



# Florida Green Commercial Building Designation Standard *Standards & Policies*

**Version 3**  
Effective June 1, 2019  
*Revised 3/27/19*

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# Florida Green Commercial Building Designation Standard

## *Standards & Policies*

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## 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 1.1 **Purpose.** The provisions of this document are intended to establish a voluntary, statewide standard for Green Commercial Building Designation. This enhances the goal of achieving uniform and meaningful Green Commercial Building Designations for Florida.
- 1.2 **Scope.** These standards apply to Green Commercial Building Designations located in Florida. The commercial building could be comprised of any commercial occupancy listed in the current Florida Building Code.

## 2. OFFICIAL DOCUMENTS

The official documents of the Florida Green Commercial Building Designation Standard shall be made available to the public as downloadable electronic files from the Florida Green Building Coalition website, and include:

- The "Checklist" shall assign credit points for green criteria of this Standard and shall be the official application for certification.
- The "Reference Guide" shall provide information on green building practices, details on how to earn credit points for complying with the Standard, and required documentation submittals for credit points.
- The "Standards & Policies" document shall describe the policies of the Florida Green Commercial Building Designation Standard.
- The "Modification Request Form" shall allow for submission of proposed changes to the Standard.

### 2.1 Checklist

- 2.1.1 The Checklist shall include a list of credit features and the maximum points that may be possible for a commercial building to achieve for that feature'
- 2.1.2 The Checklist shall include a location for the applicant to total the estimated achieved points.
- 2.1.3 The Checklist shall include a certification Application Form. At a minimum the application must include:
  - 2.1.3)1 The name of the commercial building
  - 2.1.3)2 The full address of the commercial building
  - 2.1.3)3 The building owner(s) name, address and contact information
  - 2.1.3)4 The name, address, contact information, and signature of the Designated Professional
  - 2.1.3)5 The pertinent commercial building design team members (engineers, architects, planners, etc.) name, address and contact information
  - 2.1.3)6 The legal description of the commercial building property



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- 2.1.3)7 The Checklist must state the application fee and indicate accepted methods for payment.
- 2.2 Reference Guide
  - 2.2.1 The Reference Guide shall serve the purpose of providing details as to how to earn points
  - 2.2.2 The Reference Guide shall at a minimum include each possible credit item and a description as to how to earn points.
  - 2.2.3 Every attempt shall be made to describe how the points will be earned such that the criteria can be objectively evaluated.
  - 2.2.4 The Reference Guide will include what, if any, submittal documentation is required to earn points for a given criteria.
  - 2.2.5 The Reference Guide shall make every attempt to include the intent, requirements, and potential technologies and strategies available for each criteria or category of criteria.
- 2.3 Standards & Policies (this document)
- 2.4 Modification Form
  - 2.4.1 A form used for revision of this standard shall include the following:
    - 2.4.2 Name, address, contact information and affiliation of proponent
    - 2.4.3 Full description of change requested
    - 2.4.4 Specific language desired
    - 2.4.5 Technical basis or justification for change
    - 2.4.6 Recommended number of credit points for any credit point changes or additions
    - 2.4.7 Justification for recommended number of credit points

### 3. OPERATING PRINCIPLES

- 3.1 Qualification shall not circumvent any local or other jurisdictional laws, unless so allowed by the jurisdictional body as an incentive for complying with this standard.
- 3.2 Credit points are earned through measures that benefit the environment. The basis for the weighting of points shall be environmental benefit; however, it is understood that in some cases the weighting, by necessity, is subjective due to the various types of environmental benefit incurred (water vs. air pollution; tree protection; etc).
- 3.3 A Checklist of qualifying environmental benefits and their respective credit points shall be maintained by the Florida Green Building Coalition such that the credit point list is open to new features through a regular, technical and public review and acceptance process that is defined by this Standard.
- 3.4 The Checklist shall be organized into categories, such as project management, energy efficiency, water conservation, site preservation, health, materials selection, and disaster mitigation. Each category has a minimum points requirement and a maximum number of allowable points.



