



# Guide to LEED Certification: Commercial

BD+C, ID+C, O+M

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## Overview

[Register](#)

[Apply](#)

[Review](#)

[Certify](#)

[Fees](#)

[Resources & Tools](#)

## Congratulations on your decision to pursue LEED certification for your project!

You're on your way to increasing the value and environmental integrity of your project. This guide will lead you through the process.

LEED certification involves four main steps:

1. **Register** your project by completing key forms and submitting payment.
2. **Apply** for LEED certification by submitting your completed certification application through [LEED Online](#) and paying a certification review fee.
3. **Review.** Your LEED application is reviewed by GBCI.
4. **Certify.** Receive the certification decision. If you've earned LEED certification: congratulations!

If you need assistance at any time, please [call or email us](#).

Note: Are you working on projects within the LEED Volume Program? Check out our [LEED Volume Program supplement](#), which works in conjunction with this guide to give you a full picture of the LEED Volume Program.

## REGISTER

Registration is an important step in the LEED certification process, signifying your intent to pursue LEED certification.

Before you begin, you'll want to make sure that your project meets all of the LEED Minimum Program Requirements, the minimum characteristics that make a project appropriate for pursuing LEED.

Building projects pursuing LEED 2009 certification must:

- Comply with environmental laws
- Be a complete, permanent building
- Use a reasonable site boundary
- Comply with minimum floor area requirements
- Comply with minimum occupancy requirements
- Commit to sharing whole-building energy and water usage data
- Comply with a minimum building area to site area ratio

Building projects pursuing LEED v4 certification must:

- Be in a permanent location on existing land
- Use reasonable LEED boundaries
- Comply with project size requirements

Visit the [LEED Credit Library](#) to read the specifics on Minimum Program Requirements. LEED 2009 projects should also read the [Supplemental Guidance to the Minimum Program Requirements](#).

Next up: select the appropriate LEED rating system for your project using our guidance for [LEED 2009](#) or [LEED v4](#).

The content in this guide applies to all LEED 2009 and LEED v4 commercial rating systems. For guidance on LEED Homes and Midrise certification, visit the Guide to Certification: Homes.

- LEED for Building Design and Construction (LEED BD+C) (please note that there is a [separate guide for Homes and Mid-Rise rating systems](#))
- LEED for Interior Design and Construction (LEED ID+C)
- LEED for Operations and Maintenance (LEED O+M)

Now, onward to registration: visit [LEED Online](#), the online portal through which you will submit your application for certification, as well as

Now, onward to registration: visit [LEED Online](#), the online portal through which you will submit your application for certification, as well as access a variety of tools and resources, provide the registration information related to your project, submit payment and sign the certification agreement (the project owner must do this last one). Once you've finished, your project application will be accessible in [LEED Online](#).

From here, you can assemble your project team and the documentation process begins!

## Project Team Roles

Individuals on your project team will be called on to fill certain roles throughout the LEED certification process. Here's a rundown of who's who so you can select your team wisely:

**Owner:** The owner of the project is the person (or entity) who has the authority to hold and control the real and personal property associated with your project, and accepts (or authorizes the acceptance of) the certification agreement. While there may be multiple owners for a particular project (if so, please submit a [Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority Form](#) ), we ask that you identify a single individual to administer the certification process. Big takeaway: the owner has ultimate control over the LEED certification application, meaning that the Green Building Certification Institute (GBCI: the organization responsible for administering LEED certification) will respond to the owner regarding the administration of the project over any other member of the project team.

**Agent:** The agent is the person (or entity) who is granted actual authority by the owner to register the project and accept the certification agreement. If you are using this option, remember to upload a signed [Confirmation of Agent's Authority Form](#) .

**Project Administrator:** This team member acts as a project manager, overseeing the LEED project as well as which project team members are responsible for certain tasks, credits or prerequisites. The project administrator plays a key quality role by checking that the LEED submission is complete and accurate before submitting the project to GBCI for review, and accepting the review results once the review is complete. Note: the individual who initially registers the project will automatically be granted the role of the project administrator, but the owner may transfer this role to another team member at any time.

