

ENERGY STAR Certification System
for Homes and Apartments
Using an Energy Rating Index-Based Compliance Path

Effective: <DATE>

Last Revised: <DATE>

1.0 Introduction

Since its inception, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)'s ENERGY STAR New Construction Program has required third-party verification of homes and apartments that earn ENERGY STAR certification. In 2007, EPA developed and implemented a structure to formally recognize the independent organizations that provide oversight of the verification process and the raters that performed the inspections and testing necessary to document compliance with ENERGY STAR program requirements. These organizations were referred to as Verification Oversight Organizations (or VOOs).

In 2019, EPA undertook a comprehensive update of the oversight recognition structure, including changing the terminology from VOO to Home Certification Organization (HCO). These changes are intended to better reflect the entire home certification process, rather than just verification oversight. The changes also provide for better consistency in EPA's approach across its residential home labeling programs (such as WaterSense). The certification structure is now defined by two documents:

ENERGY STAR Certification System
for Homes and Apartments Using an Energy Rating Index-Based Compliance Path

This document, subsequently referred to as the *ENERGY STAR Certification System*, establishes the specific eligibility criteria, policy requirements, and certification procedures required of a Home Certification Organization (HCO).

ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol
for Homes and Apartments Using an Energy Rating Index-Based Compliance Path

This companion document, subsequently referred to as the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol*, identifies the Standards and ENERGY STAR Residential New Construction national and regional Program Requirements required to be met for a home or apartment to earn the ENERGY STAR certification when an ERI-based path is used.

A Home Certification Organization (HCO), previously referred to as a Verification Oversight Organization (VOO), is defined as an independent organization that is recognized by EPA to implement an ENERGY STAR certification program that complies with the *ENERGY STAR Certification System*. These organizations are responsible for decisions related to the granting and withdrawal of ENERGY STAR certifications for homes and apartments, and provide for the credentialing, oversight, and quality assurance of individuals that verify homes and apartments to earn ENERGY STAR certification, hereafter referred to as 'raters.'

An organization seeking to become an HCO must submit an 'Application for Recognition' to EPA that demonstrates that it meets the program's eligibility criteria and has the capability, competencies, and proper controls to implement an ENERGY STAR certification program in accordance with the *ENERGY STAR Certification System* and the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol*.

EPA's recognition of an HCO relates solely and specifically to the ENERGY STAR Residential New Construction programs for site-built single-family homes and multifamily buildings that are certified using an Energy Rating Index (ERI) approach, and does not qualify an organization to implement or participate in other aspects of the ENERGY STAR program (e.g., ENERGY STAR certification of multifamily buildings using an ASHRAE-based approach or ENERGY STAR certified manufactured homes), nor federal tax credit verification.

Activities undertaken by HCOs are not intended as services provided to the federal government. HCOs are expected to be market-based and may not submit claims for compensation to EPA or any other federal agency for their activities related to fulfilling the required roles and responsibilities of recognized HCOs. Recognized HCOs may implement participation or certification fee structures, or seek funding from other sources, to support their oversight programs and activities.

2.0 Effective Date

The *ENERGY STAR Certification System* shall be effective on <Date>. Homes and apartments are required to be certified and labeled in accordance with these requirements beginning on the effective date <Date>.

3.0 HCO Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for recognition by EPA as an HCO, an organization is required to demonstrate the following:

3.1. Legal Responsibility

The organization is required to be a legal entity, or defined part of a legal entity, that can be held responsible for all activities related to its ENERGY STAR certification program.

3.2. Independent Governance

The organization is required to be independent from builders and developers whose homes and apartments would be certified through its ENERGY STAR certification program. In addition, the

organization is required to maintain an independent governance mechanism to ensure the HCO's policies and activities related to its ENERGY STAR certification program comply with the intent of the *ENERGY STAR Certification System* and the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol* and support the integrity of the ENERGY STAR program. Examples of such mechanisms include, but are not limited to:

- A Board of Directors with a diverse representation of interests;
- An Independent Governance Committee with a diverse representation of interests that supervises the organization's operation of its ENERGY STAR certification program; and/or
- Accreditation to a governing standard, such as ISO/IEC 17065, "*Conformity Assessment: Requirements for bodies certifying products, processes, and services.*"

3.3. National Scope of Operations

The organization is required to have the ability to implement its ENERGY STAR certification program on a national level¹. This must be demonstrated, at a minimum, through the following:

- Having access to a network of raters capable of providing certifications across the U.S.; and
- Maintaining a quality assurance and oversight mechanism for raters that may be distributed across the U.S.

