



Minor Works Control System

for signboard



Minor Works Control System for signboard

The Minor Works Control System (MWCS) aims to facilitate building owners and occupants in carrying out small-scale building works safely and lawfully through simplified statutory procedures and thereby improve the quality of such building works and building safety in Hong Kong.

► Minor works

A total of 187* items of building works that are minor works are subjected to the control under the MWCS. The size, location and respective criteria of each item of minor works are set out in the Building (Minor Works) Regulation (B(MW)R). These minor works are classified into three classes according to their scale, complexity and risk to safety:

- Class I (a total of 58 items) are those relatively more complicated minor works
- Class II (a total of 68 items) are those of comparatively lower complexity and risk to safety
- Class III (a total of 61 items) mainly include common household and amenity minor works

Some of the minor works are associated with signboards. The related trade practitioners can carry out those minor works in accordance with the simplified requirements of the MWCS.

For detailed descriptions of the 187 items of minor works, please visit the Buildings Department website at www.bd.gov.hk, and refer to the B(MW)R and the Technical Guidelines on Minor Works Control System.

Note:

* The B(MW)R was amended in 2012 (8 minor works items were added) and 2020. The Building (Minor Works) (Amendment) Regulation 2020 with effect from 1 September 2020 involve 9 repealed, 56 amended and 70 additional minor works items.

► Signboard trade

Minor Works		Item ¹		
		Class I	Class II	Class III
Erection/ alteration/ removal of signboards	projecting signboards ²	1.20, 1.24	2.18, 2.24	3.16, 3.18
	signboards on the roof of a building	1.21, 1.24	2.25	3.19
	wall signboards ²	1.22, 1.24	2.19, 2.26	3.17, 3.20
	outdoor signboards fixed on-grade	1.23, 1.24	2.21, 2.22, 2.25	3.22
	signboards on or hung underneath the soffit of a balcony or canopy ²	1.24	2.20, 2.27	3.21
Installation/alteration/replacement/removal of display surface of signboards			2.23, 2.68	3.16, 3.17

Wall signboards at overhead of shopfront should have a minimum clearance of 2.5m from the ground; and should be structurally independent without supporting any roller shutter, air-conditioning unit or being used for storage.

Signboards containing concealed structural elements are advised to have access panel(s) not less than 200mm in dimension or diameter for inspection of the concealed structure.

All signboards erected under the MWCS should not comprise wooden structural elements.

The signboards erected under MWCS are advised to display the minor works submission numbers on the signboards in accordance with Appendix D of Practice Notes for Registered Contractors 71 issued by the Buildings Department. For the erection of a signboard under Class III minor works, the prescribed registered contractor is advised to submit to the Buildings Department a duly completed standard form MW32 for issuance of a submission number to be displayed on the subject signboard.

For detailed descriptions, sizes, locations and respective requirements of each minor works item, please visit the Buildings Department website at www.bd.gov.hk, and refer to the B(MW)R and the Technical Guidelines on Minor Works Control System. The requirements of the minor works items generally involve restrictions related to structural safety. For example, the works should not result in any additional load to any cantilevered slab or the works should not involve the alteration of any other structural elements. For the location, if the works are located on a slab or roof, it may be required that the slab or roof should not be a cantilevered slab. The appointed prescribed building professional and/or prescribed registered contractor should ensure the works comply with all the requirements of the relevant minor works items.

Notes:

- 1 The numbers tabulated under “Item” denote the classes and item numbers of the minor works. For example, “1.20” denotes the item no. 20 under Class I minor works items in the B(MW)R. Any alteration works must be read as including any strengthening works for that item. Any erection works must be read as including any replacement works for that item. Any removal works must be read as including any removal works for any structure that falls within the descriptions of that item and is an unauthorised structure.
- 2 To facilitate those food business licence applicants to retain their existing unauthorised signboards, the food business operators have the option to appoint their authorized person/registered structural engineer to provide services for validation of the unauthorised signboards under the Signboard Validation Scheme (SVS) under the Buildings Ordinance and the required certification on unauthorised building works under the licence application in one go [by using the prescribed forms Form UBW-1a and Form UBW-2a].

For details of the SVS and unauthorised signboards that are eligible for joining the SVS, please read Practice Note for Authorized Persons, Registered Structural Engineers and Registered Geotechnical Engineers APP-155 and paragraph 6 of the “Guideline UBW-1 for Authorized Persons and Registered Structural Engineers for Certification of Food Business Premises Free of Unauthorised Building Works” at the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department’s website (www.fehd.gov.hk).