## Important considerations

### Deadline for registration

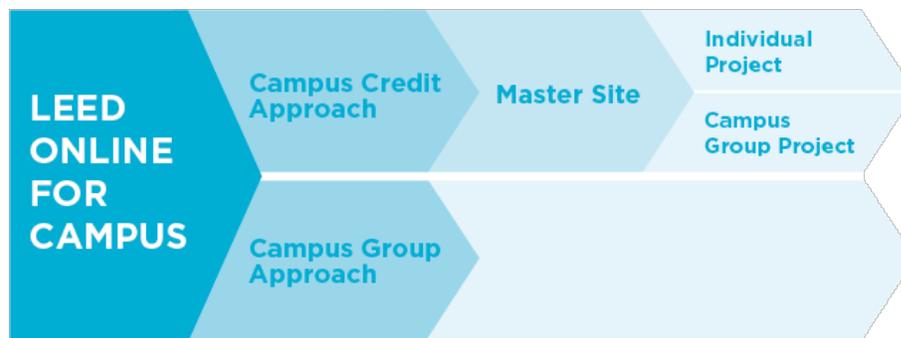
In order to optimize an integrated design process, which is a core part of LEED, we encourage you to register as early as possible – ideally, during the design phase for LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C rating systems, and early in the planning and facility assessment phase for LEED O+M projects. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines](#) .

### Recertification (LEED O+M only)

If your project has already been certified under LEED O+M, in order for your certification to remain current, we require you to recertify your project within five years of the previous certification. Your project is eligible for recertification after 12 months and every 12 months thereafter, and we encourage you to register for recertification as soon as possible. For more information, view the [Recertification Guidance](#).

### Campus projects

If you are planning to bring more than one building located on a single shared site and under the control of a single entity (for example, a corporate or educational campus, government installation or commercial development) through certification, you may register your project as a campus or group project to streamline the documentation you'll need to submit for review. Please note, however, that individual building registration and certification fees apply to campus and group projects. Depending on the campus approach you select, you will pursue a slightly modified registration process, as compared to one-off project registration.



- **Campus credit approach:** This approach enables you to streamline the documentation process by earning “campus credits” – prerequisites and credits that can be applied to all LEED projects on the master site. You will need to register a “master site,” which includes a general narrative of the overall campus projects and a schematic site plan, in addition to registering each individual project on the site.
- **Campus group project approach:** In this approach, you'll register the group of projects on the site as a single LEED project that will then receive a single LEED rating and certification. To be eligible for this approach, LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C projects must be under the same construction contract and be constructed at the same time, and LEED O+M projects must be under the same ownership and management, share the same performance period and have substantially similar space types. For this approach, your team's campus project documentation must demonstrate that the group of projects collectively meets the credit requirements using a “group credit.” You may use a campus group project certification independently or in combination with campus credits documented under a master site review, through the campus credit approach above.

# APPLY

Now comes the fun part: you're ready to collect and submit the appropriate documentation via [LEED Online](#) so that GBCI may review your project. Working with your project team, you will identify [LEED credits to pursue and assign them to project team members](#). [Your team will then collect information, perform calculations and analysis, and prepare documentation demonstrating your achievement of the prerequisites and your selected credits](#).

[Once your application is prepared, upload your completed materials into LEED Online](#) and make sure to perform a rigorous quality check of your entire application before submitting for review. We suggest that you open each form and check that you have included all required information, and open each file upload to verify that you have uploaded the correct document. Cross-check credits and prerequisites to make sure that you have reported common data points, such as gross square footage, occupancy and total material cost consistently. Want more tips? Here are some characteristics common among high quality submissions:

- Relevant prerequisite/credit information is clearly highlighted within the submission
- File attachments are clearly and intuitively labeled
- Only required documentation is submitted (if only a few pages are needed to provide the required credit/prerequisite information, no need to submit more!)
- Concise narratives are used to describe project-specific circumstances (these are really helpful for the GBCI reviewer)

All finished? Ready, set, submit! Don't forget to pay your certification review fee - and remember, your review will commence once your payment has cleared our system.

## Important considerations

### LEED O+M projects

You may choose to extend the performance period for any prerequisite or credit to a maximum of 24 months preceding your certification application, in case you need more time to establish performance. All performance periods must overlap and come to a conclusion within one month of each other. Please be sure to submit your completed application for review within 60 days of the conclusion of the performance period.