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- 3.4.1 Certification shall be earned by achieving at least 100 credit points, by reaching the minimum credit points required in each category, and by complying with all Prerequisites (no credit point value) listed in each category.
- 3.4.2 If any category minimums cannot be achieved, point deficiencies may be added to the total minimum required score of 100, creating an "adjusted minimum required points."
- 3.4.3 The FGBC Green Commercial Building Designation program uses a tiered rating system. Certification is awarded at different levels according to points achieved over the project's adjusted minimum required points.
  - Bronze = 0 - 30 points over the project's adjusted required minimum
  - Silver = 31-60 points over the project's adjusted required minimum
  - Gold = 61-90 points over the project's adjusted required minimum
  - Platinum = 91 > points over the project's adjusted required minimum
- 3.4.4 Certification of a Florida Green Commercial Building Designation shall be accomplished through an FGBC Project Evaluator who has been accredited by the Florida Green Building Coalition to evaluate a project with respect to the criteria contained in this Standard.
- 3.5 For each commercial building that qualifies for the Green Commercial Building Designation, written certification, fully disclosing all the features that qualify the Commercial Building, shall be provided to any purchasers or local officials upon request.
- 3.6 Wherever possible, this Standard will promote the market value of environmental improvements through economic analysis (e.g. there is economic benefit to be gained through improvements that reduce energy use beyond minimum code requirements).

## 4. DEFINITIONS AND ACRONYMS

*Credit Points* - Qualification points assigned to features that improve the environmental, ecological and sustainability impacts of a building.

*Florida Green Building Coalition. (FGBC)* - A Florida non-profit corporation with open membership whose primary mission is to develop and maintain Green Designation Standards for Florida and to promote cost-effective, sustainable improvements in the built environment.

*Green Commercial Building* - A commercial building that incorporates multiple environmental, ecological and sustainability features that reduce the environmental degradation throughout its life cycle considerably more than a commercial building that just minimally meets state and local regulations.

*Designated Professional* – An individual who is authorized by the project owner to coordinate project information with the FGBC Project Evaluator and who shall collect, organize, review, and submit all documents required by the Standard in order to achieve certification.



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*Project Evaluator* - An individual assigned by the Florida Green Building Coalition to evaluate a commercial building with respect to the criteria contained in this Standard for the purposes of certifying that the qualifications for a Florida Green Commercial Building Designation have been achieved.

### 5. CERTIFICATION PROCESS

5.1 A Project Registration Form (available in the Checklist) and the appropriate non-refundable deposit shall be submitted to FGBC by the Designated Professional.

5.1: If the project is not permitted within three (3) years of FGBC registration, then the project must comply with the FGBC standard in effect at time of permitting and will be subject to the current fee structure in effect at time of submittal. Additionally, if the final submittal is not made to FGBC within 5 years of registration, then the project is subject to the current fee structure in effect at time of final submittal.

The Final Application Form for green designation (available in the Checklist), with the required documentation and fee shall be submitted within five (5) years of the project registration with FGBC.

Projects not submitted within five years from registration with FGBC must comply with the current version and fee structure in effect at time the Final Application is submitted.

- 5.2 A Project Evaluator shall be assigned by FGBC after receiving the Project Registration Form or Final Application Form and appropriate fee.
- 5.3 The Project Evaluator role is to assist with interpretation of the standard, answer questions regarding submittal, and verify that all required information and documentation specified in the Checklist and Reference Guide for the credit points requested have been received. The Project Evaluator is the evaluator for FGBC, and a technical resource for the Designated Professional regarding any interpretation of the standards. The Project Evaluator is not a consultant for the design team.
- 5.4 The Project Evaluator shall verify the correct points earned based on information received and other verification deemed necessary.
- 5.5 Upon completion of the project review, the Project Evaluator shall forward the verified Checklist with a final score, photographs, any calculations, and documentation to FGBC for archiving.
- 5.6 The Florida Green Building Coalition shall uphold the Standard including, if need be, denying certification of applicants for failure to meet the minimum requirements of the Standard. Failure to comply with the Standard shall not be grounds for any refund of the application fee to the applicant.



