ARCHITECTURAL INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Practice Guideline: Guide to Document 8C – 2026 Standard Short Form Contract Between *Client* and *Consultant*

September 2026

1.0 Background

1.1 In September 2026, Document 8C-2026 AIBC Standard Short Form Agreement Between *Client* and *Consultant* replaced its predecessor Document 8C-2021: AIBC Standard Short Form Agreement Between *Client* and *Consultant*. The contract can be found on the AIBC website.

1.2 This Guideline assists both the *Client* and *Consultant* in the contract's appropriate use and how to complete several important parts.

1.3 It is a requirement for AIBC Registrants, and strongly recommended for EGBC Registrants, that all consultants in British Columbia have a written contract with their Clients before any professional services are provided.

1.4 This contract is compatible with other construction industry-endorsed standard contracts and terminology.

1.5 A written contract confirms the Client's expectations of services which will be provided in connection with the Project or assignment. It also confirms that the *Client* understands their responsibility to pay professional fees, reimbursable expenses and applicable taxes. A written contract helps to minimize misunderstandings between a *Consultant* and *Client* which could otherwise lead to disputes or even litigation.

1.6 The use of the more comprehensive AIBC Document 6C: Standard Form of Contract Between *Client* and *Consultant* or other AIBC endorsed forms of contract is always recommended, for Projects of any size or complexity. For AIBC Registrants, AIBC Document 6C, not AIBC Document 8C, is recommended for any Project of any size where the architectural services are for building design or building alteration.

1.7 The *Consultant* and *Client* must understand that this short form does not contain fully detailed provisions, and as a result, does not completely protect *Consultant* or *Client* interests.

1.8 Capitalized terms in this document are defined terms in the AIBC Bylaws and have the same meaning. Italicized terms in this document are defined terms in Document 8C-2026.

2.0 Purpose

2.1 Registrants are required, by AIBC Professional Standard 5.1 in Schedule A: Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct in the AIBC Bylaws, to ensure that an executed, written agreement is in place prior to commencing work for a Client. Per AIBC Professional Standard 5.2, this architectural services contract must be a standard form contract approved by the AIBC Board, or be based upon, and generally consistent with, a standard contract in relation to the services, responsibilities, and general conditions. The AIBC Board has approved ten standard form contracts, of which Document 8C-2026 Standard Short Form Contract Between *Client* and *Consultant* is one of them. The list of approved contracts can be found in Practice Guideline: Standard Form Contracts.

2.2 This contract is designed to be used by *Clients* and '*Consultants*'. *Consultants* are defined in the contract as AIBC Registrants and EGBC Registrants. This contract may be used by AIBC Registrants other than Architects when they are working on Projects that do not require an Architect under the ***Architects Regulation.***

2.3 This 'Short Form Contract' is recommended for use as either:

2.3.1 a stand-alone contract for small, simple Projects or limited scopes of service (e.g., feasibility study; building analysis; programming); or

2.3.2 an interim contract, permitting professional services to start while a more appropriate and complete contract is being prepared and executed.

3.0 Recommended Procedures

3.1 As soon as the terms of engagement have been negotiated with the *Client*, complete the contract, including the following, as applicable:

- Date of the contract.
- Legal name and the address of *Client*.
- Legal name and the address of *Consultant*.
- Check appropriate box(es) to indicate the *Consultants* involved: AIBC Registrant classification; EGBC Registrant, including discipline; and/or managing consultant, as applicable.
- Name of managing consultant (if not this *Consultant*); sub-consultants engaged by *Consultant*; and other consultants engaged directly by Client, with respective disciplines, as known.
- Name or description of Project or assignment, its address or location, including size and budget, if applicable.
- Description of *Consultant's* scope of services. Attach a schedule, if necessary.

3.2 When this contract serves as an interim contract:

- check the appropriate box in Item 3; and
- ensure that a subsequent compatible contract is executed by the date indicated and includes a provision that it supersedes this interim agreement, as applicable.

3.3 Indicate amounts of professional liability insurance carried by *Consultant*, both 'per claim' and 'aggregate.'. If no professional liability insurance is carried by the Consultant, this must be stated. Professional liability insurance is mandatory for Architects; it is highly recommended for other consultants. Complete line 4A or 4B, as applicable, not both.

3.4 Check the appropriate box(es) and complete the relevant blanks respecting professional fees, retainer, interest and administration charge.

3.5 Sign and have the *Client* or authorized representative sign and date the contract. Provide a copy to the *Client*. If executing the contract on paper, two copies are required, one for each party to the contract. If executing the contract digitally, a PDF of the final contract with both signatures is provided to the Client.

3.6 As of July 1, 2021, authorization stickers are no longer required. The contract can be used at no charge.

3.7 As of October 1, 2026, Provincial Sales Tax (PST) is payable on some architectural services. While the contract allows PST to be charged, PST is not applicable to all services that might be provided under this contract. Refer to the Government of BC website: gov.bc.ca/gov/content/taxes/sales-taxes/pst/publications/architectural-services.

3.8 Feedback or questions on this Practice Guideline can be directed to practiceadvice@aibc.ca.

Practice Guideline Amendment History

2026 September 24 – Removed reference to outdated AIBC 8C Chinese Language Edition Contract.

September 2 – Revised and updated for new AIBC 8C-2026 Standard Short Form Agreement Between *Client* and *Consultant*.

2021 June 15 – Updated to reflect the discontinuation of Authorization stickers as of July 1, 2021.

2020 January 9 – Second Edition: AIBC Document 8C-2020 replaced its predecessor AIBC 8C-2010; Guide reformatted, revised to reflect new contract edition; minor changes to insurance requirements; revised to reflect 2019 bylaw amendment to bylaw 28.1; reissued as Practice Guideline: Document 8C – 2020 Standard Short Form Contract Between *Client* and *Consultant*.

May 19, 2020 – Both AIBC Document 8C-2020 and this Practice Guideline were translated into the Chinese language for the convenience of Chinese speaking users and published on the AIBC website. This Practice Guideline has also been updated to include the creation of Chinese language edition.

2010 January – First Edition: Issued as a guide appended to AIBC Document 8C-2010, which replaced its predecessor AIBC Document 8.

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