The recertification performance period includes the entire time since the previous certification and must be at least a year in length, but may be up to five years in length. You'll need to track and record building performance data throughout the entire recertification performance period.

### Campus Projects

**Campus credit approach:** If your team is pursuing this approach, be sure to document all campus credit information within the master site.

**Campus group project approach:** For this approach, your team's group project documentation must demonstrate that the group of projects collectively meets the credit requirements using a "group credit." You may use our group project certification independently or in combination with campus credits documented under a master site review, through the campus credit approach above.

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# REVIEW

After you've submitted your application and paid the review fee, GBCI will conduct a thorough technical review. But don't kick back yet – you'll need to be an active participant throughout the process.

While the type of review you'll undergo will vary depending on the specific needs of your project and the rating system under which you are certifying (more on that below), the process is the same:

### Part 1: Preliminary Review

- You will first submit your application for a preliminary review. GBCI will check your application for completeness and compliance with the selected rating system and attempted credits.
- GBCI will respond with its preliminary review within 20-25 business days, indicating which prerequisites and credits are anticipated to be awarded during final review, pending further information or denied.
- Your team can accept the preliminary review results as final if you are satisfied, submit new or revised documentation, or attempt additional credits before submitting for final review.

### Part 2: Final Review (optional)

- The final review stage allows you to submit supplementary information or amend the application. GBCI suggests you submit these clarifications within 25 business days after receiving the preliminary review results. GBCI will then review revised or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of

the preliminary review.

- GBCI will respond with a final LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the preliminary review, you can either accept the review results as final, or revise your application and resubmit, this time as an appeal.

### Part 3: Appeal Review (optional, appeal fees apply)

- The appeal review stage provides one additional round of review and allows you to submit supplementary information, amend the application or add new credits not previously attempted. GBCI will review the pending or newly submitted prerequisites and credits, and reconsider any anticipated credits or prerequisites for which information has changed since the return of the final review. The fee associated with appeals varies depending on the level of complexity of the credits or prerequisites involved in the appeal.
- GBCI will respond with an appeal LEED certification review report within 20-25 business days, marking prerequisites and attempted credits as either awarded or denied.
- Like the final review, you can either accept the appeal review results as final, or submit a further appeal. There is no cap on the number of appeals you may submit.

## Standard review (all rating systems)

Through the standard review path, you will submit your entire application (all credits and prerequisites) once you've completed your project.

## Split review (LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C rating systems)

You may choose to pursue split review if you are certifying under a design and construction rating system. To do this, you'll submit part of your application at the conclusion of your project's design phase (design credits and prerequisites), and the rest at the conclusion of construction (construction credits and prerequisites), completing two rounds of reviews. The split review is designed to help your team determine if your project is on track to achieve LEED certification at its preferred level. Please note that only credits and prerequisites identified as design credits can be submitted during the design review, and that your application must be submitted before your project is substantially completed.

## Precertification review (LEED for BD+C: Core & Shell projects only)

This is an optional review pathway available for a fee for LEED BD+C: Core & Shell projects that is focused on your intended design and construction strategies. We offer precertification to help your project attract tenants and help you determine which credits and prerequisites your project is likely to achieve during the full review.

## Expedited review

In a time crunch? Contact GBCI at least five business days (please allow longer if you are paying by check) prior to submitting an application to request an expedited review to cut your review time in half (reduced from 20-25 business days to 10-12 business days per review phase). Please note that there is an additional charge for this service, and GBCI's ability to fulfill your request depends on their current review capacity. If GBCI can accommodate your request, they will confirm availability and provide a custom review schedule for your project.

## Submitting an inquiry

Having difficulty fulfilling a rating system prerequisite or credit? Have you thought of an alternative way to interpret a credit or path to fulfill it? We've established inquiries so that you can gain clarification before you register your project or as you're working through your LEED application. All inquiries are filed through [LEED Online](#) (unless you haven't registered yet – in which case, please reach out to GBCI) and should address only one credit or prerequisite. Here are your options:

**Credit Interpretation Ruling (CIR):** A CIR allows you to obtain technical guidance related to a particular credit or facet of the LEED rating system. Our review team will let you know if your interpretation of a particular credit or prerequisite is consistent with published rating system requirements. When it comes time to submit your application for review, you will need to provide documentation demonstrating fulfillment of the CIR and indicate the approved CIR within your application for certification. You may file an appeal if you are not satisfied with the result of your CIR using the process above. Keep in mind, also, that CIRs are not precedent setting; your project team can only utilize the ruling for the project under which the CIR was submitted.

