



Applying LEED to healthcare projects

June 2026

What are the advantages of using LEED for healthcare facilities?

LEED-certified healthcare facilities exemplify the triple bottom line, benefiting people, planet, and profit. LEED certification supports healthier, more productive environments, reduces environmental impact, delivers significant utility savings, and enhances building value. These facilities are designed and operated to use less water, energy, and natural resources, thereby reducing their overall impact at local, regional, and global scales. Around the world, projects—from hospitals and long-term care facilities to administrative offices on hospital campuses—are using LEED to advance a more efficient, equitable, and sustainable future. LEED helps the healthcare sector meet ambitious sustainability goals while enabling individual projects to achieve substantial reductions in operating costs.

How can healthcare facilities earn LEED certification?

Healthcare facilities can earn certification under different LEED rating systems at various stages of a building's lifecycle.

- **LEED Building Design and Construction (BD+C):** Healthcare is typically the most appropriate rating system for new construction or major renovation of healthcare projects. Hospitals that operate 24/7 and provide inpatient medical treatment, including acute and long-term care, are required to use this rating system. At least 60% of the project's gross floor area must be [complete](#) at the time of certification, and the submission must include the entire building's gross floor area. For healthcare projects, this may include spaces dedicated to both administrative and support functions.
- **LEED for Operations and Maintenance: Existing Buildings or Interiors** applies to existing buildings or spaces that have been fully operational and occupied for at least one year. Projects may be undergoing improvements or little to no construction, and must include the entire building's gross floor area. Unless otherwise noted in credit-specific requirements, this also encompasses process-related operations and performance metrics.

How many healthcare projects are registered and certified under LEED?

As of June 2026, there are 4,188 LEED-certified and registered healthcare projects across the globe. This represents 926 million square feet or 86 million square meters.

What issues are unique to healthcare projects?

Healthcare projects often have distinct energy and water demands, unique ventilation requirements, high equipment loads, 24/7 operations, and programmatic ties to other buildings, all of which can make pursuing robust efficiency measures challenging. Recognizing these

Applying LEED to healthcare projects

complexities, USGBC developed a healthcare-specific LEED rating system with credits tailored to the sector's needs.

How does LEED address the unique challenges of healthcare projects?

LEED v5 is the most current version of the rating system and is available to all commercial projects pursuing certification under New Construction, Core and Shell, Commercial Interiors, and Existing Buildings. Many strategies developed for healthcare projects in earlier versions of LEED have been adapted for LEED v5 or appear in the new Project Priorities and Innovation credit category. Credits in this category offer greater flexibility to address unique project contexts and priorities, including building typology, culture, location, areas of innovation, and specific performance objectives. Sector specific Project Priority credits are continuously being developed and will be released in the [Project Priority Library](#) for use. Following are the current healthcare project type credits:

- [Places of Respite](#)
- [Direct Exterior Access](#)

When developing the LEED v4 and LEED v4.1 rating systems, USGBC adapted certain prerequisites and credits to support the unique needs of healthcare projects, incorporating feedback from industry stakeholders. The LEED BD+C: Healthcare rating system includes credits that specifically address this building type:

- Source reduction for persistent, bioaccumulative, and toxic [Mercury](#) and [Lead, Cadmium, and Copper](#)
- [Integrated Project Planning and Design](#)
- [Environmental Site Assessment](#) [Furniture and Medical Furnishings](#)
- [Design for Flexibility](#)
- [Places of Respite](#)
- [Direct Exterior Access](#)

Additional credits that are shared across rating systems but include Healthcare-specific requirements:

- [Surrounding Density & Diverse Uses](#)
- [Access To Quality Transit](#)
- [Interior Water Use Reduction](#)
- [Minimum Indoor Air Quality Performance](#)
- [Thermal Comfort](#)
- [Interior Lighting](#)
- [Quality Views](#)
- [Acoustic Performance](#)

To find relevant LEED Interpretations for healthcare, use the LEED Addenda database and enter “healthcare” in the main search bar. Relevant LEED Interpretations for healthcare can be

Applying LEED to healthcare projects

found in the [LEED Addenda database](#) by entering the term “healthcare” in the main search bar.

How does the Arc platform relate to healthcare?

The LEED v4.1 O+M rating system offers a unique, performance-based pathway to certify existing buildings and interior spaces. It leverages [legacy Arc](#), a state-of-the-art platform for collecting, managing, and benchmarking performance across five categories: energy, water, waste, transportation, and human experience.

