



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 Buildings¹, a set of policies set by Executive Order 13423² and 13514³ for building, renovating, and operating optimal, efficient buildings – as replaced by the Executive Order 13693⁴: Planning for Federal Sustainability in the next Decade^{5&6}.

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 1-200-02⁷) The DoD initiated the Unified Facilities Criteria (UFC) program to unify

¹<https://www.wbdg.org/FFC/FED/HPSB-MOU.pdf>

²http://www.wbdg.org/FFC/FED/EO/eo13423_instructions.pdf

³<http://www.wbdg.org/FFC/FED/EO/eo13514.pdf>

⁴https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/sites/default/files/docs/eo_13693_implementing_instructions_june_10_2015.pdf

⁵https://sftool.gov/Content/attachments/guiding_principles_for_sustainable_federal_buildings_and_associated_instructions_february_2016.pdf

⁶https://sftool.gov/Content/attachments/determining_compliance_with_the_guiding_principles_for_sustainable_federal_buildings_february_2016.pdf

⁷<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 more than 300 full time technical experts and consultants specializing in architecture, engineering and building management is the premiere organization for third-party verification. 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 will evaluate your compliance with the Guiding Principles and provide support for your project.

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

- Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings published February 2016⁸ specifically for New Construction and Modernizations
 - [Technical Guide: New Construction and Modernizations – Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings \(February 2016\)](#)

Department of Defense

- UFC 1-200-02 High Performance and Sustainable Building Requirements⁹.
 - [Technical Guide: New Construction and Renovations – Guiding Principles Implemented by UFC 1-200-02 \(December 2016\)](#)

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

ELIGIBILITY

Before beginning, make sure that your project meets all of the minimum requirements to pursue the assessment. To clarify the correct offering for your project, 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 in which project design was complete after February 2016 should follow the 2016 Guiding Principles for New Construction or Modernization.

For Department of Defense, the UFC 1-200-01 DoD Building Code (General Building Requirements)¹⁰ document provides clarification for projects eligible for assessment through the current version of the UFC 1-200-02 High Performance and Sustainable Building Requirements.

In order to be eligible to participate, the project building, all other real property within the project boundary, and all project work must comply with applicable federal, state, and local building-related

⁸ <https://www.energy.gov/eere/femp/guiding-principles-sustainable-federal-buildings>

⁹ <http://www.wbdg.org/ffc/dod/unified-facilities-criteria-ufc/ufc-1-200-02>

¹⁰ <http://www.wbdg.org/ffc/dod/unified-facilities-criteria-ufc/ufc-1-200-01>

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.¹¹

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.

If questions arise as it relates to interpretation of the eligibility of the project, GBCI will work with the appropriate 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-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.

REGISTER

Guiding Principles Assessment Handbook

Teams review this document, *The Guiding Principles Assessment Handbook*, to learn about the review process, fees, team member roles, project directory, and more. A copy of this document must be distributed to the project administrator and project owner. During the registration process teams will be asked to confirm receipt of this document.

Register your project

To register a project, your first step is to complete the [Registration Form](#). In order to optimize an integrated design process, which is a core part of meeting the requirements, we encourage you to register as early as possible – ideally, prior to the design phase.

Project Team Roles

During registration you will need to identify project team members. The Guiding Principles Assessment project team usually includes the owner, primary contact, and project administrator defined for Guiding Principles Assessment projects as follows:

Owner Organization: Also known as the Building Owner Organization, the department that will own and occupy after construction, for example: US Army, US Air Force, US Navy, US Marine Corps, Federal Agency, GSA, DOE, etc.

¹¹ 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.

Primary Contact Organization: Also known as the Project Owner Organization, the department that owns the project and is executing in accordance with the Owner Organization/Building Owner specifications: US Army, US Air Force, US Navy, US Marine Corps, Federal Agency, GSA, DOE, etc.

Project Administrator Organization: Often the non-DOD organization hired to manage project execution for the US Army, US Air Force, US Navy, US Marine Corps, Federal Agency, GSA, DOE, etc. 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 listed on the Guiding Principles Assessment [fee table](#). Projects pursuing both LEED certification and Guiding Principles Assessment do not incur Guiding Principles Assessment fees if the two applications are submitted concurrently.