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- 5.7 Certification of a Florida Green Commercial Building Designation shall be provided in writing and accomplished in accordance with the provisions of this Standard.
- 5.8 Each Florida Green Commercial Building Designation Certificate shall include the following:
  - 5.8.1 The seal of the Florida Green Building Coalition;
  - 5.8.2 The name of the commercial building and the building owner;
  - 5.8.3 The full address where the commercial building is located;
  - 5.8.4 The signature and typed or printed name of the Project Evaluator;
  - 5.8.5 The date the certification was completed; and
  - 5.8.6 The statement: “This certification is provided by the Florida Green Building Coalition. Any questions, comments, or complaints regarding the green designation of this commercial building may be directed to the Florida Green Building Coalition”
- 5.9 Each Florida Green Commercial Building Designation certification shall include a disclosure stating that the Project Evaluator had no financial interest in the project or current contracts/obligations with the owner or any member or organization of the building design team (engineers, architects, etc.).

## 6. SELECTION OF FGBC PROJECT EVALUATOR

- 6.1 Any organization or individual that would like to serve as a Project Evaluator may request to do so by submitting the required information to FGBC.
- 6.2 At a minimum, the following information shall be required and kept on file for each applicant for acceptance as an FGBC Project Evaluator:
  - 6.2.1 Full name of applicant
  - 6.2.2 Permanent mailing address, phone number and, if applicable, e-mail of applicant
  - 6.2.3 Occupation (primary source of income) of applicant
  - 6.2.4 Employer and length of employment of applicant
  - 6.2.5 Statement of applicant’s qualifications for reviewing the breadth of criteria given in the Checklist and Reference Guide.
  - 6.2.6 Agreement to report each certified Green Commercial Building to the Florida Green Building Coalition and to uphold the provisions of this Standard, including the no-financial interest agreement (section 5.9 above).
- 6.3 Any Project Evaluator must be an FGBC member in good standing (membership fees up to date) and must actively participate in 75 percent of the meetings of the FGBC Commercial Building Standard Committee
- 6.4 The Florida Green Building Coalition shall assign a Project Evaluator from the list of approved Project Evaluators.
- 6.5 The cost for evaluation services rendered shall be negotiated between FGBC and the Project Evaluator or their organization.



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- 6.6 FGBC reserves the right to have its own staff, staff working for FGBC under contract, or qualified volunteers assigned as Project Evaluators and it has the right to select the evaluator of its choice for any given project.

### 7. BASIS FOR QUALIFICATION

- 7.1 Each commercial building shall qualify as described in the Checklist and the Reference Guide and each item receiving credit shall be verified by the Project Evaluator.
- 7.2 Appropriate Standard.

The Standard version in effect at the time of project registration determines the applicable version of the Standard that shall be used. However, if a project is not previously registered with FGBC, then the applicable version of the Standard to be used shall be the version in effect on the building permit date.

Any project may elect to use a more recent version of the Standard, which is in effect at the time of application.

### 8. REVISION PROCEDURES FOR THE GREEN COMMERCIAL BUILDING STANDARD

#### 8.1 Periodic Review.

At least triennially, the provisions set forth in these Green Commercial Building Standards shall be reviewed by the Standards Committee of the Florida Green Building Coalition in collaboration with other stakeholders. At a minimum, this review shall include consideration and evaluation of changes in the law, technological innovations, and comments and requests received from interested parties.

#### 8.2 Annual Revision Cycle

##### 8.2.1 The annual revision cycle is:

- Dec 31 - Last date to accept public modification requests for review
- Feb 28 - Last date for review and approval by the FGBC Green Commercial Building Standard Committee of all modification requests
- April 1 - Last date for posting revised proposed standards on the FGBC website.
- June 1 - Effective date of revised standard

8.2.2 All modification requests shall be disposed of on an annual cycle such that modification requests received on or before the last working day of December are included in the revision cycle that concludes no later than the last working day of May.

