



# Policy, Program, and Plan Models for LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance

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In organizational or facility management there are high-level statements called “policies” that set the stage for lower-level statements called “programs and/or plans” targeted at implementing those policies. In LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M, a policy commits the organization to an overarching course of action, which empowers staff working at the operational level. A policy is a strategic view of a given sustainability goal that sets behavioral boundaries and may encompass a large number of buildings or an entire organization in a general way. The program/plan is the field-level operational working document that lays out the series of steps required to meet that sustainability goal reliably in a given building or group of buildings.

## POLICIES

In LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M certain policies are required as prerequisites (e.g., WE prerequisite 1, MR prerequisites 1 and 2, EQ prerequisite 3). In those cases USGBC provides the following policy model to help the project team ensure that all relevant and necessary aspects of the policy are addressed. (*Note: this policy model appears in the LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M Rating System as well; for reference it is repeated here without change*)

- Scope – Describe the facility management and operations processes to which the policy applies. Describe the building components, systems and materials to which the policy applies.
- Performance Metric – Describe how performance will be measured and/or evaluated.
- Goals – Identify the sustainability goals for the building.  
Note: although applicants are required to set goals, documentation of actual achievement is not required to demonstrate compliant policies; stating the goal is enough. Applicants are encouraged to set high goals and work toward their achievement.
- Procedures and Strategies – Outline the procedures and strategies in place to meet the goals and intent of the policy.
- Responsible Party – Identify the teams and individuals involved in activities pertaining to the policy. Identify and outline key tasks for the above teams and individuals.
- Time Period – Identify the time period over which the policy is applicable.

Applicants are not required to develop separate policies for the purposes of achieving LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M prerequisites and credits as long as they can highlight these components in their existing policies.

## PROGRAMS & PLANS

Certain optional credits in LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M reward the project team for having a program or plan to operate the building or grounds in a sustainable way. In LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M the terms “program” and “plan” are used synonymously to reference the facility’s operational system in place to implement sustainability goals for certain portions of the building or grounds. A program/plan for a given sustainability goal may or may not have an associated policy.

The submittal templates or forms for several LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M credits specify that the project team must provide a compliant written program/plan as part of the certification process (e.g., SS credits 2 and 3, EQ credit 3.1). For those credits the program/plan must meet certain minimum requirements, as defined by the key elements listed below:

- Goals and Scope – the intent of the program/plan, the physical or programmatic boundaries of the program/plan.
- Responsible Party(ies) – the party responsible for program/plan development and oversight of implementation. If the key responsible party is a contractor or consultant to the facility owner or property manager, list the contractor or consultant's title as well as the title of the in-house person to whom that person reports.
- Guidance for Resources and Implementation – the guidance documents or information used to instruct personnel on the required sustainability practices and implement them in the field. These may include: standard operating procedures; process outlines; program budgets; educational/communications materials; recommended/required product lists and sources; excerpts from contract language; or similar materials that enable the successful ongoing implementation of the program/plan.
- Performance Measurement – how actual outcomes and sustainability performance for each element of the program/plan will be measured and tracked over time.
- Quality Assurance/Quality Control Processes – a description of how the responsible party verifies that the program/plan is being successfully implemented, the performance measurement methods truly reflect the actual outcomes, and that sustainable performance persists over time.

Applicants are not required to develop separate written programs/plans for the purposes of achieving LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M credits as long as they can highlight these components in their existing operations documents or contracts. Also, where elements of the program/plan repeat elements of an associated LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M policy, it is not necessary to replicate that information in the program/plan.

A company-wide program/plan is acceptable for LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M; it is not necessary to have a completely unique document dedicated to each project building. However, all building-specific requirements, special circumstances or exceptions must be identified and listed in an addendum or supplement to the company-wide program/plan.

*Note: LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M also uses the word “plan” in some credits to reference a technical document produced by an industry specialist, i.e., “stormwater management plan”, “building operating plan”, or “commissioning plan.” In these cases this use of “plan” is intended to capture a term of art in the industry, and such technical plans do not need to comply with this program/plan model.*