3.4. Staffing and Competency

The organization is required to employ, or have access to, sufficient personnel with the competencies necessary to meet all EPA requirements related to the *ENERGY STAR Certification System* and the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol*. This may include on-staff personnel, as well as designees² working under a contract or other formal agreement that places their activities under the legal responsibility of the HCO.

¹ EPA may consider recognizing HCOs that do not have national scope of operations for specific states or regions where unique geographic situations, code structures, or state/local law warrant different oversight models.

² See Section 7.0 for additional information about the use of designees.

4.0 HCO Policies

An HCO is required to maintain documented formal policies related to:

4.1. Business Code of Ethics

The HCO is required to maintain a business code of ethics for itself, its raters, and its designees (if used).

4.2. Impartiality and Objectivity

The HCO is required to maintain conflict of interest (COI) policies to identify and mitigate risks to impartiality of the HCO, its raters, and its designees. These policies must address COI that pertains to both the individuals and organizations involved in verification and certification. The COI policies are required to include disclosure of existing or potential conflicts of interest and steps to resolve the conflicts. These COI policies are required to be reviewed on an ongoing basis and disclosures updated, as necessary. The HCO is required to disclose any identified potential or existing conflicts of interest and mitigation steps to EPA on an annual basis.³

In addition, the HCO's organizational chart and management system is required to reflect impartiality of decision making related to its ENERGY STAR program and show a clear separation of roles between certification decisions from other business activities that may present a conflict of interest, if any.

4.3. Non-Discrimination

The HCO's policies, and the administration of its policies, are required to be non-discriminatory and may not unduly impede or inhibit access to its ENERGY STAR certification program, nor the *ENERGY STAR Certification System* or the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol*. Further, the organization is required to make its ENERGY STAR certification program accessible to all eligible ENERGY STAR builder and developer partners, and access may not be conditional upon the size of the ENERGY STAR builder or developer partner, nor membership in any association or group.

³ See Section 6.7 for additional information about HCO reporting requirements.

4.4. Publicly Available Information

The HCO is required to provide publicly available information online and in hard-copy format covering its ENERGY STAR certification program and the HCO's policies and procedures for granting and withdrawing certification.

5.0 Certification and Oversight Procedures

An HCO is required to take all necessary steps to evaluate conformance with the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol*, including the following measures.

5.1. Training, Credentialing and Listing of Raters

- Develop or recognize training, examination and continuing education programs for raters that provide the knowledge and skills necessary to perform ERI ratings, verify ENERGY STAR-specific program requirements, and comply with the HCO's policies related to its ENERGY STAR certification program.
- Credential individuals that have satisfied the training requirements specified above and ensure that only credentialed raters perform verification of homes and apartments to earn the ENERGY STAR label.
- Maintain a publicly available online list of credentialed raters for its ENERGY STAR certification program.

5.2. Approved Software Rating Tools

- Require that only software rating tools that are tested and approved by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) may be used when implementing its ENERGY STAR certification program⁴.
- Ensure that current versions of software rating tools are used for ENERGY STAR certifications. A transition period no longer than six (6) months is allowed for new software version releases, as determined by a home or apartment's permit date.

⁴ Software Rating Tools that have been tested and approved in accordance with the most current version of RESNET Publication 002 may also be used.

5.3. Quality Control Protocols

Implement comprehensive quality control systems and procedures that ensure that ENERGY STAR certifications are supported by on-site observations and tests of the certified homes and apartments including, at a minimum⁵:

- Collection of energy simulation files for every certified home;
- Quality assurance file reviews at a rate of at least ten (10) percent;
- Quality assurance field inspections at a rate of at least one (1) percent;
- A set of repeatable standards for assessing whether discrepancies found during quality assurance file reviews and field inspections are within allowable thresholds; and
- In the event that discrepancies are discovered outside allowable thresholds, provisions for addressing the specific discrepancies of the certification(s) in question and, more generally, for identifying and addressing the root cause(s) to ensure the discrepancies do not reoccur.

5.4. Sampling Protocol

An HCO may choose to offer a sampling protocol for use in its ENERGY STAR certification program.

