

FFIEC Information Technology Examination Handbook (IT Handbook InfoBase)



The FFIEC IT Examination Handbook is the set of booklets U.S. examiners use to assess technology risk management at financial institutions and their service

What it is

The FFIEC Information Technology Examination Handbook (IT Handbook) is the set of booklets that federal and state examiners use to evaluate technology risk management at financial institutions and their technology service providers. Published online as the IT Handbook InfoBase, it currently comprises ten booklets: Audit; Business Continuity Management; Development, Acquisition, and Maintenance; Information Security; Management; Architecture, Infrastructure, and Operations; Outsourcing Technology Services; Retail Payment Systems; Supervision of Technology Service Providers; and Wholesale Payment Systems. Each booklet pairs guidance with examination procedures and a downloadable work program.

The handbook is published by the Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC), the interagency body established by Congress in 1979 that comprises the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, the National Credit Union Administration, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency, and the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, with state regulators represented through the State Liaison Committee. The FFIEC prescribes uniform principles and standards for the federal examination of financial institutions; the booklets are supervisory guidance rather than regulation, but examiners apply them to banks, savings associations, credit unions, and their service providers, and findings carry supervisory consequences.

At a glance

PUBLISHER Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC)	TYPE Guidance	VERSION InfoBase; ten current booklets, revised individually (latest InfoBase update February 27, 2026)
EFFECTIVE February 27, 2026 (latest InfoBase update; booklets dated individually)	DOMAIN Financial Services Regulation	FAMILY Other
REGION United States	INDUSTRY Financial Services	ADOPTION MODEL Regulatory Compliance
IMPLEMENTATION COMPLEXITY High		

Source: <https://ithandbook.ffiec.gov/>

Why it matters

- Examination readiness** Institutions that map controls and evidence to the booklets' examination procedures answer examiner requests quickly and completely.

- Consistent supervisory expectations** The same booklets are used by all federal banking agencies and many state regulators as one program satisfies multiple examiners.

How SmartSuite supports FFIEC IT Handbook

Booklet Requirements Library

Hold each booklet's sections and examination procedures as requirements linked to the policies and controls that satisfy them.

Control Owners and Review Cadence

Assign owners and schedule risk assessments, access reviews, testing, and policy approvals on the cycle examiners expect.

Examination Evidence and Audit Trail

Store evidence with links to requirements, timestamps, and approvers so examiner requests are answered from one record.

Testing, Findings, and Remediation

Track self-assessments, audit findings, examination findings, and remediation through verified closure.

Third-Party and Resilience Alignment

Connect service provider due diligence, contracts, and continuity exercises to the booklets that require them.

Board and Examiner Reporting

Report readiness by booklet, open findings, and risk posture to the board and to examiners.

Common framework mappings

FFIEC CAT

GLBA Safeguards Rule (16 CFR Part 314)

OCC CSWP

NYDFS 23 NYCRR 500

NAIC MDL-668

FINRA Cybersecurity

NIST CSF 2.0

NIST 800-53 Rev.5

ISO 27001:2022

COBIT 2019

CIS Controls v8.1

SOC 2

PCI DSS 4.0.1

SOX

MAS TRM 2021

Official resources

FFIEC IT Examination Handbook InfoBase

The FFIEC's home for the IT Handbook, with booklet summaries, What's New, glossary, and links to laws, regulations, and guidance.
ithandbook.ffiec.gov

FFIEC IT Booklets

The list of current IT Handbook booklets with online, PDF, and work program downloads.
ithandbook.ffiec.gov/it-booklets

FFIEC Information Security Booklet

The booklet examiners use to assess an institution's information security program, with examination procedures.
ithandbook.ffiec.gov/it-booklets/information-security

FFIEC Management Booklet

The booklet covering IT governance, IT risk management, and board and management oversight, with examination procedures.
ithandbook.ffiec.gov/it-booklets/management

Frequently asked questions

What is the FFIEC IT Examination Handbook used for?

Federal and state examiners use the IT Handbook's booklets and work programs to examine how financial institutions and their technology service providers manage information technology risk. Institutions use the same booklets to set policy, self-assess, and prepare for examinations.

Is the FFIEC IT Handbook a regulation?

No. The handbook is supervisory guidance issued by the FFIEC, an interagency body that does not itself regulate institutions. Its member agencies apply the booklets in examinations, however, and shortcomings can lead to examination findings, lower ratings, or enforcement actions under the agencies' own authority.

Which booklets make up the FFIEC IT Handbook?

The InfoBase currently lists ten booklets: Audit; Business Continuity Management; Development, Acquisition, and Maintenance; Information Security; Management; Architecture, Infrastructure, and Operations; Outsourcing Technology Services; Retail Payment Systems; Supervision of Technology Service Providers; and Wholesale Payment Systems. Superseded booklets are kept in an archive.

Who publishes the FFIEC IT Handbook?

The Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council, established by Congress in 1979. Its members are the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System, the FDIC, the NCUA, the OCC, and the CFPB, with state regulators represented through the State Liaison Committee.

How does the IT Handbook relate to the FFIEC Cybersecurity Assessment Tool?

The Cybersecurity Assessment Tool is a separate FFIEC resource that institutions use to measure inherent cyber risk and cybersecurity maturity. Its statements draw on the IT Handbook, and examiners use the handbook's booklets, particularly Information Security and Management, when reviewing the areas the tool covers.

How should an institution prepare for an FFIEC IT examination?

Map policies, controls, and evidence to the examination procedures in each relevant booklet, run self-assessments, close prior findings, and keep risk assessments, testing results, vendor due diligence, continuity exercises, and board reporting current. Examiners typically issue a request list based on the work programs, so organized evidence shortens the examination.

How does SmartSuite support the FFIEC IT Handbook?

SmartSuite holds booklet requirements, controls, evidence, findings, and vendor records in one system with owners, due dates, and an audit trail. Compliance teams use it to track readiness by booklet, respond to examiner requests, and report to the board.

License included / downloadable: Yes The IT Handbook booklets and work programs are U.S. government publications available free from the FFIEC InfoBase; the platform links to the official booklets rather than reproducing them.

Full framework page and mappings: smartsuite.com/frameworks/ffiec-it-examination-handbook-infobase