

Date: August 3, 2021

From: Executive Director, Office of Construction & Facilities Management (003C)

Subj: CFM Policy Memorandum 003C-2021-21 Green Building Certification Requirements (VIEWS Case 05434344)

To: All CFM Staff

1. Authority. This policy is established in accordance with Office of Construction & Facilities Management (CFM) responsibilities outlined in 38 USC 312A and VA Directive 0056, VA Sustainable Buildings Program.
2. Purpose. This policy establishes green building certification requirements to support VA facility compliance with applicable laws.
3. Applicability. This policy applies to all VA major construction projects and leases entering design on, or after, August 1, 2021.
4. Background
  - 4.1 Safe, effective, and efficient healthcare delivery environments are inextricably linked to responsible environmental stewardship. Green buildings promote health and well-being for patients and staff while preserving and protecting the environment.
  - 4.2 In 2019, the General Services Administration (GSA) conducted a review of available green building certification systems and recommended “agencies use the certification system that best meets their mission and portfolio needs”. To that end, CFM has determined it is in the best interest of VA to utilize one primary certification system. CFM has also determined that the primary certification system must be specifically tailored to support VA’s healthcare-intensive portfolio needs and that the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) certification system by U.S. Green Building Council® (USGBC®) is the most appropriate certification system to assist VA in meeting its mission and portfolio needs.
5. Policy
  - 5.1 All VA major construction projects, including major renovations, must be certified using USGBC’s LEED certification system.
  - 5.2 All applicable VA projects must achieve a minimum certification level of Silver. Project delivery teams are encouraged to pursue higher level project certification based upon a business case analysis.

- 5.3 If a project cannot achieve the minimum LEED Silver certification, a deviation waiver must be initiated for approval by the Associate Executive Director, Office of Facilities Planning.
- 5.4 CFM lease projects must comply with GSA green building certification requirements.
- 5.5 Project Delivery Teams must coordinate with Office of Facilities Acquisition for additional project requirements in the development of acquisition plans.
6. Responsibilities
  - 6.1 Office of Design and Construction (ODC)
    - (a) Track and report LEED point compliance during project execution phases on a “Sustainability Scorecard” developed by Office of Facilities Planning.
  - 6.2 Office of Facilities Planning (OFP)
    - (a) Effective immediately, discontinue the CFM “internal certification” program.
    - (b) Within 30 days, establish a Sustainability Program to oversee the management of LEED project requirements throughout the project lifecycle including the development of business case analyses and post occupancy evaluations.
    - (c) Within 30 days, and in coordination with ODC, develop and make available a template for a “Sustainability Scorecard” to track LEED point compliance of major construction projects with this policy and related legal requirements. Update the Scorecard on an as-needed basis.
    - (d) Within 180 days, revise applicable design and construction criteria to reflect, and support, the policies contained within Section 5 of this Memorandum. Provide regular updates of progress on this effort to the Deputy Director, CFM.
  - 6.3 Office of Real Property
    - (a) Ensure all new facility leases include GSA-required green building certification requirements.
    - (b) Track and report compliance with this policy to Deputy Director, CFM.
7. To be consistent with VA policies on updating directives and handbooks, CFM policies and procedures are subject to renewal every 5 years. The review is

based on the latest signature date of the policy, procedure, manual or guide. CFM's Quality Assurance Service (QAS) will monitor renewal cycle and notify proponent offices in advance of expiration. Policies and procedures should be updated whenever substantive changes are needed, even if this precedes the 5-year renewal requirement. Employees can access the site by going to the VA intranet page at <https://vaww.cfm.va.gov>. Click on Policy and Publications and then click on Policy and Procedure Management Program.

8. For any questions regarding this CFM Policy Memorandum, please contact James Symanski, Jr., P.E., CFM Facilities Criteria Manager for Sustainable Design, at (202) 714-8602 or via email at [james.symanski@va.gov](mailto:james.symanski@va.gov).



Michael D. Brennan, Ph.D., AIA  
Executive Director, Office of Construction & Facilities Management

*USGBC® and LEED® are trademarks owned by the U.S. Green Building Council® and are used with permission.*