guide/fees. For projects pursuing both LEED certification and Guiding Principles Assessment, only one fee will be levied.

Once a project is registered, payment received and agreement signed, the team will have access to various tools including a dedicated contact from GBCI who will reach out to set up a conference call. The GBCI contact will be available throughout the process to provide clarification and answer questions.

APPLY

STEP 2:

Demonstrate Compliance and Document Your Project

The Project Information Form provides a framework for projects to indicate their compliance path for each Requirement. The form, coupled with the relevant Technical Guide, provide necessary guidance for requirements and documentation needed for review. Teams also submitting their project for LEED certification can use the streamlined LEED credit compliance pathways by checking the boxes on the Project Information Form.

Each Requirement has multiple compliance paths available. There is a compliance path that supports the streamlined LEED submittal option, if available. There is a compliance path that offers detailed Step-by-Step guidance on how to meet the requirements, this path is available to project teams that are not leveraging a LEED submittal option. Additionally a compliance path is available to indicate that a Requirement is not applicable for the project. If this compliance pathway is selected GBCI will work with the project's agency to approve.

The final assessment report will indicate the outcome for the project. The project can be either Compliant or Not Compliant. Guiding Principles for Federal Leadership in High Performance and Sustainable Buildings require that each Requirement is assessed and determined to either meet or not meet the guidelines in the Executive Orders, items deemed not applicable will not impede compliance. Projects cannot be partially compliant.

STEP 3:

Submit your Application to GBCI

Prior to submitting, confirm that your registration and review fees have been paid. When your application is ready to be submitted, contact GBCI and you will be granted access to a folder specific to your project in the file sharing platform where your application will be saved and submitted.

Upload general documents, such as project drawings, plans, and narratives (that may be referenced in multiple credits) to the "General Submittals" folder. Upload other required documentation within the appropriate folders for each Requirement. Ensure that each file is clearly labeled. It is helpful to include a short narrative describing the approach the project took for each Principle.

Contact GBCI when your application is complete and ready for review and indicate whether you would like a Standard review or a Split review. The Standard review path is for buildings whose construction is complete; the entire application will be submitted at once. Such projects undergo a Preliminary Review and a Final Review. The Split review path is for buildings that have been designed and may have started construction, but are not yet fully constructed, and will include both a Design Review phase and a Construction Review phase, each with its own Preliminary and Final Reviews.

For many federal agencies data security is an issue; if you need a secure submittal please work with GBCI. Additional fees apply.

REVIEW

STEP 4:

Participate In the Review of Your Application

After the review fee has been paid, GBCI will conduct the review. Note that if the submittal is concurrent with a LEED review, any issues hindering the LEED review would also affect this review's timeline and vice versa.

Preliminary Review

GBCI conducts a technical review of the project application. Throughout this and subsequent reviews GBCI may request clarifications during the review.

GBCI will email the project administrator the preliminary review report within 25 business days of receiving the assessment fee. The report will indicate those aspects of the Guiding Principles that are "Awarded", as well as those for which GBCI requires additional information to make a determination. Technical guidance for those not awarded will be provided. The preliminary review may be accepted as final if the results are satisfactory.

Amend Application and Resubmit

After the Preliminary Review, you may amend the project application with additional information and clarifications. GBCI recommends that the amended application is submitted within 25 business days of receiving the preliminary review report.

Once all application materials are finalized and uploaded to the project folder, contact GBCI and indicate that the application is ready for review.

Final Review

GBCI will review the updated application and respond to the project administrator with a final review report within 25 business days of receiving the amended application. The final review report will indicate those aspects of the Guiding Principles that are "Awarded" and provide technical guidance for those that were attempted but not awarded. The review results may be accepted or the application may be revised and an appeal may be submitted.

If the application is undergoing a Split review, you would then resubmit for the Construction Review phase (Preliminary and Final as outlined above) when ready.

Appeal Review (optional, additional fees apply)

You may amend your application with additional information and clarifications and re-submit it to GBCI as an appeal. Appeals are specific to each aspect of each Principle and multiple appeals may be submitted concurrently; a separate fee is required for each appeal.

Once all application updates are complete, you may request an appeal by contacting GBCI. The appeal request must indicate specifically which aspect of which Principle you would like to appeal. You will be emailed an invoice for the appeal shortly after the request.

Once submitted, GBCI will review the amended sections of the application and provide a review report within 25 business days of receiving payment. The appeal results may be accepted or an additional appeal may be filed. There is no limit to the number of appeals a project team can pursue. After the appeal review is completed, email GBCI to accept the results.

COMPLIANCE

STEP 5: Finalized Assessment

Once the assessment is complete and the review is accepted, compliant projects will receive an official GBCI certificate, which can be used to demonstrate compliance and promote this achievement.

STEP 6: Celebrate and Communicate

Your work toward demonstrating compliance with the High Performance & Sustainable Buildings, Guiding Principles is something to be celebrated and communicated. The USGBC.org and/or GBIG.org public project directories provide the opportunity to share your success, educate and motivate. Simply sharing limited information regarding the address, size of the project, and the identity of the agency that occupies the space. The public directory will not disclose the underlying information from the High Performance & Sustainable Buildings, Guiding Principles review application.

You are free to opt-out of the project directory and publicity opportunities as a “private project” at the time of registration: specific instructions on how to do so are available in LEED Online. All private projects that earn certification will be prompted once more to transition to public status (we can’t help ourselves, we love sharing good news!). You will need to re-confirm your “private” status at that time, if you wish to retain it.