

# Certificate of classification

## Display requirements for the class of a building

There are 10 classes of buildings defined under the Building Code of Australia (BCA), each of which has a different use. Queensland uses these same general classifications in its building standards.

In April 2008, Queensland passed laws to improve building safety under the *Building Act 1975*. These laws require building owners to display a certificate of classification in all new buildings other than a single detached house (class 1a building) and carports and garages (class 10 buildings).

### What is a certificate of classification and where can it be obtained?

A certificate of classification is a document that specifies a building's classification and describes the way it can be used. For example, a certificate for a retail shopping centre would classify it as a class 6 building, being a shop or other building for the sale of goods by retail or the supply of services direct to the public.

If a building was built after 1 April 1976, it should have a certificate of classification with its building approval. If a certificate is not available, or if you are unsure if one has already been issued with the building approval, a certificate of classification can be obtained from a building certifier or from the local government (depending on who issued the building approval).

### How do these laws apply when occupying a building?

Before a class 1b to 9 building (buildings other than single dwellings and non-habitable building) can be occupied or used, a certificate of classification must be on display as near as practical to the main entrance of that building. This only applies where a certificate of classification was given on or after 1 July 1997 (previously it was not required to be displayed, only issued with the building approval).

### Why do I have to display the certificate of classification?

A certificate of classification contains important information about the use of the building, ongoing maintenance requirements, fire safety and other special requirements. It needs to be displayed to ensure this information is readily available for people who occupy the building, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) officers and local government officers.

It is an offence not to display a certificate of classification in a building and/or not to comply with the restrictions stated on the certificate. Failure to do either may incur a financial penalty.

## Where does a certificate of classification have to be displayed?

A certificate of classification is required to be clearly displayed as near as practical to the main entrance of a building. If a building has more than one main entrance, such as a shopping centre, the certificate is only required to be displayed at one main entrance. It is recommended to place it at the entrance that would normally be used by emergency services personnel and where the building's fire indicator panel is located.

In a multi-tenancy building, if a certificate of classification for the entire building is displayed near the main entrance of the complex, it is generally not necessary for owners of individual units to also display that certificate at their unit unless it has undergone a change and has its own classification.

## Does it have to be displayed in a frame?

There are no requirements for a certificate of classification to be displayed in a frame. However, it is recommended to display it in a way that ensures it is securely fixed and cannot be damaged. If it is displayed on the outside of a building it should be also be protected from the effects of weather.

## What if there is several tenancies with their own entrances?

Some buildings have several tenancies that open directly to the outside of the building. In these cases, the building owner may choose to display the certificate of classification in a single location on the outside of a building. It is recommended that the certificate be located as close as practical to the entrance of the property, is weather-proof and securely fixed. Alternatively, a copy of the certificate can be displayed as near as practical to the entrance of each individual tenancy.

## Where should certificates of classification be displayed in larger buildings, such as a shopping centre?

In cases where there is more than one certificate of classification for a large building, such as a shopping centre, there are different ways to display them. The building owner can display all of the certificates near the main entrance. Alternatively, a certificate can be displayed at each of the tenancies as near as practical to the tenancy's entrance.

## Do I have to produce other documents if they are asked for?

The QFRS or local government officers may ask for a certificate of classification to be provided if one is not already displayed in the building. They may also ask for other documents if required for the building. These might include required fire safety management plans or maintenance reports for fire safety systems.

## For more information

For more information, refer to the Department of Housing and Public Works website at [www.hpw.qld.gov.au/construction/BuildingPlumbing](http://www.hpw.qld.gov.au/construction/BuildingPlumbing).