



A New Chapter for Trademark Protection in China - Coming January 1, 2027

On June 26, 2026, the Standing Committee of China's National People's Congress adopted the fifth revision of the PRC Trademark Law, which is a significant overhaul that will take effect on January 1, 2027.

The revised law, comprising 87 articles across 9 chapters, introduces several changes brand owners and IP practitioners should be aware of:

- Dynamic marks/Motion marks are now recognized under the new law, alongside text/word, figures, 3D marks, colour combinations and sound marks are protectable trademark types, reflecting the rise of animated logos and motion-based branding.
- Where earlier rules mainly punished trademark agencies for facilitating bad-faith filings, the revised law lets authorities fine the applicant directly with penalties reaching RMB 100,000
- A newly added Article 69 empowers CNIPA to issue an official statement confirming a mark's well-known status in China, giving owners a useful tool for disputes or examinations happening abroad.
- Applications lacking genuine intent to use, and manifestly exceeding ordinary business needs, shall be refused.
- The period to oppose an approved application is cut from three months to two, leaving brand owners less time to catch and challenge conflicting filings
- In addition to third-party non-use cancellation actions, the revised law empowers CNIPA to revoke, on its own initiative, trademarks that have remained unused for three consecutive years without justified reasons, reinforcing the importance of genuine commercial use and proper portfolio maintenance
- Using a mark through e-commerce, websites, or other online/network activity is now expressly recognized as valid use for legal purposes

With just over five months remaining before the new law takes effect, businesses with existing or planned operations in China should use this transition period to review their trademark portfolios, assess potential non-use risks, revisit filing strategies, and ensure that watch services and enforcement practices are aligned with the shortened opposition timeline.

This overhaul signals China's continued determination to modernise its trademark system and clamp down harder on squatting and opportunistic filings. Worth watching closely if you have brand assets in the region