When offered, the sampling protocol is required to, at a minimum:

- Set eligibility requirements for a builder or developer to participate in sampling;
- Require that homes and apartments participating in sampling be within the same subdivision or planned community;
- Require successful inspection of at least the first seven (7) consecutive instances of a sampled measure before applying sampling to that measure;
- Ensure that verification occurs on a representative sample of homes and apartments at a rate of no less than one-in-seven (or 15 percent);
- Address inspection failures identified during sampling, including additional inspections of non-inspected homes and apartments; and
- Set conditions for revoking eligibility to participate in sampling.

⁵ Quality Assurance Protocols that employ innovative quality control schemes, such as those relying on remote video QA or automated file flagging, may be submitted to EPA for consideration that propose alternative field and field review frequencies.

5.5. Issuing the ENERGY STAR Label and Certificate

The HCO is required to maintain the final authority over all ENERGY STAR certifications and responsibility for determining that certified homes and apartments conform with and have been verified in accordance with the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol*. The HCO is required to provide the ENERGY STAR builder or developer partner with the ENERGY STAR label and certificate for each certified home or apartment.

5.6. Ethics Compliance and Complaint Resolution

- Maintain an ethics complaint process covering the HCO, its raters, and designees.
- Maintain procedures for disciplining raters, including provisions for appeal; and inform EPA when disciplinary action is taken⁶.
- Maintain a resolution process for homeowner inquiries.
 - Provide a web page that allows homeowners to submit inquiries or concerns regarding the ENERGY STAR certification of their home or apartment.
 - For eligible inquiries, perform Certification Reviews for the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol* as defined by EPA and rescind the ENERGY STAR label in cases where the HCO determines a home fails the Certification Review.

5.7. Recordkeeping, Reporting, and Disclosure

- Require retention of certification documentation, including verification records, related to the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol* for a minimum of three (3) years.
- Maintain a public or private database of ENERGY STAR certified homes and apartments, including physical address, certification date, ERI score, ENERGY STAR ERI Target, builder or developer partner name, rater name and company, software version number, and ENERGY STAR version number.
- Provide a public interface that, at a minimum, accepts queries by physical address and reports the home or apartment's current ENERGY STAR certification status and date.
- Provide EPA with routine summary reports of the number of homes and apartments certified through the HCO's ENERGY STAR certification program, by geographic location, builder or developer partner name, and energy rating company name (if used).

⁶ EPA reserves the right to terminate the ENERGY STAR Partnership Agreement of raters that violate the terms of their partnership or the Federal ENERGY STAR trademark.

- Provide EPA with aggregate/summary information about the energy-efficiency features used in homes and apartments certified through the HCO's ENERGY STAR certification program, upon request by EPA.
- Provide EPA with annual reports regarding the HCO's administration of its ENERGY STAR certification program, including quality assurance, dispute resolution activities, any identified conflict of interest and conflict of interest mitigation (or more frequently, upon request by EPA).

5.8. Coordination with EPA

- Maintain open lines of communication with EPA to address questions and concerns promptly.
- Participate in meetings, as EPA deems necessary.
- Work collaboratively with EPA to facilitate the comprehensive and coordinated investigation and response to:
 - Findings resulting from routine quality assurance activities;
 - Certification discrepancies, including those referred to the HCO by EPA; and
 - Certification Review Requests and other inquiries from homeowners.

6.0 Use of Designees

An HCO is permitted to delegate many of the responsibilities related to the administration of its ENERGY STAR certification program to one or more external parties, referred to as designees. However, an HCO may not delegate the following responsibilities:

- Establishing policies governing ENERGY STAR certification activities, including business code of ethics and conflict of interest policies as outlined in Section 4.0.
- Credentialing raters to work with the HCO's ENERGY STAR certification program and maintaining a publicly available online list of credentialed raters as outlined in Section 5.1.
- Exercising final authority over certification decisions and issuance of the ENERGY STAR label as outlined in Section 5.5.
- Exercising final authority in resolving ethics complaints, presiding over appeals, and disciplining raters as outlined in Section 5.6.
- Maintaining a database of homes and apartments that are certified as ENERGY STAR as outlined in Section 5.7.
- Coordinating with EPA as outlined in Section 5.8.