8.2.3 The Board of Directors of the Florida Green Building Coalition may revise the FGBC Green Home Designation Standard at any time according to Section 8.3



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### 8.3 Revision Procedures

- 8.3.1 Interested parties may submit a modification request to Florida Green Building Coalition on the official "Modification Request Form" available from the FGBC website.
- 8.3.2 Modification Requests shall be reviewed by the FGBC Green Commercial Building Standard Committee for consensus recommendation.
- 8.3.3 The proposed revised standard documents shall be posted on the FGBC website for a 30-day public comment period with notification to the general membership.
- 8.3.4 Following the public comment period, each public comment received shall be reviewed by the Florida Green Building Coalition Green Commercial Building Standard Committee for consensus recommendation.
- 8.3.5 The FGBC Green Commercial Building Standard Committee shall be responsible for conducting the periodic evaluation through a consensus process, whereby both consenting and the non-consenting opinions are documented and incorporated as comments into each report or proposal to change.
- 8.3.6 Public comment proposals for change receiving two-thirds majority support from the FGBC Green Commercial Building Standard Committee shall be incorporated into a set of revised Florida Green Commercial Building Standard documents.
- 8.3.7 The proposed final version of the revised Standard documents shall be submitted to the FGBC Board of Directors for review.
- 8.3.8 The Board of Directors of the Florida Green Building Coalition shall adopt, adopt with modification, or reject the proposed revised Standard.

### 8.4 Procedure for Submission of Modification Requests

- 8.4.1 Proposals to change the Florida Green Commercial Building Designation Standard may be submitted to the Florida Green Building Coalition in writing, at any time, using the official "Modification Request Form" posted on the FGBC website.
- 8.4.2 All proposals to change the Florida Green Commercial Building Designation Standard that meet the criteria set forth in this section of these Standards shall be accepted for consideration and evaluation.
- 8.4.3 At a minimum the modification request shall include the following
  - 8.4.3.1 Identification of submitter, including:
    - Name, address, contact information and affiliation of submitter
    - Full description of criteria seeking placement or modification
    - Technical basis for placing or modifying criteria within the Standard
    - Recommended number of credit points
    - Justification for recommended number of credit points
    - Signature of submitter
    - Date Modification Request Form is submitted to the Florida Green Building Coalition
  - 8.4.3.2 Specific revisions in a format that clearly identifies the manner in which the Florida Green Commercial Building Standards are to be altered (i.e. underline/strikeout format or equivalent). Any proposal to change the Florida Green Commercial Building Standards that does not include proposed alteration(s) shall be rejected and returned to the submitter.





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- 8.4.3.3 Substantive reason(s) or justification for each proposed change. The lack of substantive justification for a proposed change may result in the rejection of the proposal and return to the submitter.
- 8.4.3.4 Supporting documentation that may be needed for the reasoned evaluation of the proposal.

## 9. SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION OF FGBC GREEN DESIGNATION

The Florida Green Building Coalition may suspend or revoke the Florida Green Commercial Building designation from a commercial building, requesting all reference to such certification be discontinued and removed from all marketing and educational materials.

### 9.1 For Failure to Correct Deficiencies.

If the Florida Green Building Coalition determines at any time that an FGBC certified green commercial building has failed to adhere to the procedures and activities listed in the standard for those items whereby the project earned credit points, the FGBC will notify the building owner of the specified deficiencies and shall require that specific corrective action, set forth in the notification, be taken not later than 30 calendar days after the date set forth in such notification.

9.1.1 In the event that the deficiencies have not been remedied, the Florida Green Building Coalition shall have the authority to immediately begin the process of revoking the certification by issuance of a Notice of Suspension Proceedings. The notice may be appealed in accordance with procedures set forth herein.

9.1.2 In the event that the specified deficiencies are not corrected within the application period set forth in the Notice of Suspension, a Notice of Revocation Proceeding shall be issued by the Florida Green Building Coalition. Such Revocation Proceeding shall follow the due process procedures contained herein. The Notice of Revocation may be appealed in accordance with the procedures set forth herein.

