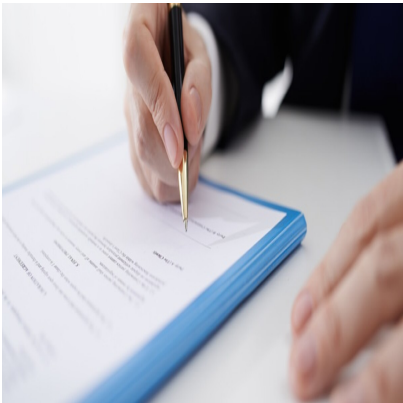




Condo Balcony Screens and Enclosures: Check Before Work

Description

A condo owner should not treat a balcony screen, an open-sided cover and a full enclosure as the same work. URA’s July 2026 guidance, the development’s approved plans and MCST by-laws must be checked before design or payment.

A condominium owner planning shade, privacy or weather protection at a balcony, PES or private roof terrace faces a narrower question than the headline suggests: separate a compliant approved screen or open-sided cover from an unauthorised enclosure before hiring a contractor. The table separates the branches that change the answer before the practical checks and worked example.

Choose the branch before acting

Situation	Practical next step
Approved balcony screen	Match the approved design, porosity and fixed elements
Open-sided PES or PRT cover	Check the specific planning exemption and obtain MCST consent
Glass, windows or operable enclosure	Assume planning and GFA questions arise; obtain professional confirmation
Changing façade appearance	Clear MCST and authority requirements before fabrication

Name the space and the proposed work

URA’s page distinguishes balconies, private enclosed spaces, private roof terraces and indoor recreation spaces because their gross-floor-area treatment and design controls differ. Start with the approved plan and strata boundary; a marketing floor plan may not be precise enough for submission decisions. [URA residential balcony, PES and PRT guidelines](#).

Where a balcony screen forms part of an approved design, its porosity must be annotated. If the screen uses louvres, the individual slats are to be fixed rather than adjustable. That condition prevents an

apparently porous screen from functioning later as a closed wall. [URA residential balcony, PES and PRT guidelines](#).

Why porosity and fixed slats matter

A screen intended for privacy or shade is not automatically equivalent to windows, sliding glass or another weather-tight enclosure. Enclosing an external space can alter façade, ventilation, fire-safety and GFA outcomes. A contractor's catalogue description cannot decide the planning classification. [URA residential balcony, PES and PRT guidelines](#).

URA's exemption list can allow an open-sided cover over a balcony, PES or PRT in a strata-titled residential development, subject to stated conditions including MCST consent. •Exempt from planning permission• does not mean exempt from every building, fire, structural, drainage or by-law requirement. [URA residential balcony, PES and PRT guidelines](#).

Planning permission is only one layer

Ask the managing agent for approved standard designs, renovation by-laws, submission forms and deposit terms. Some developments require uniform colour, material, dimensions or fixing details to protect the façade. A neighbour's installation may predate current rules or have different approval. [URA planning-permission exemptions](#).

For uncertain work, appoint an appropriate qualified person to compare the proposal with the approved plans and current handbook. Obtain written conclusions before ordering custom glass or metalwork. Retrospective changes are costly and may still need removal. [URA planning-permission exemptions](#).

Brief the contractor with evidence

The work brief should show the exact space, dimensions, fixing points, drainage path, material, opening method and façade view. Record which elements remain open and how porosity is measured. This converts a vague •balcony cover• into something the MCST and professionals can assess. [URA planning-permission exemptions](#).

After approval, keep the drawings, consent, invoices and photographs. Do not allow site substitutions that create adjustable slats or seal an edge that was approved as open. Ask for a written variation decision rather than accepting a verbal assurance from the installer. [URA planning-permission exemptions](#).

Put the numbers or sequence to work

An owner wants rain protection over a PES. A contractor proposes a roof plus sliding side panels and calls the package an open-sided cover. The owner separates the roof from the panels, obtains the MCST's standard, and asks a qualified person whether the panels create an enclosure. Only the documented, approved version is priced and installed.

The example is a planning model, not a quoted price, official calculator result, medical instruction or promised outcome. Replace its assumptions with the issued notice, live service, signed contract, current timetable or professional advice that controls the real decision.

Before you commit

1. Retrieve the approved strata and planning plans
2. Name balcony, PES or PRT correctly
3. Draw every fixed and movable element
4. Check URA's current condition
5. Obtain MCST consent
6. Use professional advice for an enclosure
7. Keep approved drawings on site

A useful working note combines a **screen-cover-enclosure classification table** with a **contractor brief that records porosity, fixed parts, drainage and approvals**. Enter only details that can be tied to a current document or live record.

Missteps that change the answer

- Copying a neighbour's alteration
- Calling sliding glass a screen
- Assuming MCST consent replaces planning checks
- Letting a contractor alter porosity
- Paying for custom work before written clearance

If one of these conditions appears, pause before payment, submission, travel or implementation and reconcile it through the relevant official service. Save the issued result or acknowledgement; a search snippet or forwarded screenshot cannot establish a current entitlement.

The decision to carry forward

Use the current official record to resolve separate a compliant approved screen or open-sided cover from an unauthorised enclosure before hiring a contractor. Save the dated result and revisit it when the underlying rule, timetable, account or personal facts change.

Related next steps

Once this decision is settled, you may need to [separate HDB fire cover from home contents protection](#). The next adjacent check is to [prepare a defect inspection and deadline file](#).

Common questions

Can balcony louvres be adjustable?

URA states that individual louvred screen slats should be fixed. [URA residential balcony, PES and PRT guidelines](#).

Is an open-sided cover always allowed?

No. The exact exemption conditions and MCST consent must be met. [URA planning-permission exemptions](#).

Does MCST approval settle all authority issues?

No. It is one necessary layer, not a substitute for applicable authority requirements. [URA residential balcony, PES and PRT guidelines](#).

Rules, service details and schedules can change. Reopen the linked official page before acting when the date, eligibility, payment destination, safety instruction or live availability is decisive.

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Author

nuraisyah

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