

# Green Lease Standards and Guidelines (GLSG) for Federal Leases- Version 1.0

GSA Public Buildings Service, Office of Leasing

## I. Purpose:

This document identifies the required provisions that agencies must include in Federal leases, in order for a lease to be considered a “green lease”.

Green leases are important because they provide environmental and economic benefits to both landlords and tenants. Green leases encourage both landlords and tenants to adopt environmentally sustainable practices which can help reduce the impact of climate change, promote energy efficiency and cost savings, and improve occupant health, comfort and productivity.

This is not a comprehensive list of considerations to use when selecting a space to lease nor does this fully reflect the characteristics of a sustainable base building or green tenant improvement effort.

## II. Background:

[Executive Order 14057 on Catalyzing Clean Energy Industries and Jobs Through Federal Sustainability](#) issued in December 2021 and the accompanying memorandum [OMB Memorandum \(M-22-06\)](#), set new climate and sustainability goals for the Federal government, with the target of a net-zero emissions building portfolio by 2045.

Per the OMB memorandum (M-22-06), “...all new (including new-replacing, succeeding, and superseding) leases entered into after September 30, 2023, for at least 25,000 rentable square feet in a building where the Federal Government leases at least 75 percent of the total building square footage are green leases. Such green leases must require the lessor to report to the agency annual data on facility greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption, water consumption, and waste generation...” (Section I.F.2). The [Implementing Instructions for EO 14057](#) further clarify that these requirements apply to “[all] new **lease solicitations** issued after September 30, 2023, for at least 25,000 rentable square feet (RSF) where the Federal Government occupies at least 75 percent of a building are to be green leases.” (Section 4.4.13)

The [Implementing Instructions for EO 14057](#) define a “green lease” as:

*...a lease for space in a privately-owned, commercial building that includes environmental and sustainability criteria for the building and operations to:*

- 1. Reduce energy, water, material resources use, and emissions;*
- 2. Improve indoor environmental quality;*
- 3. Reduce negative impacts on the environment;*
- 4. Increase the use of sustainable products and services;*
- 5. Increase reuse and recycling opportunities;*
- 6. Reduce impacts of transportation through building location;*

7. Consider the effects of the building on human health and the environment; and
8. Track impacts of emissions, energy, water, and waste.

The E.O. 14057 Implementing Instructions further require the following:

*“GSA must issue **green lease standards and guidelines** to be applied to Federal leases, including provisions that promote a standard framework for lessor reporting of emissions, energy, water, and waste associated with leased space. Agencies with independent leasing authority must incorporate the guidelines and language into agency-specific leasing policies and procedures.”*

### **III. Green Lease Standards and Guidelines**

The Green Lease Standards and Guidelines include the following provisions to address in a federal lease procurement based on the eight key Criteria in the green lease definition per the Implementing Instructions:

- Green lease **CRITERIA** are the 8 key criteria that align with the **definition** of a green lease, in “Section II. Background” above.
- Green lease **GUIDELINES** are the **broad** guidelines that address the **general intent** of the key green lease criteria.
- Green lease **STANDARDS** contain the necessary building and performance standards that **must** be included for a lease to be considered a “**green lease**”.
- Green Lease **RECOMMENDATIONS** support sustainability within the lease and are **encouraged** but not required to meet the definition of a green lease.

To qualify as a green lease, the lease must include provisions that address all of the Required STANDARDS in Column 3 of the Table below. **This includes STANDARDS that are required by statute or regulation, as indicated underlined in italics.**

Additionally, Green Lease **RECOMMENDATIONS** are provided for consideration in Column 4 of the Table. They support sustainability within the lease and are **encouraged** but are not required for the lease to meet the definition of a green lease.

The Green Lease Guidelines focus on **ongoing operations** as required by the lease. It is assumed that federal leases are **complying with statutory and regulatory mandates** related to sustainable site considerations, including: Floodplain guidance; Environmental due diligence (Environmental Site Assessment); National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); Locational policy; Seismicity standards; Historic preservation guidelines, etc. Multiple green lease requirements can support more than one key green lease criteria.

The specific lease language used by GSA to address different Green Lease Standards and Recommendations can be found in [GSA's Request for Lease Proposal \(RLP\) and Lease templates](#). Other available green leasing resources may be used to develop language to meet the Green Lease Standards and Recommendations. Agencies should refer to established industry standards for the Green Lease Guidelines, such as those developed by ASHRAE, the Environmental Protection Agency, ASTM International, ANSI, the Department of Energy, etc. A common reference for sustainable product and practice standards is the Green Procurement Compilation.

**Table 1: Required STANDARDS for a lease to quality as a Green Lease**

\*Requirements that originate in statute or regulation are *underlined in italics*.

