B3 Guidelines Project Role:

Guideline Leader

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[Center for Sustainable Building Research]
College of Design · University of Minnesota

Contents

Selecting a Guideline Leader

As the manager of the project team's submissions for the B3 Guidelines, the Guideline Leader should have the management skills and authority needed to fill this role. The Guideline Leader should be familiar with both the individual project and with the B3 Guidelines, whether from previous experience or by reviewing and learning through the course of the project. Though they are not expected to have deep knowledge within every category of the B3 Guidelines (Performance Management, Site and Water, Energy and Atmosphere, Indoor Environmental Quality, and Materials and Waste), it is helpful for the Guideline Leader to have a general understanding of the design strategies, compliance thresholds, and documentation needed. Experience with sustainable building design and rating system documentation (such as the B3 Guidelines, LEED, or Green Communities) is helpful for this role.

While a project can only have one Guideline Leader at any given time, team members can transition into or out of this role throughout the course of a project. Though other approaches can also work, the Guideline Leader for the design phases is often a member of the design team – typically the architectural team – with sustainable design and project management experience. This may transition to a construction administrator as the project is built and is typically handed off to a building owner or operator for the operations phases. The Guideline Leader may also serve other roles within the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool, such as Architectural Leader.

This document is focused on the roles and responsibilities of the Guideline Leader during the design and construction phases, rather than the operations of a project.

Guideline Leader Responsibilities

Compliance with the B3 Guidelines is documented within the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool, an online project file that guides projects from predesign through ten years of building operation and captures relevant documentation and project metrics to ensure that the guidelines are being met. The team member charged with coordinating the integration of the B3 Guidelines into the design process and for the timely submission of project documentation is called the Guideline Leader. This person is also the project's main point of contact with the B3 Guidelines Administrators.

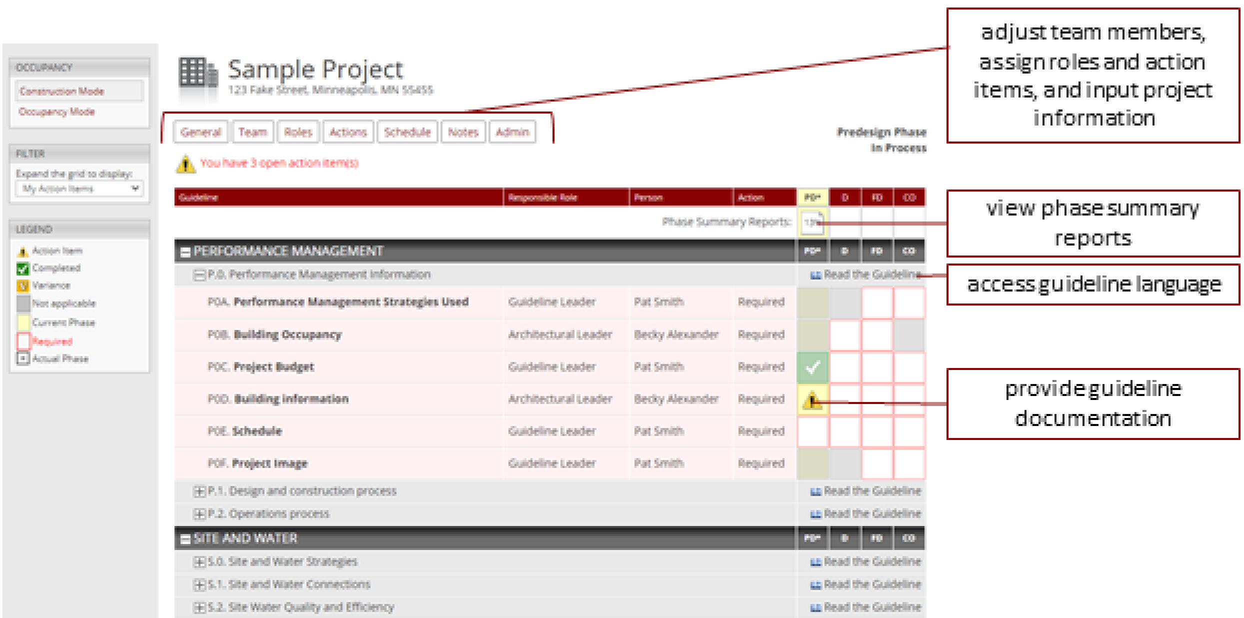
The Guideline Leader's tasks include:

- Project Set Up: If not already established, the Guideline Leader is responsible for coordinating with the B3 Guidelines Administrators to set up a project file in the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool. For projects with limited scope – such as renovations – this includes documenting which guidelines are outside the project scope. The Guideline Leader is also responsible for ensuring that each guideline is assigned to the appropriate team member.
- Coordinating Design and Construction Phase Compliance: The Guideline Leader helps ensure that the project team understands the guideline requirements, incorporates them into the design, and submits complete and timely documentation to the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool.
- Completing Guideline Documentation: The Guideline Leader may be tasked with completing documentation requirements in the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool related to general project information, such as schedule and budget.
- Reviewing Phase Submissions: The Guideline Leader is responsible for reviewing project team submissions at each phase to confirm, to the best of their knowledge, that complete and accurate documentation is provided.
- Coordinating and Reviewing Variance Requests: Projects with programmatic conflicts or technological limitations that prevent them fully meeting specific guideline requirements can request accommodations to the performance thresholds and/or documentation schedule using a full or provisional variance. The Guideline Leader is responsible for reviewing variances requested by the project team to confirm they meet the program requirements and accurately represent the project.

Detailed guidance for these tasks can be found below, along with an overview of how to navigate the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool.

Navigating the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool

The B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool serves as an online project file where the project team can review guideline requirements, assign roles and responsibilities, submit documentation, and track progress. Everyone on a project team has access to the Tracking Tool using their individual log-in credentials. While the Tracking Tool's landing screen shows all projects an individual is assigned to, the project dashboard (shown below) is the primary tool for a specific project. More detailed information on navigating the Tracking Tool is available on the B3 Training and Education webpage (https://www.b3mn.org/guidelines/training-and-education/).