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

APPLY

Demonstrate Compliance and Document Your Project

The Project Information Form is used to indicate the documentation path selected for each Requirement.

All projects must submit the following: Project Information Form, general project narrative (brief description of building use, occupancy, site conditions, modernization or renovation scope, special circumstances, or other information that will provide a holistic understanding of the project), and a concise narrative for any Requirement with special circumstances. See each Requirement in the relevant Technical Guide for documentation options and specifics. A few guidelines for applications are as follows:

- Ensure the relevant information is clearly highlighted within the submission documents
- Clearly and intuitively label all documents
- Submit only required information (if only a few pages of a large report are needed to provide the required information, highlight the relevant sections only)

Teams must demonstrate compliance with the Guiding Principles Requirements. A portion of the requirements have more than one path available for documentation, such as paths to use a LEED credit. When using a LEED credit, the LEED credit form and all supporting documentation is required as specified by the LEED documentation requirements. Each Requirement includes a path to indicate that a requirement is not applicable for the project. If Requirements are only partially applicable, (i.e. Daylighting not permitted in select secure areas of the building), it is expected that the project comply in other portions of the project and provide documentation delineating the portions of the project that are in compliance versus those that are not applicable.

Application to GBCI

Prior to submitting for review, 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 apply to multiple requirements) to the “General Submittals” folder. Upload other required documentation within the appropriate folders for each requirement.

Contact GBCI when your application is complete and ready for review. For many federal agencies data security is an issue; if you need an alternative submission process, contact GBCI as early in the process as possible. Additional fees apply.

REVIEW

Participate In the Review of Your Application & Assessment Report

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

Guiding Principles Assessment projects are encouraged to utilize the split review process. To do this, you’ll submit part of your application at the conclusion of the project’s design phase (design requirements), and the rest at the conclusion of construction (construction requirements), completing two phases of reviews. The split review is designed to help your team determine if your project is on track early in the process. Please note that only requirements identified as design requirements can be submitted during the design review. The Technical Guide identifies whether each requirement is a design or construction requirement.

If any changes occur to the project after the design review that might affect compliance, those changes must be re-reviewed by GBCI. In these cases, documentation for the affected requirements must be updated and submitted for one additional round of review during the construction phase.

Contact GBCI to request an exception if the project is better suited to submit the entire application (design and construction requirements) once the project is completed.

Review Process for both the Design Review and the Construction Review

Part 1: Preliminary Review

- Once all application materials are finalized and uploaded to the project folders, contact GBCI and indicate that the application is ready for preliminary design review.
- GBCI conducts a technical review of the project application, checking your application for completeness and compliance. Throughout this and subsequent reviews GBCI may request clarifications.
- GBCI will contact the project administrator with its preliminary review report within 20-25 business days of receiving the assessment fee. The assessment report will indicate those aspects of the Guiding Principles that are compliant, as well as those that are pending with a request for more information.
- Your team can accept the preliminary review results as final if you are satisfied, prepare new or revised documentation, or attempt additional requirements before submitting for final design review.

Part 2: Final Review (optional)

- The final review stage allows you to submit supplementary information requested by GBCI during the preliminary review or amend the application. GBCI suggests you submit these clarifications within 25 business days after receiving the preliminary review results. GBCI will review revised or newly submitted information.
- GBCI will respond with a final review report for the assessment within 20-25 business days, marking requirements as either compliant or not compliant.
- Like the preliminary review, you can either accept the review results as final, or revise your application and resubmit for a supplemental (appeal) review.

