# Granny flats vs Self-certification:

# Overview for Plumbers and Drainlayers

The Board is aware of confusion around the difference between the Granny Flats exemption and the proposed self-certification scheme. While both aim to reduce delays and improve efficiency, they apply to different types of work and have different rules.

- **Granny Flats:** No consent or inspections required for plumbing/drainlaying in small standalone dwellings. Any authorised person can do the work.
- **Self-Certification:** Consent still required. Endorsed certifying plumbers and drainlayers can self-certify their own work instead of BCA inspections.

These are two separate schemes, with different legal pathways and responsibilities on the plumber/drainlayer. The Board will provide further guidance as each scheme is finalised.

## Frequently asked questions

**Q: Can I self-certify plumbing or drainlaying work in a Granny Flat?**

No. Granny Flats fall under a separate scheme that does not require a building consent or inspections. You do not need to self-certify this work — but you must still be authorised to carry it out.

**Q: Why is a Granny Flat treated differently from other residential work?**

Granny Flats are considered low-risk, small standalone dwellings. The Government has chosen to exempt them from the building consent process entirely. Other residential work still requires a consent — which is where self-certification applies.

**Q: Will the two schemes eventually be merged?**

No - that is not the intention. They are designed to work in parallel, but they serve different purposes. The Board will continue to work with MBIE to ensure they are aligned where appropriate, especially around scope and eligibility.

**Q: What if a Granny Flat is part of a larger consented build?**

If a granny flat is included in a consented project the building consent exemption for granny flats is not being used. The self-certification scheme may apply to the plumbing/drainlaying work — but only if the work meets the “certifiable” definition that will be set in regulations and the plumber/drainlayer is endorsed.

**Q: Are stormwater or wastewater pumps included in either scheme?**

These are generally excluded from both schemes due to their complexity and risk. Final scope will be confirmed in regulations and technical guidance.

**Q: Who is responsible for oversight of Granny Flats plumbing work?**

The Board will continue to regulate who can carry out plumbing and drainlaying work. MBIE sets the policy and legal framework. There are no BCA inspections for Granny Flats, but plumbers/drainlayers must still meet the Board's licensing requirements.