**LEED Interpretation:** Administered by USGBC, LEED Interpretations focus on the evolution of the LEED rating system and are published periodically in the form of official addenda. They are developed through a deliberative process involving LEED committees and are not conducted within the standard 20-25 business day timelines. Like Project CIRs, LEED Interpretations provide answers to technical inquiries about applying LEED in situations not already addressed by the rating systems, reference guides and MPRs. They differ from Project CIRs in that, as USGBC issued addenda, these rulings are precedent-setting and applicable to all projects registered in the future. As in the case with all addenda, projects registered before a LEED Interpretation is published may voluntarily elect to follow these revisions. You can access published LEED Interpretations online in our searchable [addenda database](#).

## Important considerations

### Deadline for submitting for review

For LEED BD+C and LEED ID+C rating systems, you will need to submit for your construction phase review (preliminary standard review or preliminary construction review) no later than two years after your project is substantially completed (the date on which your building receives a certificate of occupancy or similar official indication that it is fit and ready for use). LEED O+M projects are required to submit for review within 60 days of the end of their performance period. If you decide you no longer want to pursue LEED certification for your project, we understand. Please contact GBCI so that they can close your application and maintain accurate records.

### Campus projects

**Campus credit approach:** We recommend that you complete the master site review prior to submitting any associated, individual or group projects for review, since the campus credits earned through the master site review will then become available to your individual or group projects associated with it. Review processes for the master site and the individual or group projects proceed as outlined above. You have the option to select standard or split reviews for design and construction rating systems.

### Appeals

If you feel that the results of a review appeal or a CIR appeal are incorrect and wish to challenge those results, you may do so by contacting GBCI.

### Upgrading your version of LEED Online

We're constantly working to improve the LEED certification experience for you, and upgrades to [LEED Online](#) that provide a smoother user experience are a key part of those efforts. Check below to see which upgrades are available.

We recently launched LEED Online for Campus, created specifically for campus projects. If you're currently registered as such a project and utilizing LEED Online version 3, please contact GBCI and they will guide you through the process of re-registering in LEED Online for Campus. Once the upgrade has been completed, GBCI will issue a refund of the registration fee associated with the project that was cancelled out in LEED Online version 3. Unfortunately, if you've already submitted your campus project for review, you'll need to stick with the version of LEED Online that you registered with – your project cannot be transferred.

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## CERTIFY

You've made it to the finish line: accepting your certification is the final step in the LEED review process. Once your final application review is complete, your project team can either accept or appeal GBCI's final certification report. If you've achieved certification: congratulations from all of us at USGBC and GBCI!

Once you've accepted the final certification report, the project will be deemed "closed out" –meaning that you will no longer be able to appeal the certification level or review decisions for specific credits or prerequisites, so please double (or triple) check that you have achieved all prerequisites and targeted credits before accepting the final certification.

### Certification Levels

While all LEED-certified projects are a cut above the rest, each is assigned one of four levels of certification to acknowledge the degree of achievement. The number of points that your project earns determines the level of LEED certification that your project will receive.

LEED Certified™: 40-49 points earned

LEED Silver®: 50-59 points earned

LEED Gold®: 60-79 points earned

LEED Platinum®: 80+ points earned

### Promote your project

Once you've earned certification, it's likely that you'll want to tell the world. You should. LEED certification benefits your business's bottom line and underscores your sustainability efforts. It's a cause for celebration!

Our [public relations guide](#) for LEED-certified projects can help you do that. You'll also receive a formal certificate of recognition, and can choose to order LEED plaques and certificates. [Learn more.](#)

(Psst... did you know that USGBC Platinum-level members receive 20 hours of dedicated public relations support from USGBC's in-house communications team? Learn more about [Platinum membership](#).)

### Project information: How USGBC handles your data

Your work with LEED is something to be celebrated – and communicated to the world at large. Achieving LEED certification gives you the opportunity to share your project strategies, photos and insight, and play a pivotal role in educating other project teams.