Project Set Up

If not already established, the Guideline Leader is responsible for coordinating with the B3 Guidelines Administrators to set up a project file in the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool. This should be done as soon as possible after the project is confirmed to be using the B3 Guidelines.[1] This includes the following steps:

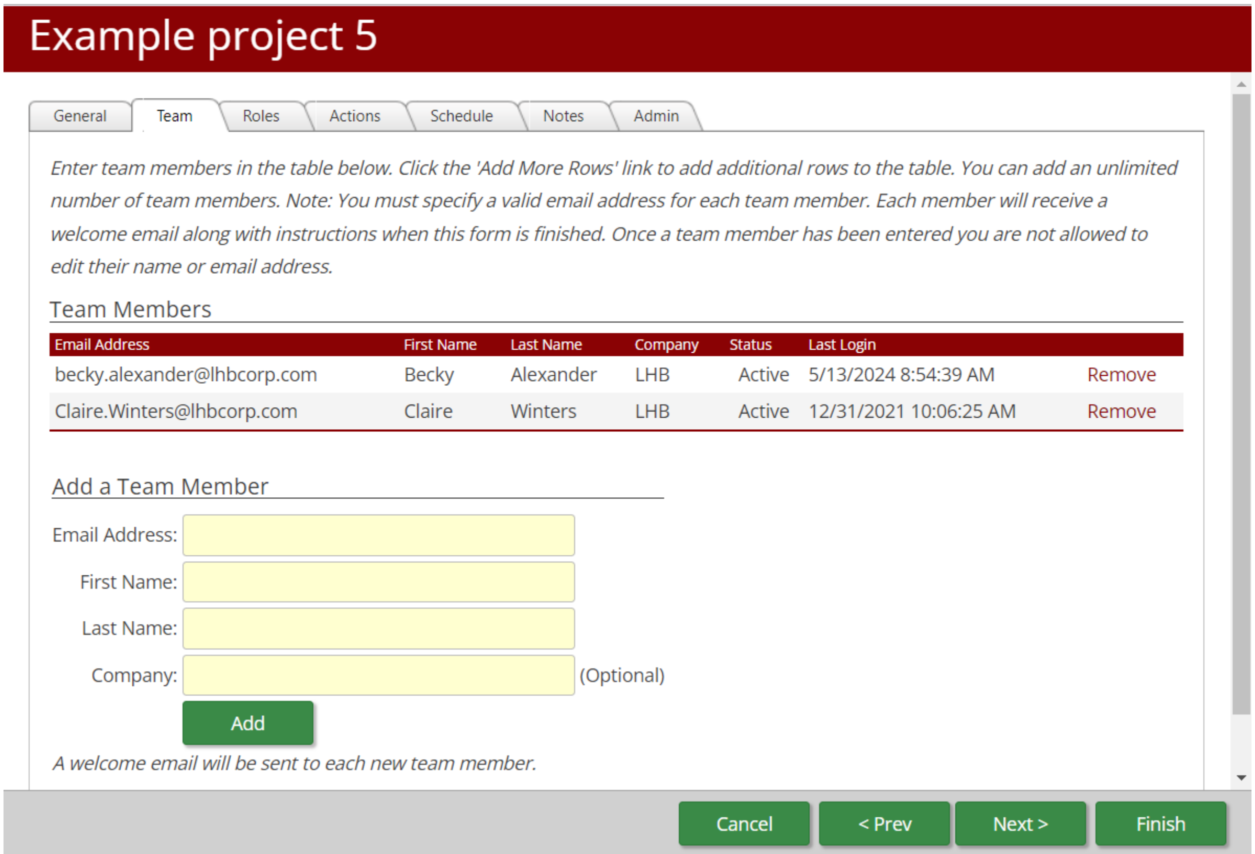
1. **Submit the Project Intake Form.** To initiate project set up, use the Project Intake Form available on the B3 Guidelines website, making sure to choose the correct form based on whether the project is State-funded or fee-applied.[2] The form requests details about the project name, contacts, size, scope, and initial schedule.

   This form is also the first opportunity to document any guidelines that are outside the project scope. The project dashboard will be set up to reflect excluded scope items that are known for certain. For example, the dashboard for a project with no educational spaces will not include a guideline that is only applicable for these types of spaces. When there is any uncertainty regarding the scope, the relevant guidelines will be included on the

[1] State-funded projects that believe they do not meet the minimum conditions (for project size, scope, and funding source) that trigger the B3 Guidelines must complete a Project Applicability Form for an official determination by the State of Minnesota.
[2] The State-funded form should be used for projects funded (or pursuing funding) through State General Obligation Bonds or from the General Fund. Other projects pursuing the B3 Guidelines and/or SB 2030 must pay to participate and should use the intake form for fee-applied projects. These projects may be using the programs voluntarily or may be required to use them by their organization or a funding or regulatory entity.

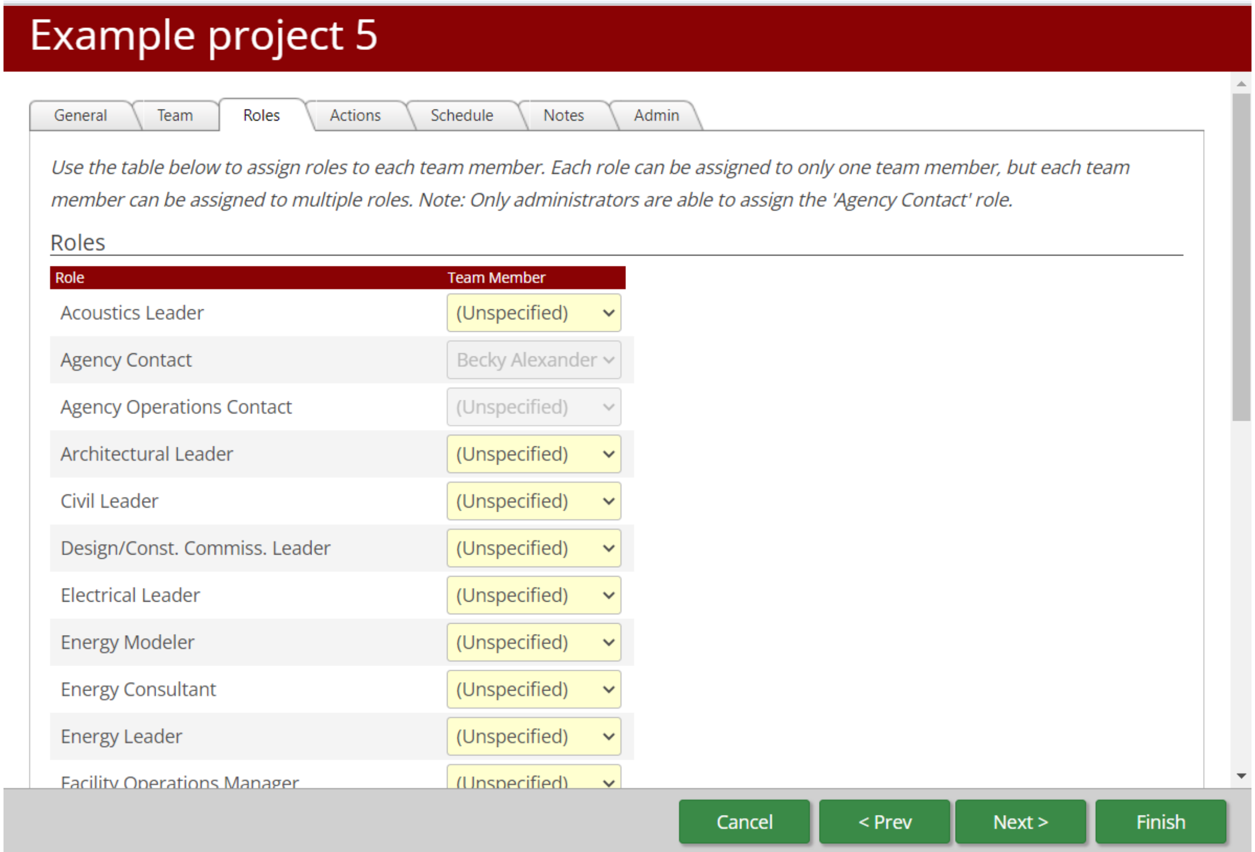
project dashboard until a final decision is made. For example, if a project team is unsure whether any new glazing will be included in a renovation project, the relevant guidelines will be included on the project dashboard until the team has confirmed that this will not be part of the project.