For information and further details regarding the application for restaurant licence, please refer to the Food and Environmental Hygiene Department’s website at www.fehd.gov.hk/english/licensing/guide.html.



Projecting signboard



Wall signboard



Signboard on the roof of a building



Signboard on or hung underneath the soffit of a balcony or canopy (other than a cantilevered slab)



Outdoor signboard erected

► Exempted building works

Building works (other than minor works) that are carried out in a building are exempted building works under section 41(3) of the Buildings Ordinance if they do not involve the structure of the building. For these exempted works, prior approval of building plans and consent to the commencement of works from the Buildings Department are not required. Though not required to be carried out by prescribed registered contractors and supervised by prescribed building professionals, the works should not be carried out in contravention of the regulations (which specify the building design and construction standards in such aspects as fire safety, structural safety and drainage works) under the Buildings Ordinance. Common interior renovation/alteration works (other than minor works), such as painting, internal plastering or wall-paper works, repair or replacement of internal branch pipe (other than embedded pipe) or sanitary fitment works, or removal of non-load bearing partition walls which need not have fire resistance rating are exempted works under the Buildings Ordinance.

► Designated exempted works

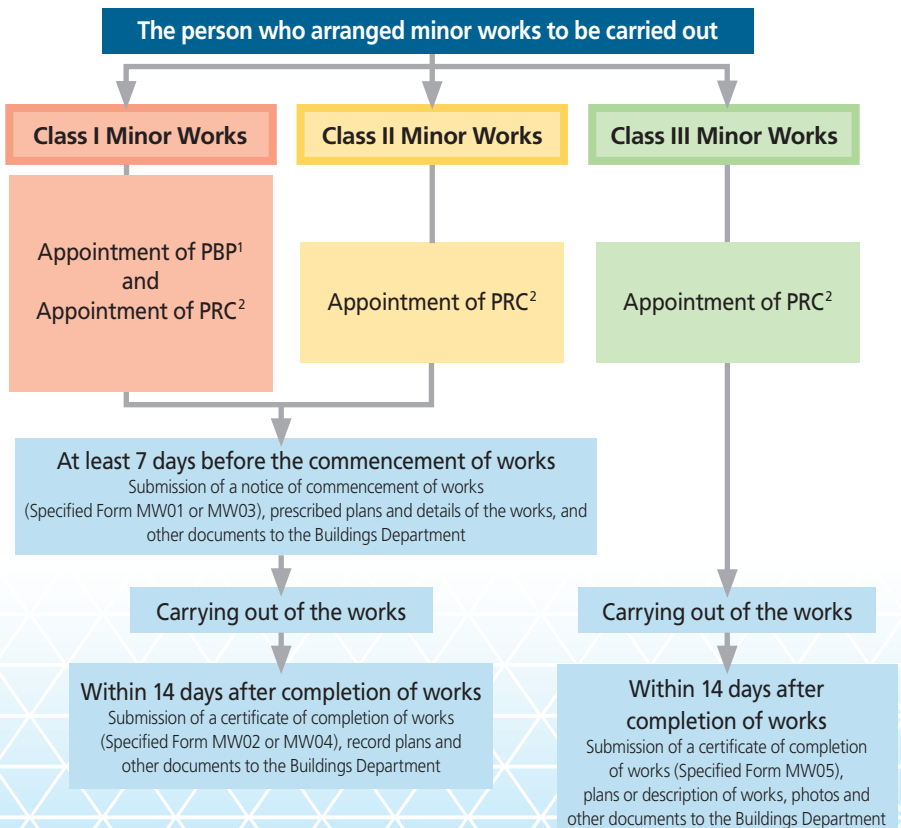
Apart from the exempted works in general mentioned above, the MWCS also introduced 30 items of designated exempted works, of which the complexity and risk to safety are lower than that of the minor works. In accordance with the provisions of the Buildings Ordinance, the designated exempted works may be commenced without prior approval of plans and consent for commencement of works from the Buildings Department, and without the need to appoint authorized persons and registered contractors for the carrying out of the works. The typical minor works item of designated exempted works related to signboards are:

Works	Description of Designated Exempted Works	Item
Small signboard	Erection/alteration of signboards (including the replacement of the display surface) with projection not more than 150 mm from the external wall and at a height not more than 3 m above ground	10
	Removal of signboards with projection not more than 600 mm from the external wall and at a height not more than 3 m above ground	11
	Installation/alteration/replacement/removal of the display surface of signboards	30

The descriptions in the table are simplified. For detailed descriptions of designated exempted works items, please visit the Buildings Department website at www.bd.gov.hk, and refer to the B(MW)R and the Technical Guidelines on Minor Works Control System.