#### How is USGBC utilizing your project data?

We use your project data for the greater good: to educate and provide resources for LEED project teams and others around the world, showcase your strategies, and share the size and power of the green building movement.

LEED-registered and certified projects are, by default, considered "public" projects, and thereby included in USGBC's public LEED project directory. A listing in this directory allows the general public and members of the media to look up your project listing and its related details.

Here's a full list of the data and project elements that may be listed in the project directory:

#### Project directory information

- Project name
- Project ID
- Physical address
- Date of registration
- Date of certification
- Certification level
- Total points earned

- Total points earned
- Project scorecard
- ACP (Alternative Compliance Path) selection
- Rating system and version
- Owner type
- Owner name
- Owner organization
- Gross square footage
- Total property area
- Project type

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 certification
- Quotations from team members

You are free to opt-out of the LEED 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. Please note, confidential, or private LEED-certified projects are not authorized to use the LEED certification logos.

## Important considerations

### Deadline for achieving certification

Each rating system will remain open and available for certification for at least six years after the rating system registration close date. To certify your project under a specific rating system, you must submit for certification by that rating system’s certification close date, also called the sunset date. If you have difficulty meeting this deadline, please reach out to GBCI—they’ll work with you on a solution for your project. [View the LEED registration close and certification close deadlines](#).

### Expiration of LEED certification

If you’ve earned certification for your LEED O+M project, you must recertify within five years of the previous certification.

### Revocation of LEED certification

In rare situations, LEED certification may be revoked. We’ve created the Certification Challenge Policy to ensure that all LEED project submittals and subsequent reviews by GBCI team members are done so with integrity, accuracy and truthfulness. A certification challenge may be initiated by GBCI or by any third party within 18 months of a project’s certification. In line with the policy, you’ll need to retain all project documentation related to your certification, and the achievement of prerequisites and credits, on-site at your certified project for two years after receiving certification, to ensure that this information is available in case of a challenge.

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This Certification Challenge Policy has been put in place to protect the integrity of the LEED certification program as a credible, accurate, and industry-recognized system for evaluating the design and construction of sustainable buildings. GBCI intends this policy to function as both a quality check on GBCI LEED reviews, as well as an instrument designed to detect and remedy incidents of intentional or inadvertent misrepresentation which result in the inappropriate award of LEED certification. This policy is not meant to serve as a vehicle for the adjudication of disputes between outside parties. Accordingly, this policy and the certification challenge process detailed herein do not replace any applicable judicial or other alternative dispute resolution processes that third parties may have available to resolve such disputes between themselves. Complaints that might warrant initiation of the Certification Challenge Process should be submitted to [legal@gbci.org](mailto:legal@gbci.org).

1.1 Certification Challenge Overview: All persons participating in the submission of information in applying for an award of LEED certification must be truthful, forthcoming, and cooperative in their dealings with GBCI; however, it is the responsibility of the project owner to confirm and represent the veracity and accuracy of the documentation submitted. To the extent the veracity or accuracy of such documentation, or GBCI’s evaluation of the same, is called into question, GBCI may initiate a certification challenge thereby revisiting its determination that the submitted documentation properly demonstrates that the project satisfied all credits, prerequisites, and MPRs necessary to achieve the awarded level of LEED certification. A project owner may defend against such certification challenge by electing to participate in the process described below. Based on the final determination of such a challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded or revoke an award of LEED certification altogether.

1.2 Basis for an Initiation of a Certification Challenge: GBCI reserves the right to institute investigations and review documentation for any reason or for no reason at all. In addition, GBCI encourages third parties who wish to make a complaint, or bring to light information affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner. Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information affecting the grant of LEED certification must have specific personal knowledge of an event or condition that would prevent a project from satisfying a particular credit, prerequisite, or MPR. Complainants must indicate the credit, prerequisite, or MPR that is affected. Further, such persons must indicate to the fullest extent possible, in the form of a written statement, details of such event or condition including the following: i) the alleged offending conduct or condition; ii) the persons involved; iii) other persons who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the allegation, including contact information for such persons; and iv) the identity of the person presenting the complaint including such person’s full name, address, email, and telephone number. Complaints must be submitted to GBCI within eighteen (18) months of the award of LEED certification for a project. GBCI cannot guarantee anonymity to persons submitting complaints. If GBCI determines that the complaint is frivolous or irrelevant to the credits, prerequisites and MPRs required for LEED certification, no further action will be taken.