2. **Add team members.** Once the Project Intake Form has been submitted, it may take up to five business days for the project file to be established and a welcome email sent to the Guideline Leader with log-in information. The Guideline Leader should then populate the project file with the names and emails of all team members or observers that should have access to the project in the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool. Ensure that each team member is aware they should be receiving an email with access to the project file.



Team members can be added within the "Team" dialog box, accessible from the top of the project dashboard within the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool.

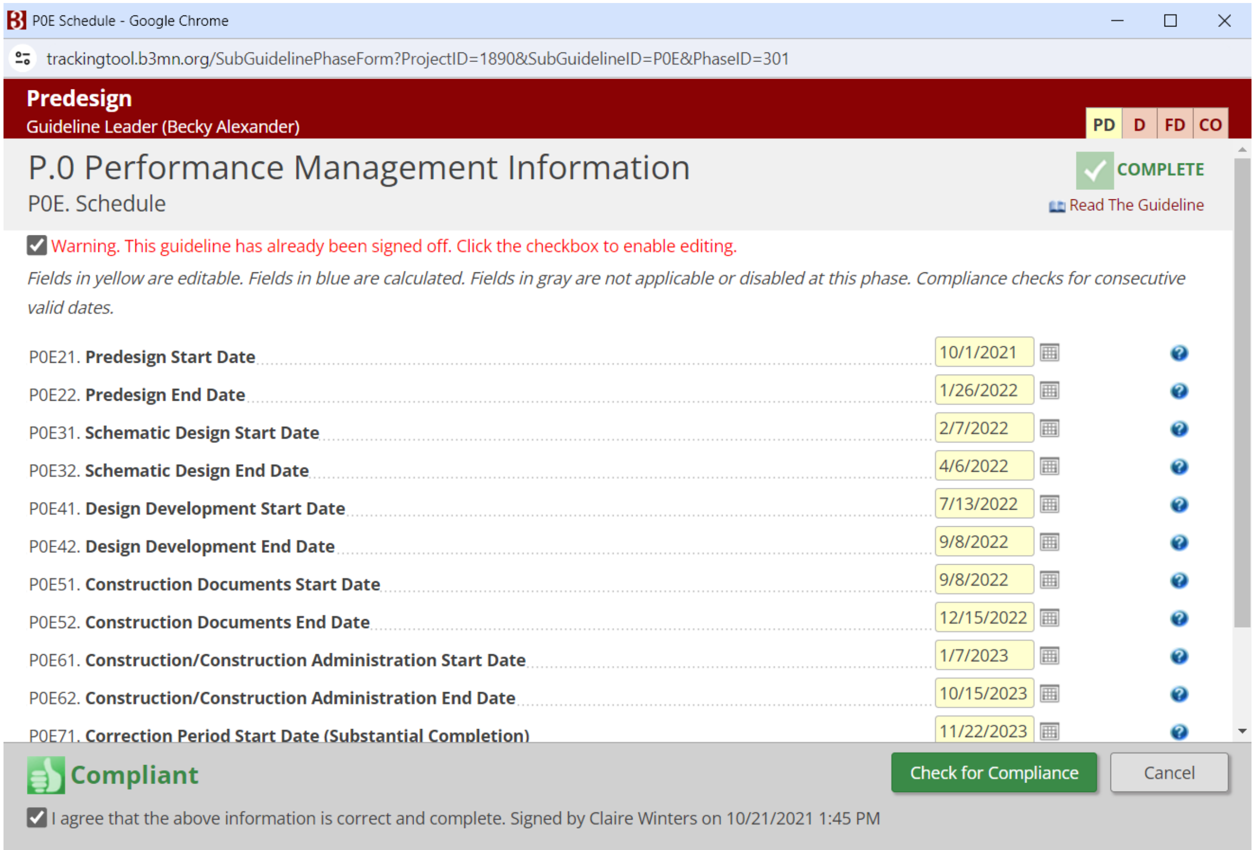
3. **Assign roles.** The Guideline Leader is also responsible for ensuring that each "role" (such as "Energy Leader") is filled. Each person can play multiple roles and not every person on the team needs to be assigned to a role. However, all roles that are assigned to an open action item in the current project phase should be filled.



Roles should be assigned within the "Roles" dialog box, accessible from the top of the project dashboard within the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool. Roles can only be assigned to people listed on the project team in the "Team" dialog box.

The Agency Contact is responsible for approving project team submissions to confirm adherence to the B3 Guidelines and cannot be edited by the Guideline Leader. If a change is needed for this role, please contact the B3 Guidelines Administrators at guidelines@b3mn.org.

4. **Define schedule.** One of the Guideline Leader's key responsibilities is to provide the design and construction schedule and update this as needed throughout the course of the project. The full schedule must be provided during project set up using best estimates for each phase, acknowledging that this is likely to shift due to the timing of funding decisions and other variables. The schedule should always be kept current to ensure accurate project tracking.



The schedule should be entered within the project dashboard, within the Performance Management Information documentation. The schedule can also be viewed from the "Schedule" dialog box, accessible from the top of the project dashboard.

