Requirements Manual

The Land Trust Accreditation Commission verifies a land trust's compliance with Land Trust Standards and Practices (Standards) by evaluating a sample of the elements within the Standards, which are called the "indicator elements." The Requirements Manual provides land trusts greater specificity about how the indicator elements are verified through the "requirements" and enables commissioners to make decisions that are fair and consistent and that accommodate the diverse nature of land trusts. The requirements are reviewed annually, and the Commission works closely with the Alliance and the land trust community on each edition.

Did you miss our April 27 webinar about the updated 2021 Requirements Manual? Watch a recording

Download (PDF) Requirements Manual  Download (PDF) Summary of Changes

Listen to Lena Pollastro from Land Trust of Napa Valley speak to how the requirements helped her organization tighten up their practices and helped ensure their promise of protection in perpetuity. Having trouble viewing in your browser? Try the direct link.

Background on Updating the 2021 Requirements Manual

- In October 2020, the Commission surveyed land trusts about proposed new requirements; comments that were submitted informed changes to the 2021 Manual. 2021 Redline Version & Information on Past Editions
- The 2021 Requirements Manual was released on March 18, 2021. "We updated new versions of the redline and summary documents on March 23, 2021 to fix a typo found by an eagle-eyed reader."
- 2021 applicants will not see any changes in the application or the accreditation management system (AMS), but minor changes will be made for 2022 applicants based on modified requirements and user feedback.

*Please note, the Commission put out "Requirements Guidance in the Time of COVID-19" in late March of 2020. More information can be found HERE.

Frequently Asked Questions

[accordion id="a1" heading="How do I give feedback on the requirements?"]

The Commission welcomes feedback on the Requirements Manual at any time from the land trust community and other stakeholders. Comments for next year's edition are most useful by August to ensure that they are considered as part of the annual review process.
The accreditation program evaluates if a land trust is meeting Land Trust Standards and Practices by reviewing documentation related to a sampling of practices called "indicator elements." Requirements are related to each indicator element and represent the specific measures used to verify if a land trust applying for or renewing accreditation is meeting the indicator element. Here's an example of how they connect [DOWNLOAD INFOGRAPHIC].

Members of the Land Trust Alliance have access to The Learning Center for background information on and resources for each of the indicator elements that can help land trusts of all sizes and scope be successful in the accreditation process. Background narratives for each indicator element also contain additional information about the accreditation requirements.

The Commission works with the Land Trust Alliance to follow best practices in establishing the specific requirements used to make fair and consistent decisions, based on these criteria, which guide the development of each requirement.

- Consistent with the language of the specific indicator element in Land Trust Standards and Practices
- Consistent with Alliance materials, published law, other published sources, and/or other professional advice (e.g., accountants, appraisers, etc.)
- Essential to land trusts and the land trust community
- Equitable, fair, and feasible for all land trusts
- Verifiable at a reasonable cost

Requirements are reviewed annually to ensure they reflect current practice in the land trust community and remain practical for verifying compliance with accreditation requirements. The process starts with a committee looking at comments from the land trust community as well as issues identified in applications throughout the year. The Commission then decides if a new edition is needed and where public comments will be sought. If a new edition is approved, it is released in the spring.