

## Q&A: Information About Changes to the Customer Service Standard

Tarion is making significant enhancements to the new home warranty program with a new Customer Service Standard (CSS) which will improve the warranty process and create a more transparent, fair, and accountable new home warranty and protection program for homeowners.

Following implementing interim measures in September 2020 and multiple public consultations in 2020, 2021, and 2022 to solicit feedback on proposed changes, Tarion has now made regulatory changes to improve the CSS.

This QA has been developed to answer some common questions from homeowners and builders:

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### 1. [What are the new changes?](#)

Tarion is making significant enhancements to the new home warranty program with a new Customer Service Standard (CSS) which will improve the warranty process and create a more transparent, fair, and accountable new home warranty and protection program for homeowners.

Following the implementation of interim measures in September 2020, and multiple public consultations in 2020, 2021, and 2022 to solicit feedback on proposed changes, Tarion has now made regulatory changes to improve the Customer Service Standard, effective July 1, 2023, by:

- Creating a new requirement that Tarion must schedule a conciliation inspection within 15 days of the request being made and make changes to the current timeline requirements for conducting the conciliation inspection and issuing the conciliation assessment report.

To ensure a smooth transition process, the following changes will take effect for people who have a date of possession on or after May 1, 2024:

- Extending the initial homeowner submission period by 10 days (now 40 days).
- Making the interim 10-day grace period at the end of the first-year warranty period permanent.
- Creating a mid-year submission at six months.

- Allowing homeowners to add items to a running list of potential defects at any time during the first-year warranty period.
- Expanding when homeowners can ask for a conciliation inspection during the first-year warranty period by removing the 30-day timeline for a homeowner to request a conciliation and instead allowing them to request a conciliation for each submission from the time it is submitted up until the next submission date.

We are making these changes and creating a stronger new home warranty and protection program to protect all Ontarians and increase consumer confidence when making one of their most important purchases, a new home.

## 2. When would these changes come into effect?

The new requirements around scheduling a conciliation inspection and issuing the warranty assessment report come into effect on July 1, 2023.

The other CSS changes take effect for homeowners who have a date of possession on or after May 1, 2024.

Tarion is committed to keeping the public informed on these important changes. We will continue to communicate with key stakeholders, including homeowners and builders, as we move forward with the implementation.

## 3. How will these improvements enhance consumer protection?

These changes benefit homeowners by addressing the challenges identified with the existing CSS process.

The new process will remove obstacles for homeowners, reduce pressure on homeowners, eliminate restrictive timelines for homeowners to add or submit items, and increases the opportunity for homeowners to request assistance from Tarion.

The new CSS will also leverage the MyHome portal to help guide homeowners through the warranty process and improves the flexibility of the process to facilitate a better relationship between the homeowner and builder.

## 4. You previously consulted on builder repair periods. Why are these not mentioned in the changes?

Previous consultations were designed to help Tarion get a better understanding of stakeholder feedback on the challenges and concerns expressed about the existing CSS.

However, in looking at the specific issue of builder repair periods, Tarion was not able to find consistent, data-driven information to help identify what a reasonable repair period would be given the ongoing issues such as trade shortages and supply change issues, Tarion is deferring discussions on changing the builder repair period to a future consultation.

We believe that the changes being proposed will result in homeowner issues being dealt with faster.

For example - the six-month submission form will allow some claims to be made up to six months earlier than before.

5. Why has Tarion only now decided to fix the issues homeowners have been having with tight timelines?

Tarion made interim improvements to Tarion's Customer Service Standard (CSS) on September 14, 2020, while long-term changes were being consulted on.

The interim changes included increasing homeowners' ability to access help from Tarion by adding 10-day grace periods to:

- The initial 30-day claim submission period
- The initial 30-day request for conciliation period
- The year-end claim submission period with written evidence the homeowner reported items to their builder during the first-year warranty period
- The year-end request for conciliation period

Additionally, the interim changes allowed homeowners to add additional items to forms during the 30-day and year-end claim submission periods, and increase the types of claims that can be addressed anytime in the first year by expanding the definition of emergency claims to include any water penetration claims.

Now, Tarion is making additional improvements to the CSS to increase flexibility for homeowners, make it easier for homeowners to ask for Tarion's assistance, and leverage Tarion's MyHome portal to make the warranty process simpler for consumers.

6. How do these changes to the Customer Service Standard differ from the two options proposed in spring 2021?

Tarion is making changes to the Customer Service Standard that combine some elements of both options previously consulted on.

For example, the new six-month submission period is consistent with one of the earlier options, but Tarion is also proposing a longer timeline to request a conciliation which was taken from the alternative option.