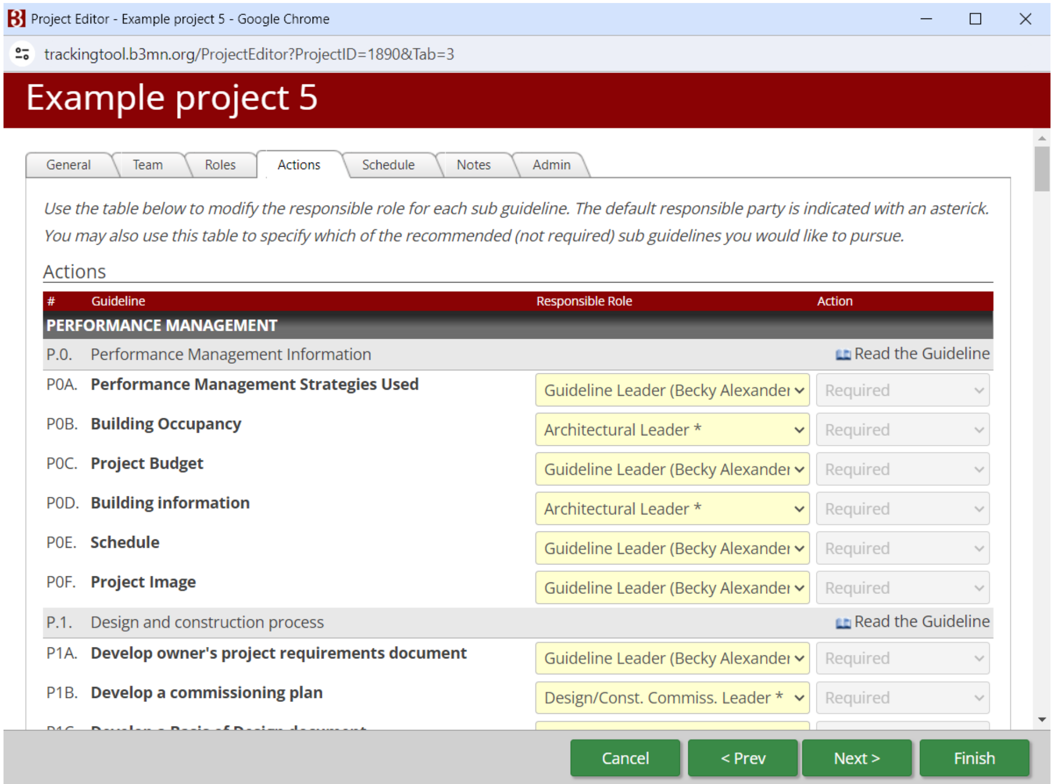
Coordinating Design and Construction Phase Compliance

The Guideline Leader coordinates project compliance with the B3 Guidelines during design and construction by helping ensure that the project team understands the guideline requirements, incorporates them into the design, and submits complete and timely documentation to the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool. This may include tasks such as:

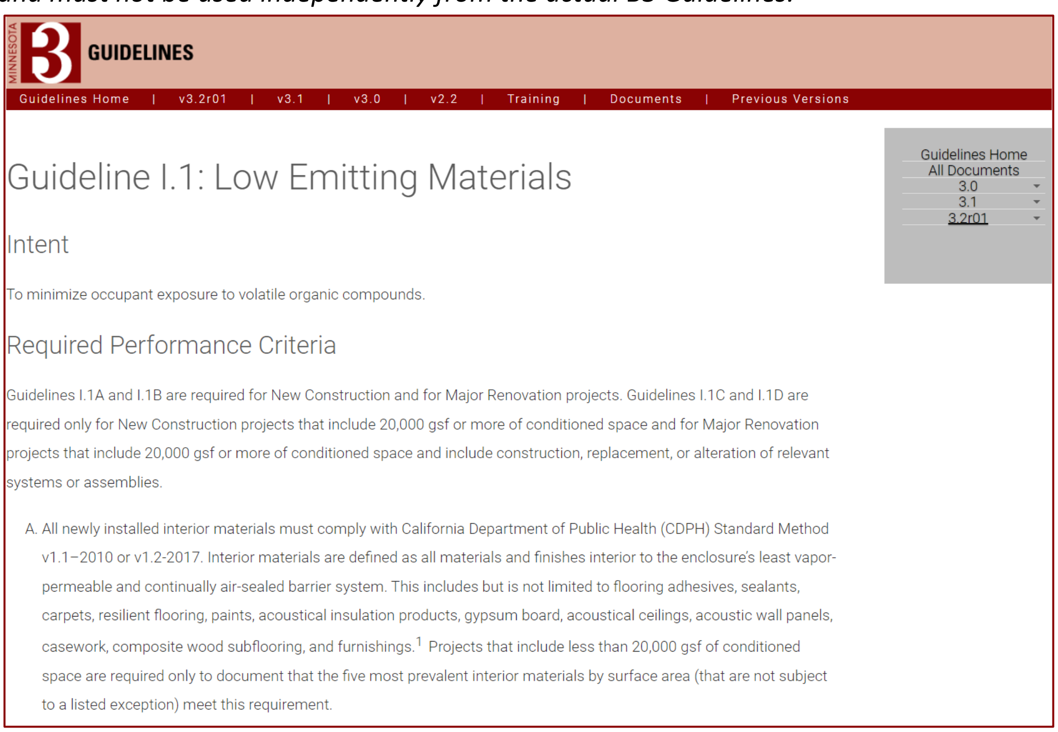
- Confirming that project owners understand the B3 Guidelines requirements and how these are likely to impact the project.
- Coordinating a B3 Guidelines kick-off meeting for the project team to review requirements, confirm team member roles and responsibilities, discuss which optional guidelines should be pursued, and identify areas that may require extra attention (such as specialized knowledge, additional time, potential programmatic conflicts).
- Coordinating a question-and-answer session with the B3 Guidelines Administrators and relevant project team members to work through any initial questions.
- Supporting an interdisciplinary, participatory team approach and coordinating across disciplines.
- Ensuring the B3 Guidelines are regularly discussed at project meetings and tracking progress on meeting the program requirements.
- Working with the project team to identify requirements that may require a full variance due to a programmatic conflict or technological limitation or a provisional variance for guidelines that do not yet have enough information to determine compliance.
- Serving as a resource for project team questions about B3 Guidelines requirements and/or sustainable design strategies. This may include:
    - Sharing knowledge directly,
    - Connecting team members to additional resources – such as the B3 Guidelines training materials and the Meeting the Guidelines section and Additional Resources listed for each guideline on the B3 Guidelines website,
    - Elevating questions to the B3 Guidelines Administrators.
- Setting and enforcing deadlines for submitting documentation to the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool. While some guidelines will benefit from preliminary calculations to ensure the design is headed in the right direction, the final calculations and sign-off should typically occur toward the end of the phase to make sure they are accurately representing the decisions made and current project status. It is typically reasonable to expect full documentation to be completed within 30 days of when the phase ends. Phases that have not been fully completed and signed off by the Guideline Leader and Agency Contact within 60 days of the project schedule are considered overdue by the B3 Program Administrators.
- Maintaining continuity as team members transition over the course of the project. In addition to ensuring new team members have the context they need, this includes updating team member roles in the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool so none are ever blank or listing an outdated contact. This could also include handing off the Guideline Leader role.
- Organizing communications and check-ins with the B3 Guidelines Administrators as needed. The need for this will vary by project but may include:
    - Communicating changes in the project status – such as switching from active to "on hold" or notifying that B3-Guideline triggering funding was not received,
    - Communicating decisions about the project scope that impact which guidelines are required,
    - Conducting an SB 2030 strategy meeting to confirm the list of strategies under evaluation if the project needs to establish an on-site energy target (for projects that do not expect to cost-effectively meet their SB 2030 Standard using only on-site measures),
    - Discussing potential variances, and
    - Working through questions that are not addressed through the online resources.

  Communication should be sent to guidelines@b3mn.org and will be directed to the appropriate person.