► Simplified requirements

The carrying out of minor works can be commenced through the simplified requirements of the MWCS, without the need to obtain prior approval of plans and consent to the commencement of the works from the Buildings Department as required under section 14(1) of the Buildings Ordinance. Any person, whether the owner/occupant or his/her agent (for example the design company) is required to appoint prescribed registered contractors (PRC) to carry out all minor works. If the works involve Class I minor works, prescribed building professionals (PBP) shall also be appointed for the design and supervision of the works. The flow chart below shows the procedures for carrying out Class I, Class II and Class III minor works:



For the registers of PBP and PRC, please visit the Buildings Department website at www.bd.gov.hk.

Notes:

- ¹ PBP are authorized persons/registered inspectors* and (if required) registered structural engineers/registered geotechnical engineers.
** If the works are prescribed repair or any associated demolition works, a registered inspector may assume the role of an authorized person in respect of such works.*
- ² PRC are registered general building contractors or registered specialist contractors of respective registered category of specialized works or registered minor works contractors of respective registered classes/types/items of minor works.

► Addition of minor works items after commencement of works

After the submission of notice of commencement of Class I or Class II minor works, if additional Class I or Class II minor works items are required to be carried out during the construction period, the PBP or PRC should submit, at least 7 days before the commencement of those additional items, a notice of commencement of works (i.e. specified form MW11 or MW12) together with the prescribed plans and details of the works, and other documents to the Buildings Department. Within 14 days after the completion of the works, the PBP or PRC should submit a certificate of completion of works (i.e. specified form MW02 or MW04), record plans and other documents together with all other completed minor works items to the Buildings Department.

► Types of registered minor works contractors

Construction companies may apply for registration as Registered Minor Works Contractors (Company) (RMWC(Co)) and register by virtue of their working experience, qualifications and competence in each class in one or more of the following types of minor works (A to H):

- Type A - Alteration and Addition Works
- Type B - Repair Works
- Type C - Works relating to Signboards
- Type D - Drainage Works
- Type E - Works relating to Structures for Amenities
- Type F - Finishes Works
- Type G - Demolition Works
- Type H - Works relating to Ventilation System inside a Building

Individual practitioners may apply for registration as Registered Minor Works Contractors (Individual) (RMWC(Ind)) of the respective Class III minor works items (items 3.1 to 3.66) by virtue of their qualifications and experience.

► Appointment of prescribed registered contractors

In selecting PRC to carry out minor works related to signboard trade, one can refer to the table of Types of Minor Works on page 8 and, on the basis of the type, class and item no. of the minor works, appoint those relevant registered contractors registered for the respective type.

► Types of minor works related to signboard

Class I									Class II									Class III								
Type									Type									Type								
Item no.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Item no.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	Item no.	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
1.20			•						2.18			•						3.16			•					
1.21			•						2.19			•						3.17			•					
1.22			•						2.20			•						3.18			•				•	
1.23			•						2.21			•						3.19			•				•	
1.24			•					•	2.22			•						3.20			•				•	
									2.23			•						3.21			•				•	
									2.24			•				•		3.22			•				•	
									2.25			•				•										
									2.26			•				•										
									2.27			•				•										
									2.68			•														

Case 1

“Erection of a 500 mm thick projecting signboard (does not consist of stone) which projects 4 m from the external wall to which it is fixed and the display area is 15 m²” is covered in minor works item 1.20. The signboard practitioners or their appointed agent can choose to appoint the following persons in carrying out the works:

1. PBP; and
2. Registered general building contractor or RMWC(Co) registered for Type C Class I minor works.

Case 2

“Replacement of the display surface which does not consist of stone of a signboard with the size and extent of the display surface same as that in the original design of the signboard” is covered in minor works item 2.68. The signboard practitioners or their appointed agent can choose to appoint the following persons in carrying out the works:

1. Registered general building contractors; or
2. RMWC(Co) registered for Type C Class II minor works.

Case 3

“Removal of a 2 m² projecting signboard which projects 2 m from the external wall to which it fixed and 5m above ground” is covered in minor works item 3.18. The signboard practitioners or their appointed agent can choose to appoint the following persons in carrying out the works:

1. Registered general building contractor; or
2. Registered specialist contractor (Demolition Works); or
3. RMWC(Co) registered for Type C or G Class III minor works; or
4. RMWC(Ind) registered for minor works item 3.18.

