

HOME IMPROVEMENT CONTRACTOR REGISTRATION

All contractors, partnerships, and corporations that solicit, bid on or perform improvements or renovations on existing one to four-unit owner occupied residential property in Massachusetts must be registered as a Home Improvement Contractor (HIC). A HIC Registration is different from a Construction Supervisor License (CSL) and they are not interchangeable. A HIC Registration does not require a written exam.

Applicants must pay an application fee of \$150 to register with the state. The registration fee is renewable every two years at \$100. The applicant must also pay a one-time fee into a Guaranty Fund based on the number of employees that they have. This fee ranges from \$100 to up to \$500. The Guaranty Fund is set up to reimburse consumers that have utilized a registered contractor that fails to complete the job according to the contract. A consumer that utilizes a registered contractor is entitled to arbitration. A consumer is entitled to reimbursement from the Guaranty Fund should a court find in the consumer's favor up to \$10,000.

- Failure to register as a HIC contractor can result in fines and/or jail time.
- Certain acts & practices are prohibited such as abandonment of a project, requiring a consumer to pay more than the legal deposit requirement, acting as a mortgage broker, and much more.
- Contractors are required to include their HIC number on all contracts, company vehicles, and business materials such as business cards, letterhead and advertisements.
- All projects in excess of \$1,000 is covered.
- All contractors must have specific items listed in their contracts in order to comply with this law.

You can obtain a HIC Registration from the Office of Consumer Affairs & Business Regulations at 617-973-8787 or 888-283-3757 (toll free, in MA only). Or go to www.mass.gov.com and search under "Home Improvement Registration" for more information and how to register.