Each requirement in the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool is assigned to a "Responsible Role" by default. For example, the Energy Leader is assigned to submit SB 2030 documentation. However, these responsibilities can be reassigned using the "Actions" dialog box, accessible from the top of the project dashboard. The Guideline Leader can also use this dialog box to specify which of the optional guidelines are being pursued.



Comprehensive information about guideline requirements is available on the B3 Guidelines website, which also includes helpful guidance for meeting the guidelines as well as links to additional resources. This can also be accessed through the "Read the Guideline" functionality in the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool. The Tracking Tool is used to submit project documentation and must not be used independently from the actual B3 Guidelines.

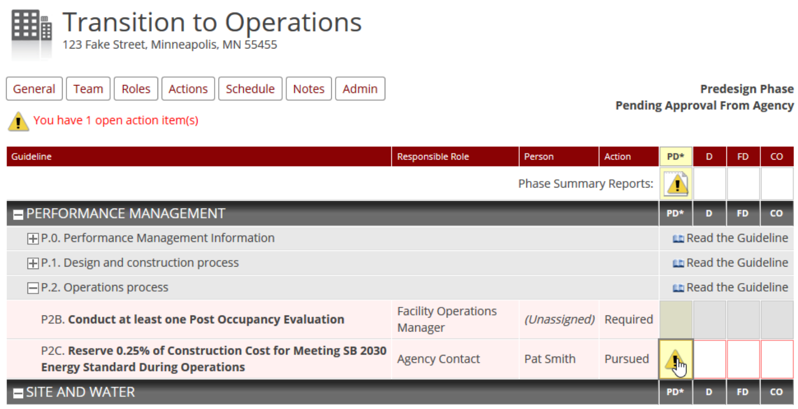


Completing Guideline Documentation

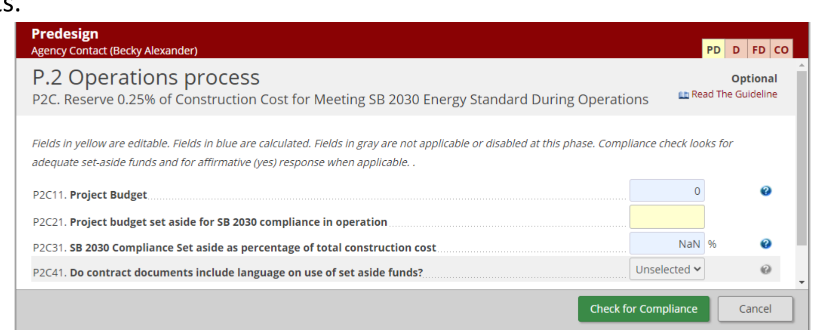
Each phase in the Tracking Tool requires project team members to complete documentation for applicable guidelines.[3]

Follow these steps to identify and complete documentation for guidelines requiring action:

1. Log in to the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool and open the project dashboard by clicking on the project name within the list of "My Projects."
2. Your current action items are identified with a yellow icon. Click on this icon to open the guideline dialog box.

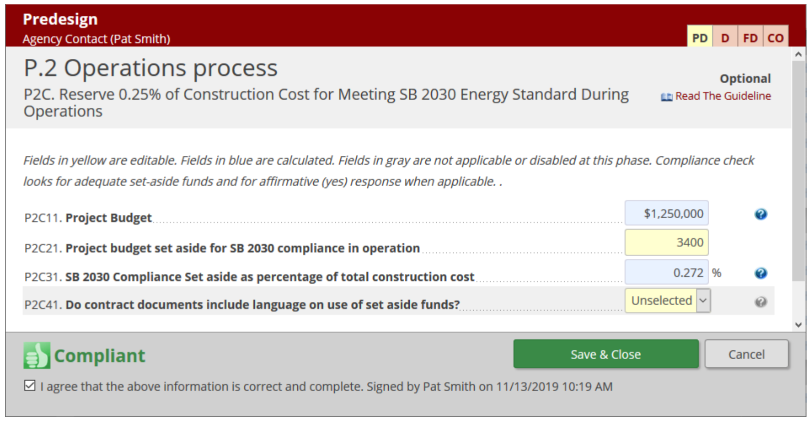


3. Complete the required fields. Fields in yellow indicate required inputs; fields in blue are calculated (some of which pull in information from other guidelines); and fields with a gray fill behind them are not applicable at this phase. Use the "Read The Guideline" link in the upper right to access the complete guideline language. Hover over the "?" icons to access additional information about compliance requirements, calculation methods, and/or acceptable file formats.

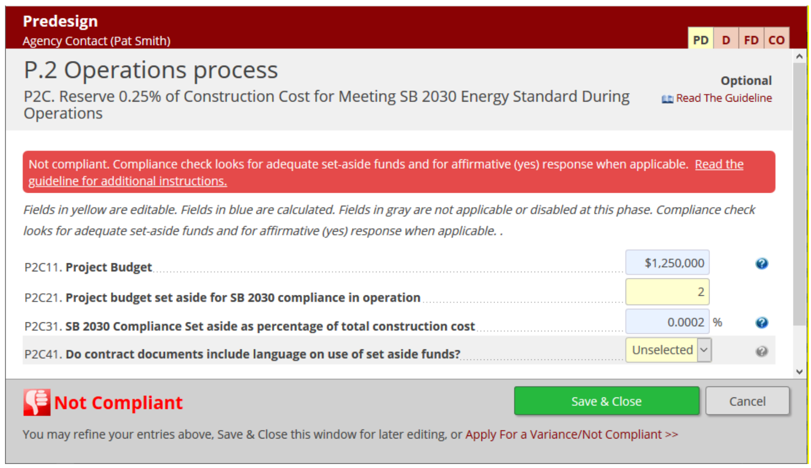


4. Click on the "Check for Compliance" button.
   If each required field is complete and passes the compliance check, you may sign off on the guideline and "Save & Close". You may also "Save & Close" without signing off by unchecking the checkbox (e.g., if you need to confirm your inputs).

[3] Applicable guidelines for a specific phase include those that both 1) are being pursued by the project (i.e., all required guidelines plus the recommended guidelines that the project team has selected to pursue), and 2) have documentation requirements for the specific phase.



If the project information is not compliant, you may “Save & Close” with the non-compliant inputs or “Apply For a Variance/Not Compliant.” Additional detail on that process is provided in a later section.