What does this mean for healthcare? LEED v4.1 enables healthcare projects to benchmark against similar high-performance facilities worldwide. Facility managers and owners can continuously monitor data and make informed decisions to optimize building performance using real-time analytics. This performance pathway can be used to certify and recertify projects every three years. [Learn more](#).

[LEED v5 BD+C](#), [ID+C](#) and [O+M](#) rating systems allow for all space types to certify utilizing the new [Arc experience](#), offering greater fluidity and flexibility for users. Performance tracking, certification, and reporting are all delivered in one place.

How can multiple buildings and structures in a campus setting earn LEED certification?

Healthcare settings often operate at a large scale, with multiple buildings across a single site. These buildings, people, and processes are interconnected. To address this, [LEED Campus Guidance](#) was introduced for projects on a shared site under the control of a single entity. Its application to LEED projects in healthcare settings reflects both the complexity and commonality of buildings and infrastructure on a single site.

LEED Campus Guidance is a useful tool for healthcare with multiple buildings, shared utilities, and site-wide management policies. By using this approach, healthcare operators and project teams can benefit from a streamlined review process and reduced certification fees under the Master Site, supporting successful implementation of LEED projects.

What technical resources are available for healthcare projects pursuing LEED?

There are various resources available for healthcare projects pursuing LEED certification.

Technical Resources

The following items may be of interest to healthcare projects. Many are designed to help projects with high process loads or high occupancy meet the intent of the credits.

- The [Energy Jumpstart Pilot Credit](#) is available for O+M projects with process loads of at least 60% that are unable to meet the Minimum Energy Performance prerequisite in the LEED v4 O+M rating system.

Applying LEED to healthcare projects

- [LEED Interpretation 10493](#) allows LEED v4 and v4.1 BD+C projects using whole building energy simulation that can document more than 50% unregulated process load to use BD+C: Core & Shell energy performance improvement thresholds in lieu of the New Construction thresholds.
- The [Whole Project Water Use Reduction Pilot Credit](#) allows LEED v4 BD+C projects to quantify water use through whole-building water balance modeling, similar to the whole-building energy modeling compliance path. It also enables projects to capture significant water savings that previously went unrecognized, such as process water.
- The [LEED v4 Energy Update](#) is available for projects with a high percentage of unregulated or process loads can continue using C&S threshold and are also encouraged to consider [LEED v4.1 credit substitution](#).

Additional LEED Interpretations for healthcare can be found in the [Addenda Database](#) by entering the term “healthcare” in the main search bar.

Industry Articles:

- [The pathway to community-positive health care design](#)
- [LEED and health care facilities: Projects by the numbers](#)

Where can I find more owner profiles and case studies on healthcare?

- California, [Watts Learning Health Pavilion](#)
- California, [Lucile Packard Children's Hospital](#)
- Canada, [Maison des Aines Sainte Anne des Plaines](#)
- Canada, [Maison des aines Chicoutimi](#) and [Maison des Aines Alma](#).
- Colorado, [Boulder Community Foothills Hospital](#)
- Iowa, [GuideLink Center](#)
- Illinois, [Veterinary Specialty Center](#)
- India, [GKNM Hospital](#)
- Malaysia, [Hospital Teluk Intan](#)
- Merida, Mexico, [Clinica-Hospital ISSSTE Merida](#)
- Saudi Arabia, [Almoosa Specialist Hospital North Tower](#)
- Virginia, [CHKD Health Center Urgent Care](#)
- Utah, [University of Utah](#)
- United States, [Kaiser Permanente Projects](#)

View non-confidential LEED-registered and certified projects in the [Project Directory](#) by entering keywords like “healthcare” or “hospital” in the search bar. This will return projects with those terms in their titles. You can also filter by region and rating system to refine your results.

Does USGBC offer education for project teams interested in green building strategies for healthcare facilities?

Yes! Check out the following session in the USGBC online course catalog.

Applying LEED to healthcare projects

- [USGBC Virginia: Healthcare and Sustainable Buildings](#)
- [USGBC Georgia Presents: LEED Project Showcase - Healthcare Facilities](#)
- [Case Study: Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford](#)
- [LEED v4.1 Healthcare: Ask the Experts](#)
- [Sustainability in Healthcare](#)
- [Patient Privacy & Tranquility Optimizing Healing Environments by Using IGUs with Integrated Louvers](#)
- [The Role Played by Green Buildings in the Achievement of Sustainable Development Goals 3, 7 & 8](#)

Who can I contact for more information about applying LEED in the healthcare market sector?

For more information, [contact us](#).