7.0 EPA Audits

EPA reserves the right to conduct periodic audits of any and all HCO activities related to the implementation of the *ENERGY STAR Certification System* and the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol* as needed to ensure the value and integrity of the ENERGY STAR program. These audits may include, but are not limited to:

- Review of HCO policies, procedures, documentation, and certification records.
- Phone interviews with HCO personnel and/or designees.
- In-person meetings with HCO personnel and/or designees at the HCO, designee, or EPA offices, at EPA's discretion.
- Site visits (including re-testing, at EPA's discretion) at homes and apartments that have been certified by the HCO through the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol*.

HCOs are expected to fully cooperate with EPA audits, provide requested documentation, and make personnel available for interviews and meetings with EPA staff.

If EPA's audit identifies deficiencies, EPA will provide the HCO with written notification and allow 30 days to resolve identified issues and provide EPA with a written response to EPA's findings. If the organization fails to submit a satisfactory response to EPA that addresses the deficiencies identified, EPA reserves the right to suspend or terminate the organization's recognition.

8.0 Amendments, Modifications, and Revisions

The following sections describe procedures to be followed in the event of amendments, modifications, and/or revisions initiated either by the HCO or EPA.

8.1. HCO-Initiated Changes

The HCO is required to notify EPA in writing about any proposed organizational changes that materially affect its compliance with the requirements outlined in the *ENERGY STAR Certification System*. Notification must be made at least 60 days prior to the implementation of such changes and with sufficient time to allow for EPA to evaluate the changes and determine if the HCO will continue to meet all program requirements.

8.2. EPA-Initiated Program Changes

EPA reserves the right amend, revise, or provide technical clarification regarding the *ENERGY STAR Certification System* or the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol* as needed to ensure the value and

integrity of the ENERGY STAR program. Organizations previously recognized by EPA will be given at least 180 days to implement any policies or procedures needed to comply with new EPA requirements.

9.0 Suspension/Termination

EPA reserves the right to suspend or terminate its recognition of an HCO that no longer meets the eligibility, policy, certification and oversight procedure requirements of the *ENERGY STAR Certification System* and/or has demonstrated a pattern of actions that may negatively impact consumer and industry confidence in, or the integrity of, EPA's ENERGY STAR program. In such cases, EPA will provide the HCO with written notification and allow 30 days to resolve identified issues and provide EPA with a written response summarizing the changes made. If the organization fails to submit a satisfactory response to EPA that addresses the deficiencies identified, EPA will suspend or terminate the organization's recognition.

Should EPA suspend or terminate an HCO, or if an HCO determines that it will no longer implement an *ENERGY STAR Certification System*, the organization is required to cooperate with EPA to ensure an orderly closure of its activities and timely transfer of relevant documentation related to the certification of homes and apartments to the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol*.

Application for EPA Recognition as a Home Certification Organization

Completed applications should be submitted to EPA at the physical address below, or via email at energystarhomes@energystar.gov.

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
ENERGY STAR New Construction Program (MC 6202A)
1200 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20460

EPA will confirm receipt of applications received within five business days and will use its best effort to make determinations on applications received within 90 business days. Note that all applicants must also participate in a formal interview process with EPA staff, to be conducted either at EPA's offices or via conference call. EPA also strongly encourages organizations considering pursuing recognition to contact ENERGY STAR to discuss their interest before applying.

PART ONE: General Applicant Information

Organization Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Contact: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Primary Contact Telephone #: _____

Organization Web Site Address: _____

PART TWO: Required Documentation

Attach to this application any policies and procedures, manuals, guidance documents, attestations, detailed narrative(s), and any other documents necessary to demonstrate that your organization meets the eligibility requirements and has the capability, competencies, and proper controls to implement an ENERGY STAR certification program in accordance with the *ENERGY STAR Certification System for Homes and Apartments Using an Energy Rating Index-Based Compliance Path* and the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol for Homes and Apartments Using an Energy Rating Index-Based Compliance Path*. Complete the table below by filling in the “Applicant’s Reference Document(s)” column to indicate the submitted documentation that fulfills the ENERGY STAR requirement noted at left. To facilitate application review, please record the exact file name that is used in the attachment and highlight the applicable text within the document or note in the table its exact location.