► Register of registered minor works contractors

For consideration of appointment of RMWC(Co) in carrying out Class I, Class II and/or Class III minor works related to signboard, reference can be made to the RMWC(Co) Register of the Buildings Department website at www.bd.gov.hk and the selection should base on the class and type of minor works registered. The following is a typical example of the register displayed on the Buildings Department website:

Registered Minor Works Contractors (Company)					
Company Name	Registration Number	Expiry Date	Class / Type	Name of Authorized Signatory with Registered Class/ Type of Minor Works	
XYZ COMPANY	MWC 12/2010	31/12/2023	I, II, III / A, B, C II, III / D, F, G	CHAN TAI-MAN	Class/Type: I, II, III / A, B, C
				CHAN SIU-MAN	Class/Type: II, III / D, F, G
Contact Information: XXXX XXXX					

For consideration of appointment of RMWC(Ind) in carrying out Classes III minor works related to signboard trade, reference can be made to RMWC(Ind) Register of the Buildings Department website at www.bd.gov.hk and the selection should base on the items of minor works registered. The following is a typical example of the register displayed on the Buildings Department website:

Registered Minor Works Contractors (Individual)			
Contractor Name	Registration Number	Expiry Date	Items of Class III Minor Works
SHING KIN-SHEUNG	MWC(W) 123/2010	31/12/2023	3.16, 3.17, 3.18, 3.19, 3.20, 3.21, 3.22
Contact Information: XXXX XXXX			
CHEUNG SIU-MING	MWC(W) 345/2010	31/12/2023	3.16, 3.17, 3.18, 3.19, 3.20, 3.21, 3.22
Contact Information: XXXX XXXX			

► Submission of documents under simplified requirements

The PBP and PRC shall comply with the Buildings Ordinance and its subsidiary regulations, and prepare and timely submit the required documents to the Buildings Department. The documents mainly include the following:

1. Form

Specified forms for notice of commencement of works (seven days prior to commencement of works) for Class I and Class II minor works and certificate of completion of works (within 14 days after the completion of works) for all classes of minor works.

2. Plan

(a) Class I or Class II minor works

The plans and details prescribed in regulation 8 of the Building (Administration) Regulations.

(b) Class III minor works

The plans showing the works as completed or description of the completed works.

3. Photograph

Photographs showing the physical condition of the premises immediately before the commencement and after the completion of the works.

4. Supervision plan

A supervision plan in accordance with the Technical Memorandum for Supervision Plans (only required for some Class I minor works).

Please refer to the Practice Note for Registered Contractors 71 issued by the Buildings Department for the requirements and guidelines on submission of the above documents.

► Signboard Validation Scheme

For unauthorised signboards in existence before 2 September 2013 and complying with the technical specifications for prescribed building or building works under the B(MW)R, they may be retained for continued use under the SVS after inspection, strengthening (if required) and certification of their structural safety by PBPs and/or PRCs to the Buildings Department. The safety check is required to be carried out again at an interval of **5 years**. Please refer to the flow chart on page 12.

For detailed descriptions of unauthorised signboards in compliance with prescribed building or building works, please refer to Part 2 in Schedule 3 of the B(MW)R.

The signboard owner and the appointed person should follow the procedure shown in the flow chart below for the required submissions to the Buildings Department in joining the SVS.

Persons for whom the signboard was erected (signboard owner) or person who arranged for the inspection

Appoint PBP/PRC (Appointed Person) to inspect the signboard

Appoint PBP/PRC to remove the signboard under the MWCS

Appointed person

Prescribed building professionals:

- Authorized person;
- Registered structural engineer; or
- Registered inspector

Prescribed registered contractors:

- Registered general building contractor,
- Registered minor works contractor (Company) registered for Type C minor works, or
- Registered minor works contractor (Individual) registered for minor works items 3.16 and 3.17

Inspect to confirm that the signboard is eligible for validation

No

Yes

Signboard inspected is structurally safe and requires no alteration/strengthening

No

Yes

Within 14 days after completion of the inspection, submit to Buildings Department a Specified Form as notification with report on physical conditions of the signboard as inspected, safety inspection report, plans, photographs and description, and certify that the signboard is structurally safe and complies with the Buildings Ordinance¹

Decide whether alteration/strengthening works will be carried out as pre-requisite for validation

No

Yes

Carry out alteration/strengthening works under MWCS

For Class I and Class II signboards, notify the Buildings Department of the commencement of minor works at least 7 days before carrying out the works

For all classes of signboards, notify Buildings Department of completion within 14 days after completing the works

Buildings Department

After verification of the key information provided, issue an acknowledgement letter with submission number and carry out random audit check

Note:

¹ Except section 14(1) of the Buildings Ordinance and regulation 25 of the Building (Administration) Regulations.

