

1.2 Background

The Regents of the University of California (The Regents) adopted the state CEQA Guidelines and all future state guideline changes on March 17, 1989 (UC CEQA Handbook Appendix A). Thus, the State guidelines are UC's guidelines and every time the State updates the CEQA guidelines, those automatically become UC's guidelines.

The Office of the President has prepared this UC CEQA Handbook, and its predecessor (previously entitled "UC CEQA Handbook: Procedural Handbook and Model Approach for Implementing CEQA"), as a companion document to provide information to campuses on how UC implements CEQA. The UC CEQA Handbook was first published in May 1991, with updates in June 1992 and February 1994. This version of the UC CEQA Handbook supercedes the 1994 version, and reflects the CEQA Guideline changes adopted by the state, which took effect January 1999. This version further updates University practices and converts the document to a web-based format providing users with Internet links to supplementary information. This document will continue to be revised as the CEQA statutes and guidelines change and as UC procedures change.

Purpose

The UC CEQA Handbook supplements the CEQA Guidelines by elaborating on compliance issues from the University's perspective. The UC CEQA Handbook, therefore, functions as a companion volume to CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines; it provides a general framework for implementing CEQA successfully throughout the UC system. Although the Handbook's provisions are not mandatory, the Office of the President should be consulted prior to making any significant deviation from the framework outlined there. It will be updated as state law, University policy and campus needs evolve.

The scope of University activities that may be subject to CEQA is broad. The UC CEQA Handbook focuses on those University projects that most clearly have a significant effect on the physical environment: Long Range Development Plans (LRDPs) and facility construction projects. Other relatively common University activities that are subject to CEQA include the purchase or lease of off-campus properties. The UC Handbook discusses compliance strategies for these and other University projects subject to CEQA.

The Regents' action in 1989 (Amended UC Procedures for Implementation of CEQA) established two requirements that differed from state guidelines. First, UC requires a public hearing during the draft EIR public review period. Second, UC described the contents of the administrative record (UC CEQA Handbook Section 3.5). The state has subsequently defined the contents of an administrative record in CEQA Statute Section 21167.6(e) <http://ceres.ca.gov/ceqa/stat/chap6.html> which supercedes the Regents' previous action.