1.3 Basis for an Initiation of a Certification Challenge: GBCI reserves the right to institute investigations and review documentation for any reason or for no reason at all. In addition, GBCI encourages third parties who wish to make a complaint, or bring to light information affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner. Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information

affecting the grant of LEED certification to do so in the following manner: Parties seeking to submit a complaint or report information affecting the grant of LEED certification must have specific personal knowledge of an event or condition that would prevent a project from satisfying a particular credit, prerequisite, or MPR. Complainants must indicate the credit, prerequisite, or MPR that is affected. Further, such persons must indicate to the fullest extent possible, in the form of a written statement, details of such event or condition including the following: i) the alleged offending conduct or condition; ii) the persons involved; iii) other persons who may have knowledge of the facts and circumstances concerning the allegation, including contact information for such persons; and iv) the identity of the person presenting the complaint including such person's full name, address, email, and telephone number. Complaints must be submitted to GBCI within eighteen (18) months of the award of LEED certification for a project. GBCI cannot guarantee anonymity to persons submitting complaints. If GBCI determines that the complaint is frivolous or irrelevant to the credits, prerequisites and MPRs required for LEED certification, no further action will be taken.

**1.4 Certification Challenge Investigation Process:** In performing a formal investigation, GBCI will review any or all of the project's documentation that GBCI, in its sole discretion, deems relevant. GBCI may request supplemental information from the person(s) making the complaint and may require the complainant to provide a statement in the form of an affidavit attested to under penalty of perjury. GBCI may request information from the project team, project owner, and/or others involved in the project.

If GBCI determines that a site visit may be useful, GBCI, with the assistance of one or more technical consultants, may, but is not required to, conduct an on-site inspection of a project. GBCI shall notify the project owner of the necessity of the site visit in writing. GBCI representatives including staff members and/or technical consultants shall make the arrangements for the site visit. No staff or technical consultant may: i) investigate any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) investigate any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) investigate any matter which presents an actual, apparent, or potential conflict of interest. GBCI representatives who are tasked with conducting a site visit must sign an engagement agreement and abide by GBCI requirements regarding conflicts of interest and confidentiality.

**1.5 GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings:** Upon the conclusion of an investigation, if GBCI determines in its sole discretion that the project owner submitted truthful and accurate documentation when applying for certification and that sufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded, no further action will be taken. The project owner and any persons submitting complaints will be notified of this decision. If GBCI determines that the documentation submitted was not completely truthful and accurate, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate the project properly achieved LEED certification at the level awarded, GBCI shall transmit a statement of its findings to the project owner by email via verifiable method of delivery, setting forth the affected credits, prerequisites, and/or MPRs, and including a written statement:

1. of the facts constituting the inaccurate grant of credit, prerequisite, minimum program requirement, or falsely submitted documentation and the credits/prerequisites/minimum program requirements affected;
2. that the project owner has thirty (30) calendar days after receipt of such statement;
3. identifying the proposed sanctions determined by GBCI potentially including revocation of LEED certification, or reduction of the level of LEED certification awarded.

**1.6 Stage 1: Contesting GBCI Preliminary Staff Findings:** If the project owner seeks to contest the findings, or is unwilling to accept the determined sanctions, such owner must submit a written response addressing the Preliminary GBCI Staff Findings and/or the determined sanctions within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of such statement. The project owner may also submit additional information related to the challenged LEED program requirement(s). If the project owner accepts, or fails to timely respond to such statement and underlying findings, GBCI shall enact the determined sanctions and close the matter. Such acceptance, or failure to respond, shall constitute a waiver of the right to a review or hearing and appeal of the same.

