

INTERNAL CERTIFICATION OPTION FOR SUSTAINABLE BUILDINGS COMPLIANCE

1. ISSUE: VA's Office of Asset Enterprise Management (OAEM) has added an internal certification option for validating compliance with the *2016 Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings* ('*Guiding Principles*').

2. BACKGROUND: VA is required to comply with numerous Federal mandates for sustainable buildings. In 2010, VA chose to require certification under the *Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design* (LEED) or *Green Globes* programs to assist in validating compliance with the original *Guiding Principles*. Under this requirement, projects were required to achieve certification levels of either LEED Silver or two Green Globes. In 2014, VA added a requirement for projects to submit "*Guiding Principles Checklists*" to further assist validation efforts.

3. DISCUSSION: On July 25th, 2017, OAEM authorized an "internal certification" procedure for all construction and renovation projects. This new procedure can now be used in lieu of the LEED/Green Globes certification requirement.

4. NEW STANDARD:

See next page for new requirements.

Projects currently under design or construction should be evaluated to determine if this new internal certification option would be appropriate for use; if so, the VA project team may choose to use internal certification in lieu of past certification requirements. In these cases, the VA project official should notify the [Sustainable Design Program](#) of their intent to switch certification methods.

5. CONTACT: James Symanski, Jr., P.E., Sustainable Design Program Manager, Office of Facilities Planning, Facilities Standards Service at james.symanski@va.gov

ALERT

The following requirements replace those found in Section 2.5 of the [VA Sustainable Design Manual \(May 2014\)](#):

2.5. VALIDATING COMPLIANCE.

All VA construction and renovation projects occurring on buildings of 5,000 square feet, or more, shall validate compliance with the *2016 Guiding Principles for Sustainable Federal Buildings* (Guiding Principles). Projects shall use one of the following paths:

a. Option A (*preferred method*): Internal Certification.

This option applies to major and minor projects, including new construction and/or renovation.

During every design phase, complete a copy of the appropriate *2016 Guiding Principles Checklist*, available from the Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP) [website](#). Include the checklist, and supporting documentation during every design review. Upon project completion, submit final checklist and supporting documentation to the VA Green Buildings [SharePoint](#) site.

b. Option B: Green Globes Certification and Checklist Completion

Certify the project using Green Building Initiative's "Green Globes" program. Achieve a minimum of two Green Globes.

During every design phase, complete a copy of the appropriate *2016 Guiding Principles Checklist*, available from the FEMP [website](#). Include the checklist, and supporting documentation during every design review. Upon project completion, submit final checklist and supporting documentation to the VA Green Buildings [SharePoint](#) site.

c. Option C: LEED Certification and Checklist Completion

Certify the project using the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) program. Achieve a minimum of LEED Silver.

During every design phase, complete a copy of the appropriate *2016 Guiding Principles Checklist*, available from the FEMP [website](#). Include the checklist, and supporting documentation during every design review. Upon project completion, submit final checklist and supporting documentation to the VA Green Buildings [SharePoint](#) site.