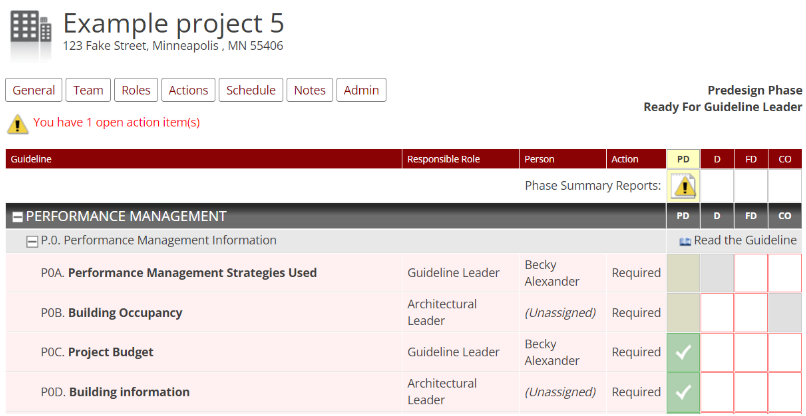
5. Once you have completed your action items for the current phase, they will appear as either a green checkbox (for those that have been signed off as compliant), a “V” (indicated a pending or approved variance application), or a non-compliant icon (indicating a pending or approved non-compliant designation). You may still edit (and re-sign-off on) these guidelines until the phase is locked for editing.
6. Repeat steps 2-5 for all your open action items for the current phase. All applicable guidelines must be signed off as compliant or have a variance or non-compliant designation either pending or approved for that phase to be submitted. If any of the guidelines assigned to you would be better answered by a different team member, those can be re-assigned to the appropriate person. It is also possible for someone else to enter data into and/or sign-off on guidelines assigned to you (and vice versa). While you will still be listed as the responsible person and will continue to receive notifications about your action items, the ‘signature’ will reflect the person who actually signed off on the guideline.
7. Feel free to work ‘ahead’ in later phases if the guidelines you are responsible for are progressing more rapidly than the entire project is moving through the Tracking Tool phases. This requires checking off a box acknowledging that “This guideline is later than the current phase.” One caution is that guideline inputs at later phases will be overwritten upon approval of previous phase summary reports <u>unless</u> they have been signed off at the later phase, so it would be prudent to only work ahead in guidelines that you can complete documentation for before completion of that phase in the Tracking Tool. Also note that variances requested in a phase later than the current phase will default to the current phase (so it is not possible to work ahead for provisional variances).

Reviewing Phase Submissions

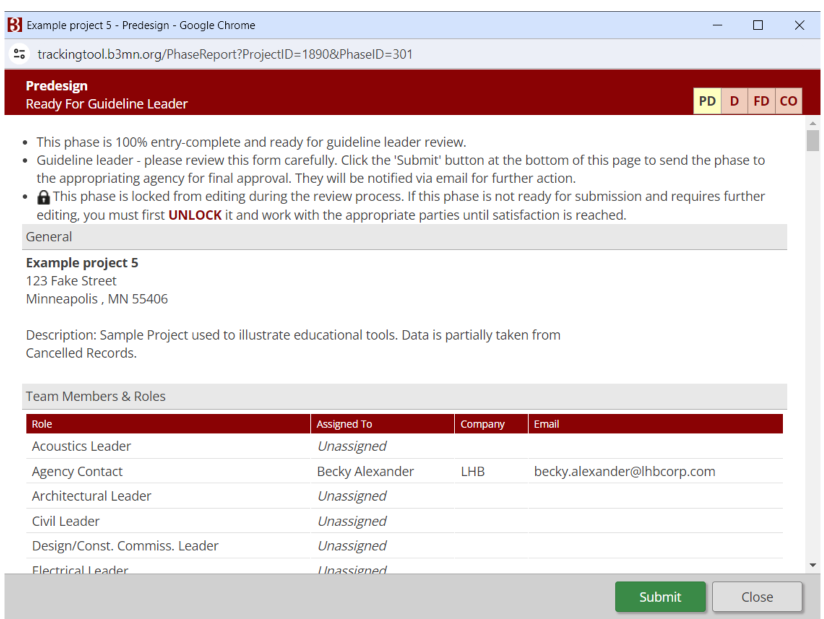
After all applicable guidelines for a phase have been completed and signed off, the phase will be locked to further edits. At this point, the Phase Summary Report will undergo a series of reviews. First, the Guideline Leader reviews the Report to confirm that it meets the minimum program requirements and is complete and accurate to the best of their knowledge. Next, the B3 Guidelines Administrators provide a preliminary review of variance requests to ensure they meet the minimum program requirements for variances. Depending on the phase, the SB 2030 Review Team may review the SB 2030 documentation for compliance. The Agency Contact will then provide the final review to confirm that the submission is complete and accurate to the best of their knowledge and to make the final determination on variance requests.

Follow these steps to complete a phase review:

1. As the Guideline Leader, you will receive an automated email from B3 Guidelines when a phase is ready for your review and submittal. Log in to the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool and open the project dashboard by clicking on the project name within the list of "My Projects." The project status should be identified as "Ready for Guideline Leader" in the upper right.



2. Open the Phase Summary Report for the current phase by clicking on the yellow action item icon. The Phase Summary Report includes all of the information submitted by the project team at that phase.



3. Review the information included in the Phase Summary Report, including linked documents, for completeness and accuracy. If you believe any information to be incomplete or inaccurate, follow up with the project team members to resolve. If changes are required, you will need to "Unlock" the phase for editing, which can be done using the link at the top of the Phase Summary Report. Any questions regarding the acceptability of submissions may be directed to the B3 Guidelines Administrators at guidelines@b3mn.org.

4. Once all issues have been resolved to your satisfaction, submit the Phase Summary Report using the "Submit" button at the bottom of the screen. This will initiate the next stage of review, by the B3 Guidelines Administrators and then the Agency Contact. If additional issues are identified during those reviews, the phase will be unlocked for editing and will need to be resubmitted by the Guideline Leader after the issues have been resolved.

Coordinating and Reviewing Variance Requests

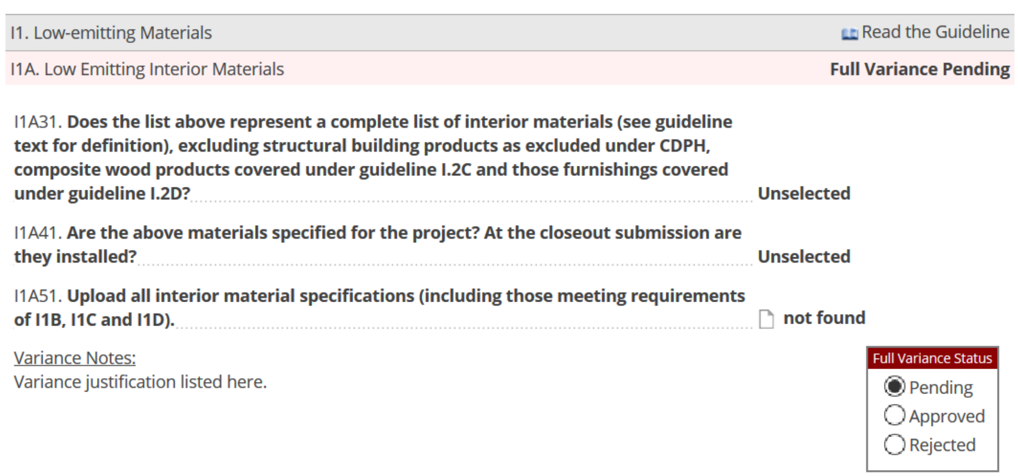
As described in the Coordinating Design and Construction Phase Compliance section, one of the Guideline Leader's responsibilities is to work with the project team to identify requirements that may require a full or provisional variance. Doing this early in the design process will provide time to verify whether a variance is justified, work through potential alternatives for meeting the intent of the guideline, resolve any questions with the B3 Guidelines Administrators, and provide detailed documentation of the request within the B3 Guidelines Tracking Tool.