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ENERGY STAR Requirements for Home Certification Organization (HCO)	Applicant's Reference Document(s)
3.0 HCO Eligibility Requirements	
3.1 Legal Responsibility	
Provide documentation that the organization is a legal entity, or a defined part of a legal entity.	
3.2 Independent Governance	
<p>Provide detailed narrative of how the organization maintains independence from builders and developers whose homes and apartments would be certified, and documentation of mechanisms used to ensure independent governance.</p> <p>Examples may include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board of Directors indicating represented interests; • Description of Independent Governance Committee and its oversight of the organization's operation; or • Accreditation to a governing standard such as ISO/IEC 17065. 	
3.3 National Scope of Operations	
<p>Provide a detailed narrative to establish the organization's ability to implement its ENERGY STAR program on a national level. This must be demonstrated, at a minimum, through the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having access to a network of raters capable of providing certifications across the U.S.; and 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining a quality assurance and oversight mechanism for raters that may be distributed across the U.S. 	
<p>3.4 Staffing and Competency</p>	
<p>Provide description of sufficient available personnel and/or designees with the necessary competencies to meet all EPA requirements related to the <i>ENERGY STAR Certification System</i> and the <i>ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol</i>.</p>	
<p>4.0 HCO Policies</p>	
<p>4.1 Business Code of Ethics</p>	
<p>Provide HCO’s business code of ethics for the organization, its raters, and its designees.</p>	
<p>4.2 Impartiality and Objectivity</p>	
<p>Provide conflict of interest (COI) policies used to maintain impartiality of the HCO, its raters and its designees (if used). The COI policy must address COI that pertains to the individuals and organizations involved in verification and certification, include disclosure of existing or potential conflicts of interest and steps to resolve the conflict, and outline the frequency of review of the COI policies and when disclosures are updated.</p> <p>Provide the organizational chart and management system to demonstrate impartiality in the decision making and the separation of roles between certification decisions and any business activities that may present a conflict of interest, if any.</p>	

4.3 Non-Discrimination	
<p>Provide policies and procedures and/or a detailed narrative indicating how the policies and administration of policies are non-discriminatory, and do not unduly impede or inhibit access to the organization’s ENERGY STAR certification program, nor the <i>ENERGY STAR Certification System</i> or <i>ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol</i>.</p> <p>The policies and procedures and/or detailed narrative must also include how the organization makes its ENERGY STAR certification program accessible to all eligible ENERGY STAR builder or developer partners, and include evidence that access is not conditional on the size of the ENERGY STAR builder or developer partner, nor membership in any association or group.</p>	
4.4 Publicly Available Information	
<p>Provide the publicly available information covering the organization’s ENERGY STAR certification program and policies and procedures for granting and withdrawing certification and where it can be found online.</p>	
5.0 Certification and Oversight Procedures	
5.1 Training, Credentialing and Listing of Raters	
<p>Provide policies and procedures or description for the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of training, examination, and continuing education programs for raters or recognition of existing training, 	

<p>examination and continuing education programs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credentialing process for individuals and process for ensuring that only credentialed individuals perform verification of homes and apartments • Publicly available online list of credentialed raters 	
<p>5.2 Approved Software Rating Tools</p>	
<p>Provide attestation that only software rating tools that are tested and approved by DOE are used when implementing the ENERGY STAR certification program⁷.</p> <p>Provide description of implementation process when new software is released, specifically outlining transition periods that are no longer than six (6) months, as determined by a home or apartment's permit date.</p>	
<p>5.3 Quality Control Protocols</p>	
<p>Provide policies and procedures and/or documentation describing the quality control systems and procedures in place to include, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collection of energy simulation files for every certified home; • Quality assurance file reviews at a rate of at least ten (10) percent; 	