Upon receiving a response to this statement, GBCI staff shall make a determination as to the disposition of the challenge and identify the sanctions to be imposed. GBCI shall provide notice of such determination and sanctions to the project owner along with a statement:

1. that the owner or representative thereof may request an oral hearing (in person or by phone) or a review by written briefing for the disposition of the matter, with the owner bearing its own expenses;
2. that the owner or representative may appear in person, may examine and cross-examine any witness under oath, and may produce evidence on its behalf;
3. that if the owner disputes the findings, or requests a review or hearing, the owner thereby consents to the formation of a Review Panel for the purpose of rendering a decision on the evidence before it, and further agrees to comply with any applicable sanctions subject to an appeal; and
4. those certain administrative fees, as detailed in Pricing Appendix A, apply if the project team requests a written review or hearing.

**1.7 Stage 2: Written Review or Hearing of a GBCI Staff Determination:** If a project owner seeks to contest the determination or sanctions issued by GBCI staff, the project owner may submit a request for either a hearing or review by written briefing. The fees outlined in Pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days following the date the owner's written request was received by GBCI.

If the project owner requests a hearing or written review, the GBCI Chair in consultation with the GBCI President shall appoint three persons to serve on a Review Panel, each of whom shall be qualified by virtue of training and experience to have the appropriate technical knowledge in the relevant LEED program requirements. No member of such Review Panel may: i) review any matter regarding a project he or she previously reviewed; ii) review any matter in which his or her impartiality might reasonably be questioned; or iii) review any matter which presents an actual or apparent conflict of interest relating to the project.

If the project owner requests a written review, GBCI will forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel. Written briefing may be submitted within thirty (30) calendar days following receipt of the request for such written review.

If the project owner requests a hearing, GBCI shall forward its findings and the response of the project owner to the Review Panel and shall designate one staff member to present the findings and any substantiating evidence, to examine and cross-examine witnesses, and to present the matter during the hearing. The Review Panel will schedule a hearing after the request is received, allowing for a period of at least thirty (30) days to prepare for such hearing, and will send by email and via verifiable means of delivery, a Notice of Hearing to the project owner. The Notice of Hearing will include a statement of the time and place selected by the Review Panel. The project owner may request modification of the time and place for good cause.

The Review Panel, GBCI, and the project owner may consult with and be represented by counsel, make opening statements, present documents and testimony, examine and cross-examine witnesses under oath, make closing statements and present written briefs as scheduled by the Review Panel. To the extent a project owner or representative fails to attend the hearing in person or by phone, such hearing shall commence as scheduled without representation by the owner. The Review Panel will determine all matters related to the hearing. Formal rules of evidence will not apply. Relevant evidence may be admitted. Disputed questions will be determined by the Review Panel.

GBCI will meet its burden of proof if it is able to demonstrate by a preponderance of the evidence, and the project owner is unable to refute either that the project owner failed to submit truthful, and accurate documentation when applying for certification, or that insufficient evidence exists to demonstrate that (i) all prerequisites and MPRs were properly completed at the time certification was conferred and (ii) that the minimum number of credits were properly completed at the time certification was conferred such that the project obtained the requisite number of points necessary to achieve LEED certification at the level awarded.

Upon the conclusion of a review or hearing, if the Review Panel determines that GBCI has not met this burden of proof no adverse action will be advised and the matter shall be closed. If the Review Panel determines that GBCI has met this burden of proof it shall identify the appropriate sanctions to be carried out by GBCI.

The Review Panel will issue a written decision following the review or hearing. This decision will contain factual findings, conclusions, and any sanctions if appropriate. Such written decision shall be sent promptly by email via verifiable means of delivery to the project owner and any persons submitting complaints.

**1.8 Stage 3: Appeal of a Review Panel Decision Before GBCI Board of Directors:** If a project owner seeks to contest the decision of the Review Panel, such owner may submit a request for an appeal to the GBCI Board of Directors. All requests for appeals must be submitted in writing and sent to GBCI by verified and traceable email, U.S. Postal Service mail, personal delivery, or private courier (such as Federal Express, United Parcel Service, etc), within thirty (30) calendar days after the owner's receipt of the Review Panel's decision. Requests for appeals must be accompanied by written briefing setting forth the basis for the appeal. If the project owner requests an appeal in accordance with this section, the fees outlined in pricing Appendix A must be provided to GBCI within thirty (30) calendar days of GBCI's receipt of such request.

In order to overturn a certification challenge decision by the Review Panel, it shall be the burden of the project owner to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the GBCI Board of Directors that such decision was arbitrary or capricious.