► Inspection of building records

The carrying out of minor works in existing buildings may involve alteration and addition works. The PBP or PRC should prepare the plans for minor works based on the information from the inspection of the actual condition of the related building and the available existing building records. The building records for existing buildings may be inspected at the Building Information Centre of the Buildings Department located at 2/F, Buildings Department Headquarters, North Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon, or via the Building Records Access and Viewing On-line system in the Buildings Department website at bravo.bd.gov.hk. Copies of the building records will be issued upon application and payment of the prescribed fee.

Please visit www.bd.gov.hk/en/about-us/building-information-centre/index.html for details of the services.

► Legal obligation of the person who arranged the works to be carried out

The person, whether the building owner/occupant or his/her agent, who arranged the works to be carried out is required by the Buildings Ordinance to appoint PBP and/or PRC to carry out the works. If the person who arranged the works to be carried out has knowingly failed to appoint the required personnel, that person may be liable to prosecution.

► Legal obligation of prescribed building professionals and prescribed registered contractors

The PBP and PRC appointed to carry out the minor works should comply with the provisions of the Buildings Ordinance and other enactments. The PRC should only carry out the classes and types or items of minor works for which they have been registered. If they contravene these requirements, they may be subject to prosecution and disciplinary action.

► Insurance

To safeguard the interests of the building owner/occupant or the appointed agent, the person who arranged the works to be carried out should ensure that the appointed PRC has procured all necessary insurance prior to commencement of the works in order to minimise the risk of any possible claim incurred from carrying out the minor works.

► Carrying out minor works at common parts of building

For minor works carried out in the common parts of a building (such as external wall of a building), the person who arranged the works to be carried out and his/her appointed person (including the PBP/PRC) should seek consent from all co-owners/incorporated owners and the management company of the building and observe all duties as stipulated in the deed of mutual covenant.

► Construction wastes

PRC shall take appropriate measures to ensure construction wastes are disposed of properly.

► Pay for Safety Scheme

The Pay for Safety Scheme was first introduced by the Government with an aim to ensure the contractors, with the employer's support, maintain a high standard of work safety and to prevent site safety from being compromised due to competitive tendering. Under the scheme, contractors are required to include in the tender the necessary safety-related items which will be paid for by the employer if the contractors have carried out the items satisfactorily. Failure in doing so will result in no payment. By means of this scheme, the Government aims to promote and encourage the practice of construction safety such that safety standards in construction sites would be enhanced.

► Supportive measures

The Buildings Department has put in place the following measures to facilitate implementation of the MWCS and to assist the public in understanding and using the system effectively:

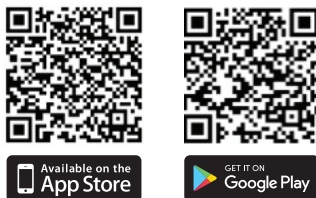
- Provide technical guidelines and practice notes on minor works to the construction industry for reference.
- Distribute leaflets and general guidelines on minor works to members of the public, building owners and owners' corporations introducing the system to assist their understanding of the classification of minor works and the appointment of appropriate PBP and PRC for the carrying out of minor works.
- Provide mobile application for the public using mobile device to access the information related to the MWCS.
- Upload detailed information of the MWCS onto the Buildings Department website (www.bd.gov.hk) for the reference of the general public.
- Establish telephone hotlines to answer public enquiries.

► Enquiry

For any enquiries in connection with the MWCS, you may contact the Buildings Department by the following means:

- Postal address: G/F, Buildings Department Headquarters, North Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon
- Email address: enquiry@bd.gov.hk
- Telephone hotline: 2626 1616 (Handled by “1823”)
- Enquiry service: G/F, Buildings Department Headquarters, North Tower, West Kowloon Government Offices, 11 Hoi Ting Road, Yau Ma Tei, Kowloon

You may download the mobile application MWCS-Quick Guide for Minor Works on App Store / Google Play to know more about the MWCS.



This pamphlet is not a legal document. It aims to introduce the main features of the MWCS to enhance the industry's understanding of the system.