⁷ Software Rating Tools that have been tested and approved in accordance with the most current version of RESNET Publication 002 may also be used.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality assurance field inspections at a rate of at least one (1) percent; • A set of repeatable standards for assessing whether discrepancies found during quality assurance file reviews and field inspections are within allowable thresholds; and • In the event discrepancies are discovered outside allowable thresholds, provisions for addressing the specific discrepancies of the certification(s) in question and, more generally, for identifying and addressing the root cause(s) to ensure the discrepancies do not reoccur. 	
<p>5.4 Sampling Protocol</p>	
<p>If a sampling protocol is proposed, provide description of the sampling protocol, to include, at a minimum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eligibility requirements for a builder or developer to participate in sampling; • Stated requirement that homes and apartments participating in sampling be within the same subdivision or planned community; • Stated policy that requires successful inspection of at least the first seven (7) consecutive instances of a sampled measure before applying sampling to that measure; 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence that verification occurs on a representative sample of homes and apartments at a rate of no less than one-in-seven (or 15 percent); • Procedure for addressing inspection failures identified during sampling, including additional inspections of non-inspected homes and apartments; and • Conditions for revoking eligibility to participate in sampling. 	
<p>5.5 Issuing the ENERGY STAR Label and Certification</p>	
<p>Provide attestation that the HCO maintains final authority over all ENERGY STAR certifications and takes responsibility for determining that certified homes and apartments conform with and have been verified in accordance with the <i>ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol</i> and will provide the ENERGY STAR building or developer partner with the ENERGY STAR label and certificate for each certified home or apartment.</p>	
<p>5.6 Ethics Compliance and Complaint Resolution</p>	
<p>Provide policies and procedures and/or a detailed narrative documenting the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics complaint process for HCOs, raters, and designees • Procedures for disciplining raters, including provisions for appeal; and attestation that HCO will inform EPA when disciplinary action is taken; and, 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolution process for homeowner inquiries, including the web page that allows homeowners to submit inquiries or concerns regarding the ENERGY STAR certification of their home or apartment. 	
5.7 Recordkeeping, Reporting, and Disclosure	
<p>Provide policies and procedures and/or detailed narrative to demonstrate the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certification documentation retention policy, indicating documentation is maintained a minimum of three (3) years Public or private database that includes the physical address, certification date, ERI score, ENERGY STAR ERI Target, builder or developer partner name, rater name and company, software version number, and ENERGY STAR version number Public interface that, at a minimum, accepts queries by physical address and reports the home or apartment’s current ENERGY STAR status and date. Attestation that the HCO will provide EPA with routine summary reports of the number of homes and apartments certified through the HCO’s ENERGY STAR certification program Attestation that the HCO will provide EPA with aggregate/summary information about the energy-efficiency features used in homes and apartments certified through the HCO’s ENERGY STAR 	

<p>certification program, upon request by EPA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attestation that the HCO will provide EPA with annual reports regarding the HCO’s administration of its ENERGY STAR certification program, including quality assurance, dispute resolution activities, any identified conflict of interest and conflict of interest mitigation (or more frequently, upon request by EPA). 	
<p>5.8 Coordination with EPA</p>	
<p>Provide attestation that the HCO will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain open lines of communication with EPA to address questions and concerns promptly. • Participate in meetings, as EPA deems necessary. • Work collaboratively with EPA to facilitate the comprehensive and coordinated investigation and response to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Findings resulting from routine quality assurance activities; ○ Certification discrepancies, including those referred to the HCO by EPA; and ○ Certification Review Requests and other inquiries from homeowners. 	
<p>6.0 Use of Designees</p>	
<p><i>No documentation required for this section.</i></p>	

PART THREE: Declaration

As an officer of _____, I, the undersigned, represent here that I have the authority to serve as an authorized signatory and submit this Application for Recognition as a Home Certification Organization to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. I understand that intentionally submitting false information to the U.S. government is a criminal violation of the False Statements Act, Title 18 U.S.C. section 1001.

The organization, _____, agrees to adhere to the provisions for Home Certification Organizations (HCOs) outlined in the *ENERGY STAR Certification System for Homes and Apartments Using an Energy Rating Index-Based Compliance Path*, including granting EPA the right, at its discretion, to conduct periodic audits of any and all HCO activities related its ENERGY STAR certification program. _____, also agrees to notify EPA in writing about any proposed organizational changes that materially affect its compliance with the requirements outlined in the *ENERGY STAR Certification System* at least 60 days prior to the implementation.

_____, understands that EPA may amend, revise, or provide technical clarification regarding the *ENERGY STAR Certification System* or the *ENERGY STAR Certification Protocol* and that organizations that have been previously recognized by EPA will be given at least 180 days to implement any new policies or procedures needed to comply with EPA requirements.

In addition, _____, understands that if, after recognition, EPA determines that an HCO no longer meets the eligibility, policy, certification and oversight procedure requirements of the *ENERGY STAR Certification System* and/or has demonstrated a pattern of actions that may negatively impact consumer and industry confidence in, or the integrity of, EPA's ENERGY STAR program, EPA will provide the HCO with written notification and allow 30 days to resolve identified issues and provide EPA with a written response summarizing the changes made. If the organization fails to submit a satisfactory response to EPA that addresses the deficiencies identified, EPA will suspend or rescind the organization's recognition.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Date: _____

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