The GBCI Board of Directors will render a written decision based on the record below and written briefs (if any); there will be no oral hearing. The decision of the GBCI Board of Directors will be mailed promptly by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the project owner. Decisions rendered by the GBCI Board of Directors shall be final. Persons submitting complaints shall be notified of the decision of the GBCI Board of Directors.

**1.9 Revocation of LEED certification:** Based on the final determination of a Certification Challenge, GBCI retains the right to reduce the level of LEED certification awarded, or to revoke an award of LEED certification.

GBCI retains the right, in its sole discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to a project for the purposes of performing an audit or site visit, or it is prevented from examining documentation related to the project's design, construction, and/or operations pertaining to LEED certification, as a result of a project owner being unwilling or unable to provide such access or documentation.

GBCI retains the right, in its reasonable discretion, to revoke LEED certification from any project where it is denied access to, or for which it is not provided with, energy and water use data on an ongoing basis after LEED certification is conferred, as is required.

To the extent a project is subject to revocation of LEED certification, such project will be removed from the LEED certified project database and may no longer be referred to as a LEED certified project. GBCI shall identify the project's certification as having been revoked. Additionally, if GBCI revokes certification of any project for which a Platinum-level certification was previously awarded, and for which the project owner received a rebate of any or all certification fees, the owner of such project shall be liable for refunding all monies so received to GBCI. Further, the owner of such project shall immediately terminate all use and display of any LEED trademarks, associated logos, and other intellectual property licensed by GBCI.

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## FEES

### LEED certification provides an exceptional value for your money: So, how much will it cost to certify your project?

**Registration fee:** There is a flat registration fee calculated on a per-project (building) basis that you'll pay up front at the time of registration. If we haven't received your payment within 60 days of your registration, we'll assume you changed your mind and go ahead and cancel the registration.

**Certification fee:** The certification fee is charged on a per-project (building) basis and based on the size of the project and the rating system under which the project is registered. Certification fees are due when you submit your application for review. After all that work you did to submit your documentation, don't forget to send your payment! Remember, GBCI will not begin your review until payment in full has been received and cleared our system (thank you!). Also, please note that certification fees are based on the fees published at the time the project is submitted for review.

**Other fees:** Other fees related to expedited reviews, appeals, and other optional aspects of the LEED certification process may apply, should you pursue these avenues.

**Member discounts:** [USGBC Silver, Gold and Platinum level member organizations](#) benefit from discounted LEED registration and certification fees. Discounts are available based on the membership status of either the owner or the project administrator for a given LEED project. Visit the fee charts page below for more information on available discounts.

[View all of the fee charts »](#)

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# RESOURCES & TOOLS

USGBC offers a number of resources and tools to support you during the process of LEED certification.

## General resources

[Credit Library](#)

[Addenda database](#)

[Pilot Credit library](#)

[Regional Priority Credit lookup](#)

[LEED Online: v4, v3](#)

[Legal agreements: LEED Certification Agreement, Confirmation of Agent's Authority, Confirmation of Primary Owner's Authority, Change of Owner Agreement](#)

## BD+C specific

### LEED v4

[Reference Guide](#)

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

### LEED 2009

[Reference Guide](#)

[Supplements: Healthcare, Retail](#)

[Rating System Document: New Construction, Retail, Healthcare, Schools, Core & Shell](#)

[Checklist: New Construction, Core & Shell, Schools, Healthcare](#)

### LEED v2.2

[Reference Guide \(New Construction\)](#)

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

### LEED v2.1

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

### LEED v2.0

[Reference Guide \(New Construction\)](#)

[Reference Guide \(Schools\)](#)

[Reference Guide \(Core and Shell\)](#)

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

## ID+C specific

### LEED v4

[Reference Guide](#)

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

### LEED 2009

[Reference Guide](#)

[Retail Supplement](#)

[Rating System Document: Commercial Interiors, Retail](#)

[Checklist: Commercial Interiors, Retail](#)

### LEED v2

[Reference Guide](#)

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

## O+M specific

### LEED v4

[Reference Guide](#)

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

### LEED 2009

[Reference Guide](#)

[Rating System Document](#)

[Checklist](#)

### LEED v2

[Reference Guide](#)

[Rating System Document](#)