Green Lease <u>CRITERIA</u>	Green Lease <u>GUIDE-LINE</u>	Green Lease <u>STANDARD</u> [Required]	Green Lease <u>RECOMMENDATION</u> [Optional]
<b>1. Reduce Energy, Water, Material Resources Use, and Emissions</b>	<b>Improve Energy Efficiency and Reduce Emissions</b>	<u><i>Ensure the leased space is in a building that earns the Energy Star label or complies with cost-effective energy efficient upgrade requirements if an exception applies.</i></u>	The Lease could require equipment and appliance electrification upon replacement for both base building systems and tenant controlled equipment (e.g. upon equipment end-of-life and/or replacement, landlord shall use/install all-electric equipment and appliances, where cost effective and feasible.)
		Ensure the lease requires HVAC equipment to operate efficiently by referencing the latest ASHRAE 62.1 standards.	The lease could include a requirement for a documented plan for periodic re-commissioning which includes references to relevant industry standards.
			<u><i>The lease could require energy efficient equipment and appliances by referencing Energy Star label or FEMP-designated products (note - Govt can specify EStar/FEMP products if they are part of T.I. build-out)</i></u>
		Ensure the lease requires energy efficient lighting for any lighting replacement in all spaces including shell, TI and parking.	The lease could include requirements for controls for occupancy and daylighting.
			The lease could include requirements to enhance energy efficiency through window coverings.
	<b>Improve Water Efficiency</b>	Ensure the lease requires efficient water fixtures and appliances by referencing EPA WaterSense (or equivalent).	
		Ensure the lease requires landscape management best practices	The lease could include requirements to encourage the use of alternative water sources for outdoor water use.
		<u><i>Ensure the lease requires maintaining and restoring pre-development hydrology conditions.</i></u>	
	<b>Reduce Resource Use and Emissions</b>	<u><i>Ensure the lease supports proper refrigerant management, and aligns with EPA's SNAP guidance.</i></u>	
	<b>2. Improve Indoor Environment al Quality</b>	<b>Ensure Indoor Air Quality, Filtration and Ventilation</b>	Ensure the lease requires proper filtration/ventilation by following current ASHRAE 62.1 standards.
<b>Ensure Indoor Air Quality</b>		Include lease language that supports air quality during construction by implementing IAQ best practices.	The lease could encourage improved IAQ through walk-off/entry mats.

Green Lease <u>CRITERIA</u>	Green Lease <u>GUIDE-LINE</u>	Green Lease <u>STANDARD</u> [Required]	Green Lease <u>RECOMMENDATION</u> [Optional]
	<b>Provide Moisture and Mold Control</b>	Ensure the lease requires the elimination or abatement of moisture that could lead to mold.	
	<b>Low-Emitting Materials</b>		The lease could encourage low-emitting materials for adhesives and sealants, paint, doors, partitions, cleaning products and paper products.
	<b>Integrated Pest Mgmt.</b>		The lease could encourage Integrated Pest Management referencing EPA’s IPM standard or equivalent.
<b>3. Reduce Negative Impacts on the Environment</b>	<b>Hazardous Waste</b>	<i><u>Ensure the lease requires compliance with hazardous materials standards for radon and asbestos per statute.</u></i>	The lease could prioritize products used in the build-out of space that do not contain Per- and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS).
<b>4. Increase the Use of Sustainable Products and Services</b>	<b>Sustainable Products</b>	Ensure the lease requires the use of products that meet the environmental preferable criteria in <a href="#">Green Procurement Compilation</a> by requiring and evaluating Environmental Product Declarations (EPD’s) for any upgrades involving floor coverings, partitions or ceilings.	
<b>5. Increase Reuse and Recycling Opportunities</b>	<b>Solid Waste Mgmt. Practices</b>	Ensure the lease requires a recycling program for paper, corrugated cardboard, glass, plastics, metals, including recycling storage space, as supported by local infrastructure.	The lease could require composting or recycling of lawn waste.
	<b>Reuse of Materials</b>	Ensure that the lease requires construction waste management best practices related to recycling and diverting >50% of construction waste to the maximum extent practicable. [Shifted from Recommended to Required]	The lease could encourage opportunities to reuse/salvage building materials.
<b>6.Reduce Impacts of Transportation</b>	<b>Sustainable Location</b>	<i>[Covered in Broad Sustainable Siting Guidance]</i>	
	<b>Electric Vehicle Service Equipment</b>	If government owned vehicle parking is part of the lease, ensure the lease provides for the minimum level of EVSE to support ZEV acquisitions through the end of the lease term (see DOE FEMP’s <a href="#">ZEV Ready Step 10: Determine Number of EVSE Ports</a> and GSA’s EVSE Leasing Policy).	
<b>7. Consider the Effects of the Building on Human Health and the Environment</b>	<b>Occupant Comfort</b>	Ensure the lease requires thermal comfort standards to meet the ASHRAE 55 standard	The lease could require acoustic standards for reverberation control, ambient noise control, noise isolation, and testing.
			The lease could include provisions to enhance occupant health and well-being by maximizing daylighting and aiming to provide natural light and views to 75% of regularly occupied spaces.

Green Lease <u>CRITERIA</u>	Green Lease <u>GUIDE-LINE</u>	Green Lease <u>STANDARD</u> [Required]	Green Lease <u>RECOMMENDATION</u> [Optional]
8. Track Impacts of Emissions, Energy, Water, and Waste	Tracking & Reporting Tenant Space Tracking	Ensure the lease requires the landlord to annually disclose/report energy, emissions, and water associated with the leased space.	The lease could include requiring the landlord to annually disclose/report waste generation, including municipal solid waste (trash and recycling), and construction waste.
		<i><u>Ensure the lease requires disclosure and transparency by reporting Energy Star score. (per Energy Efficiency Improvement Act- 2015)</u></i>	The lease could encourage the tracking and reporting of energy for government tenants independently from other tenants. This could include estimating energy use if tenant level submeters are not available.
			The lease could encourage visibility into energy use by end use (e.g., lighting, cooling, heating, etc.)

For lease projects where a **newly constructed building** is the only solution that will meet a customer agency’s requirements, and existing buildings are not competing, the following additional requirements apply:

**Table 1a : Required considerations for NEW LEASE CONSTRUCTION projects**

Green Lease <u>Criteria</u>	Green Lease <u>Guideline</u>	Green Lease <u>Standard</u> [Required]
1. Reduce energy, water, material resources use, and emissions	Improve Energy Efficiency and Reduce Emissions	Ensure that the building earns a 3rd-Party green building rating
		<i><u>Ensure that the building operating plan conforms with 2019 ASHRAE Standard 90.1 and the 2021 International Energy Conservation Code (IECC) related to energy conservation requirements for mechanical systems, building envelope efficiency, insulation, and lighting.</u></i>