Part 3: Supplemental (appeal) Review (optional, fees apply)

- The supplemental (appeal) review stage provides an additional round of review and allows you to submit additional information, amend the application, or address requirements not previously submitted. GBCI will review the previously not compliant or newly submitted requirements, and any information that has changed since the return of the final review. The fee associated with supplemental (appeal) reviews varies depending on the level of complexity.
- Appeals are specific to each Guiding Principle requirement and multiple appeals may be submitted concurrently; a separate fee is required for each appeal.
- GBCI will respond with an updated assessment report within 20-25 business days, indicating which requirements have been either compliant or not compliant.
- Like the final review, you can either accept the supplemental (appeal) review results as final, or submit for additional supplemental (appeal) reviews. There is no cap on the number of supplemental (appeal) reviews you may submit.
- After the appeal review is completed, contact GBCI to accept the results.

COMPLIANCE

Assessment Report

Once the assessment is complete, the project team will receive the assessment report that indicates the final 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. Requirements deemed not applicable will not impede compliance¹². Projects cannot be partially compliant.

Compliant projects will receive an official GBCI certificate.

Celebrate and Communicate

Your work toward demonstrating compliance with the High Performance & Sustainable Buildings, Guiding Principles is something to be celebrated and communicated. All projects are, by default, considered “public” projects, and thereby included in the public project directory. A listing in this directory allows the general public and members of the media to look up your project listing and its

¹² To learn more (1) DoD projects see the [UFC 1-200-02](#) Section 4-2 COMPLIANCE WITH FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS (2) Federal Agencies see the [Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings and Associated Instructions](#) Section III. Agency Determination of a Building’s Compliance with the Guiding Principles

related details. Neither the public directory or the public opportunities will 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 or any time thereafter.

Project directory

The public project directory provides the opportunity to share your success, educate and motivate. Here’s a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the project directory:

- Location
- Size of the project
- Identity of the agency that occupies the building
- Identity of the agency that built the project
- The project is registered
- The project has been reviewed against the Guiding Principles

By submitting information to GBCI you grant GBCI a license to access, view, publish and display the above project information.

Publicity opportunities

Successfully meeting the Guiding Principles gives you the opportunity to share your project strategies, photos and insight, and play a pivotal role in educating other project teams. All “public” projects also benefit from publicity opportunities: we may utilize your project data to create case studies highlighting your project’s features, reference your project on our website or to the media, or create other derivative works. Information that may be used for articles, project profiles, other features:

- Service providers
- Project team members
- Promotional or other project photographs
- Project strategies for compliance
- Quotations from team members

Trademarks

Note that if a project chooses to remain “private”, it must not be marketed or represented to the general public as a Guiding Principles project. These projects aren't entitled to use or display any intellectual property, including the GBCI trademarks and logos. These projects may communicate their status as a Guiding Principles project to government entities for the limited purposes of complying with building and tax laws, and administrative proceedings related to land use entitlements.

How is your project data utilized?

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of the green building movement. Whether or not you elect for your project to be private, you confer the right to GBCI, and GBCI’s affiliates to publish, display and exploit the project information only in aggregated, anonymized and non-identifying form, the aggregated project information.

Disclaimer of warranties

Neither GBCI nor any of GBCI's representatives make any (and GBCI and GBCI's representatives do hereby disclaim, to the greatest extent allowed by law, any and all) warranties, representations, and conditions, whether written, oral, express, implied or statutory, including any warranties of accuracy, completeness, title, against infringement, merchantability or fitness for a particular purpose, with respect to the program, the application, GBCI's assessment, and any optional services provided by or on behalf of GBCI. GBCI explicitly disclaims any and all liability arising from client's use of the application for any purpose other than for the facilitation of GBCI's assessment.

By submitting information to GBCI, you acknowledge that certain aspects of the Guiding Principles are conceptual, qualitative, and open to broad interpretation. GBCI'S interpretation of the Guiding Principles may differ from that of OM and/or other Federal Agencies tasked with evaluation or enforcement of your compliance. The results of GBCI's assessment are to be used for your internal purposes only and neither constitute an official determination of conformance, nor does it guaranteed any such determination by an applicable governing authority.

Except as expressly set forth herein, GBCI owns and retains all rights and interests to GBCI Intellectual Property and Marks. All GBCI Intellectual Property and Marks are commercial items in accordance with and as such "commercial items" term is used in the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) 12, 27.405-2, 27.405-3 and Defense FAR Supplement (DFARS) 227.7105.