Variance requests made by the project team are included in the Phase Summary Reports. The Guideline Leader is responsible for reviewing variances requested by the project team to confirm they meet the program requirements and accurately represent the project. These requests are also reviewed by the B3 Guidelines Administrators and the final determination of approval or rejection is made by the Agency Contact.

Follow these steps to review variance requests:

1. Review the Variance and Non-Compliance Guidance section to familiarize yourself with the types of variances available, the accepted reasons for variances, and the submission requirements for variance requests.

2. During your review of the Phase Summary Report (described above), navigate to any guidelines with open variance requests – as identified by the language "Variance Pending" – and review the project team's justification, which appears in the "Variance Notes."



3. If the variance request both meets the program requirements and accurately represents the project, continue the process of reviewing and submitting the Phase Summary Report. If it does not, unlock the phase for editing and follow up with the team member making the variance request to resolve. This could involve re-submitting

the variance request with additional detail, re-submitting it as a provisional variance request (with the goal of adjusting the design in later phases to meet the B3 requirement), or immediately adjusting the design to meet the B3 requirement. If you are not able to determine whether a variance request meets the program requirements, please contact the B3 Guidelines Administrators (guidelines@b3mn.org) for assistance.

If you determine that the guideline is not relevant to the project due to limited project scope (e.g., a site-related guideline for an interior-only renovation), please contact the B3 Guidelines Administrators for review, as this can typically be removed from the project's Tracking Tool file without using the variance process.

Full variances that are approved by the B3 Guidelines Administrators and the project's Agency Contact will be noted in subsequent Phase Summary Reports, but no further action will be needed. On the other hand, provisional variances only apply to the current phase, so the project team will revisit this guideline during subsequent phases.

Issues that cannot be resolved by a variance or through design modifications will need to be submitted as "Not Compliant", which happens at the last phase in which the guideline is documented. As the Guideline Leader, your approval of a Phase Summary Report with a "Not Compliant" guideline acknowledges you are aware that the project does not meet the intent of the specified B3 Guideline and is not eligible for a variance. This non-compliance designation will be displayed on the publicly-available B3 Case Studies Database.

Variance and Non-Compliance Guidance

The B3 Guidelines differ from other rating systems in that it primarily consists of a set of required measures for all projects rather than a menu of optional sustainability strategies.[4] Due to the variability of B3 projects, some may require adaptations to the performance thresholds and/or documentation schedule. The B3 Guidelines allow the use of variances to provide this accommodation under certain circumstances.

Variances should be used sparingly. For best results, project teams should review the full list of applicable guidelines during early design to identify requirements that may be difficult to achieve. This should be followed by conversations about strategies to pursue compliance and identification of any guidelines that may require a variance. Project teams should also ensure that any items that are outside the scope of the project – such as site guidelines for an interior renovation – are communicated to the B3 Guidelines Administrators; variances are not needed for guidelines that are outside the project scope.

Variances

Two types of variances may be requested:

- Provisional Variance:
  A provisional variance can be considered as a 'free pass' to the next phase in the Tracking Tool for guidelines that do not yet have enough information to determine compliance. Provisional variances only apply to the submitted phase; the guideline will need to be re-addressed in later phases by submitting compliant documentation, submitting another variance request, or designating the guideline as non-compliant. If the project's ability to meet the guideline is unknown, provisional variances should be used as long as possible before requesting a full variance or non-compliance designation, with the goal of achieving compliance in a later phase. However, a provisional variance may not be requested during the last phase in which a guideline is required; at that point, all non-compliant or undocumented guidelines must either request a full variance or be designated as non-compliant.
- Full Variance:
  Full variances are intended for cases where guidelines conflict with the program (intended use) of the project, either by direct conflict or due to the limits of available approaches. If the building program cannot accommodate a specific guideline, a variance for that guideline may be requested. For example, a prison may not be able to meet a guideline related to light levels at the site boundary because of higher lighting levels demanded by their security requirements. The other acceptable justification for a full variance is due to technological limitations, where available technologies or methodologies do not permit the project to meet the B3 Guidelines performance threshold. For example, a project in Greater Minnesota may not have sufficient construction and demolition waste recycling facilities in the region to fully meet the guideline requirements. When requesting a full variance, the design team is expected to pursue creative solutions to meet the intent of the guidelines to the extent feasible.

The following conditions are <u>not</u> considered as grounds for a full variance:

- Variances will not be considered if alternative design strategies have not been evaluated, including consideration of creative solutions that maintain the intent of the guidelines.
- Variances will not be considered based on budgetary or project schedule constraints.

[4] In addition to the required measures, the B3 Guidelines also offers recommended measures for projects that seek an elevated level of performance.

- Variances will not be considered for requirements missed by the project team that cannot be addressed at later phases (e.g. neglecting to document construction waste diversion rates or neglecting to specify appropriate low-VOC finishes).
- Meeting the B3 Guidelines may require adjustments to the standard design and construction processes used by the project team. This is not an accepted justification for a variance.
- Small or irregular sites are not an automatic reason for a variance.
- Variances should not be used for guidelines that are unrelated to the project scope. Instead, these should be communicated to the B3 Guidelines Administrators upon project set-up so they can be hidden for the project. For example, an interior renovation project with no sitework may request the site-related guidelines be removed.
- Variances are not required for 'recommended' guidelines.
- SB 2030 requirements are not eligible for variances. There are several pathways built into that program to accommodate unique project types and considerations related to cost-effectiveness.