### 9.2 For Cause.

Any commercial building certified by the Florida Green Building Coalition may have its accreditation revoked in any of the following circumstances:

9.2.1 Upon determination by the Florida Green Building Coalition that an FGBC certified building owner has acted in such a manner as to impair the objectivity or integrity of the accrediting program or harm the reputation of the Florida Green Building Coalition, including, but not limited to submission of false information to the Florida Green Building Coalition or failure to submit to the Florida Green Building Coalition any material information required to be submitted in connection with obtaining or maintaining accreditation; knowingly or negligently issuing certifications that fail to meet all of the certification criteria; or misrepresentation by the building owner in advertising or promotional materials of its accreditation status in general or with respect to any service provided by the building owner.

### 9.3 Suspension/Revocation Due Process



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The Florida Green Building Coalition shall comply with the following due process procedures in considering any suspension or revocation actions against a building owner.

### 9.3.1 Notice

The Florida Green Building Coalition may, at its discretion, initiate a proposed suspension or revocation action pertaining to the building's green certification against a building owner by providing the building owner written notice of the proposed action sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the last known address of the building owner. Such notice shall inform the FGBC building owner of the entire basis and justification for the proposed action.

### 9.3.2 Contest of Proposed Suspension/Revocation

A respondent may contest a proposed suspension/revocation by filing a response with the Florida Green Building Coalition within 30 days of receipt of the notice. The response shall contain all pertinent and substantive information and argument that is in contradiction to the proposed suspension/revocation, including identification of all disputed materials and facts. If the respondent fails to file said response within the allotted time, the Florida Green Building Coalition may, at its discretion, suspend/revoke the accreditation of the respondent effective immediately upon written notification to the respondent.

### 9.3.3 Hearing

If the respondent files a timely response contesting the proposed suspension/revocation and requests a hearing, the Florida Green Building Coalition will appoint an independent, unbiased, and qualified hearing officer and issue a decision on the proposed suspension/revocation. The hearing officer will review the notice of suspension/revocation and the respondent's contest. If the hearing officer finds that the respondent's contest has raised substantiated and valid factual argument to the contrary of the proposed suspension/revocation, the respondent shall be afforded an opportunity to participate in an open and public hearing, and to submit additional documentary evidence, and rebuttal argument to any material contained in the original notice of suspension/revocation or developed during the course of the hearing officer's investigation. The notice shall be provided to the respondent by written notice by certified mail, return receipt requested, to the last known address of the respondent at a minimum of 120 days before the scheduled hearing.

### 9.3.4 Hearing Officer's Decision

The hearing officer shall issue a written decision on the proposed suspension/revocation that is based on all the information contained in the hearing record including statements of the factual and legal basis of the decision. If the hearing officer decides to impose suspension or revocation, the decision must include findings regarding all disputed materials, and justification for all findings. A suspension/revocation decision by the hearing officer shall take effect upon the issuance of the hearing officer's decision and the written notification of such decision to the respondent.

### 9.3.5 No Ex Parte Communication

No ex parte communication between the parties and the hearing officer shall be allowed.



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## 10. APPEALS PROCEDURES FOR SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION

### 10.1 Notification

The Florida Green Building Coalition shall notify the building owner and the Florida Green Building Coalition Board of any and all disciplinary actions. Additionally, the Florida Green Building Coalition shall clearly notify the building owner of all procedures and rights to remedy.

### 10.2 Appeal

10.2.1 In the event that an accreditation application was not approved or the accreditation has been suspended, the building owner shall have the right, for a period of 30 calendar days after the date of notice, to appeal to the Florida Green Building Coalition.

10.2.2 In the event that a FGBC green commercial building accreditation is suspended following the expiration of the period to appeal a suspension, in the absence of an appeal having been taken, the building owner shall have the right, at its election, for a period of 30 calendar days after the date of issue of a Notice of Suspension, to appeal to the Florida Green Building Coalition.

10.2.3 An appeal shall be in writing and sent by certified mail or other method that provides evidence of delivery to the Chairperson of the Florida Green Building Coalition and shall specify the basis for the appeal.

10.2.4 The appellant building owner may, at the time of noticing its appeal, request in writing, a hearing. In such an event, the Florida Green Building Coalition shall, not later than seven (7) calendar days after the filing of the notice of appeal, appoint a hearing officer and notify the appellant building owner of the date of the hearing, which shall be held as expeditiously as possible, but not later than 30 calendar days after the receipt of the notice of appeal.