Non-Compliance

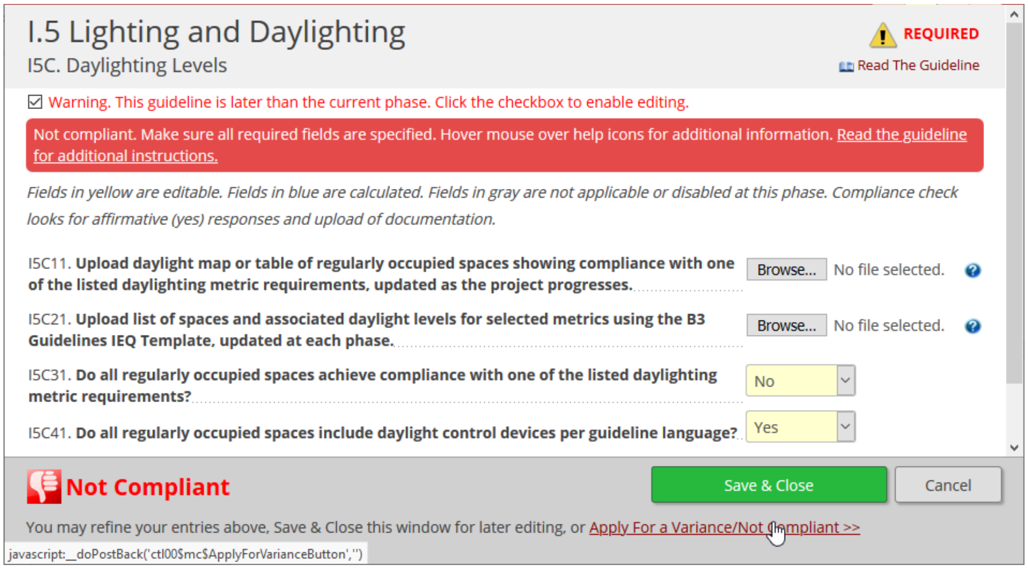
A guideline is designated as 'Not Compliant' if the project team cannot document compliance and there is not adequate justification for a variance. This designation is reserved for the last phase a guideline is required to maximize the project team's opportunity to find a compliant solution. Not Compliant designations are displayed publicly as part of the B3 Case Studies Database.

Requesting a Variance or Not Compliant Designation

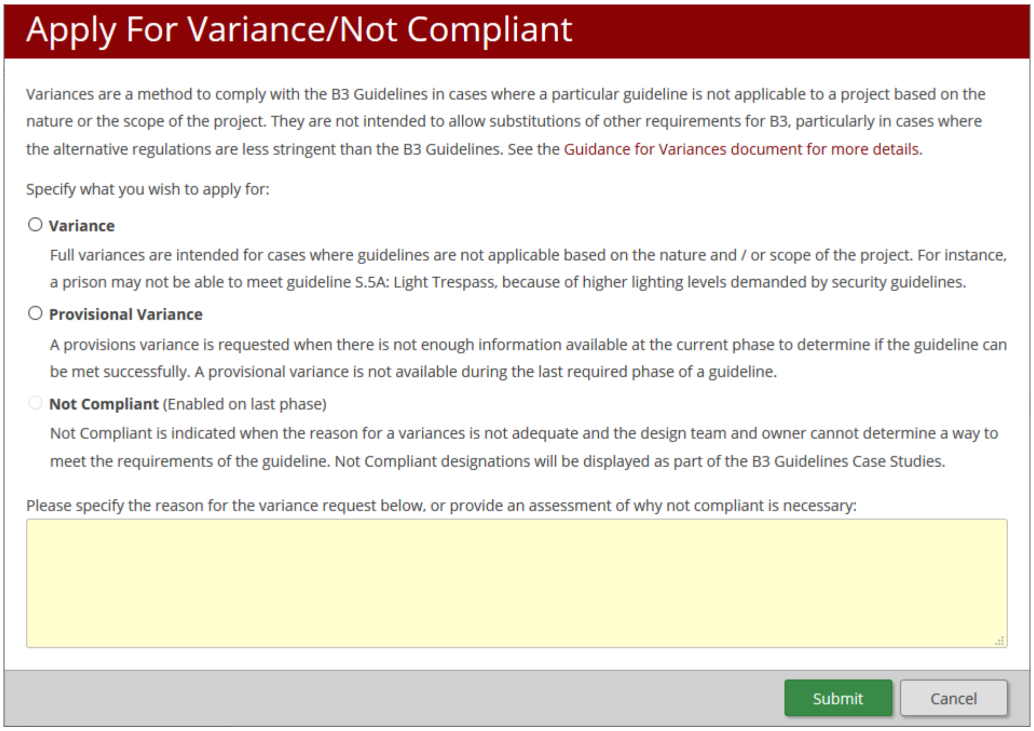
Variance requests are made within the Tracking Tool by the project team and are included in the Phase Summary Reports. Upon phase completion each variance request is first seen by the project's Guideline Leader when they approve the Phase Summary Report and is then reviewed by the B3 Guidelines Administrators to ensure it meets the program's minimum variance requirements. The final determination of approval or rejection is made by the Agency Contact, who may further specify a compromise, equivalency, or conditions for the variance. If the agency contact is not able to make a determination on a variance request, it will be referred to B3 Guidelines Administrators.

Follow these steps to request a variance:

1. Variances may be requested when incomplete or non-compliant information is entered in the fields of the Tracking Tool, and after 'Checking for Compliance'.



2. Select the type of variance being requested, identify the reason for the variance, and describe how it meets one of the permitted justifications. Additional documentation can be provided as needed via email to the B3 Guidelines Administrators and Agency Contact. For full variances, describe how the project team evaluated creative solutions to maintain the intent of the guidelines and identify a modified performance level and/or compliance method that will be pursued by the project team. For Not Compliant designations, describe why this designation is necessary.
   - Example of acceptable justification for a provisional variance:
     - *The project team has not been able to document full compliance with the daylighting requirements during schematic design. Our daylight model currently shows achievement of spatial daylight autonomy in 40% of regularly occupied space, which does not meet the minimum requirement of 50%. We will continue to work through this during design development by evaluating window size and placement and the potential for toplighting through daylight monitors and/or solar tubes.*
   - Example of acceptable justification for a full variance:
     - *The project team is requesting a full variance for the 75% construction waste diversion requirement due to technological limitations of the local market. The project is located in rural Minnesota, and conversations with local waste management services revealed that there are no facilities accepting gypsum board, carpet, wood products, or concrete within 60 miles. Upon evaluating alternatives, we found a farm operator that would accept gypsum board directly to use as a soil amendment. Our revised approach was to maximize recycling rates for the material categories where is it available (including cardboard/paper, metals, and plastics). While this was able to achieve diversion rates above 90% in these categories, the project's overall diversion rate was only 56%.*
   - Examples of unacceptable justifications:
     - *We couldn't meet the 75% waste diversion threshold because we are located in rural Minnesota.*
     - *The contractor did not track waste diversion for this project.*
     - *The project schedule could not accommodate the time required for daylight modeling.*
     - *The project budget could not accommodate the acoustic wall paneling required to meet the reverberation time requirement.*



3. Once submitted, the variance is reviewed as part of the phase submission. If a full variance or Not Compliant designation is approved, no additional action is needed. If a provisional variance is approved, the guideline will need to be revisited at the next applicable phase. Resolving rejected variance requests could involve revising and resubmitting the request with more complete documentation, having the B3 Guidelines Administrators deactivate the guideline as not applicable, submitting compliant design information, resubmitting as a provisional variance instead of a full variance, or resubmitting as Not Compliant. All open variance requests must be resolved before moving on to the next phase.

Any questions on variance requests can be directed to the B3 Guideline Administrators at guidelines@b3mn.org.

