

WHY BECOME LICENSED?

IT'S THE LAW. Any construction project priced at \$500 or more in combined labor and material costs must be performed by a contractor who is licensed in the trade or work occupation.



What kind of experience is required?

At least four years of journey-level experience is required to qualify for the examination. Credit is given for experience as a journeyman, foreman, supervising employee, contractor, or owner-builder.

Is school necessary?

There are no educational requirements to qualify for a contractor license. You may receive credit for technical training, apprenticeship training, or education instead of a portion of the required four years of practical experience. At least one year must be practical experience.

Is there an examination requirement?

Yes, the qualifying individual for a contractor license is required to pass written law and trade examinations, unless he or she meets the requirements for a waiver. An examination notice will be sent at least three weeks prior to the examination date.

Are there any financial requirements to qualify for a license?

No, but you will need to have a \$15,000 contractor bond or cash deposit in place before you become licensed. CSLB does not issue bonds.

What are the other requirements?

All applicants must be fingerprinted (at an additional cost to the applicant) and undergo a criminal background check before a license will be issued.

For more information about becoming a California licensed contractor, view CSLB publications and forms at www.cslb.ca.gov, including the annual *California Contractor License Law & Reference Book*.



CONTRACTORS STATE LICENSE BOARD

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DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS



BUILDING YOUR CAREER AS A LICENSED CONTRACTOR



Answers to questions about...

What are the California contractor license classifications?

CSLB issues licenses to contract in specific trades or fields of the construction profession. Each separate trade is recognized as a “classification.” You may add as many classifications to your license for which you qualify.

Class “A” General Engineering

The principal business is in connection with fixed works requiring specialized engineering knowledge and skill.

Class “B” General Building

The principal business is in connection with any structure built, being built, or to be built, requiring in its construction the use of at least two unrelated building trades or crafts; however, framing or carpentry projects may be performed without limitation. In some instances, a General Building contractor may take a contract for projects involving one trade only if the general contractor holds the appropriate specialty license or subcontracts with an appropriately licensed specialty contractor to perform the work.

Class “C” Specialty

There are 42 separate “C” classifications for contractors whose construction work requires special skills and whose principal contracting business involves the use of specialized building trades or crafts. Manufacturers are considered to be contractors if engaged in on-site construction, alteration, repair, or installation.

CLASSIFICATION CODE

ASBESTOS ABATEMENT	C-22
BOILER, HOT-WATER HEATING AND STEAM FITTING	C-4
BUILDING MOVING/DEMOLITION	C-21
CABINET, MILLWORK AND FINISH CARPENTRY	C-6
CERAMIC AND MOSAIC TILE	C-54
CONCRETE	C-8
CONSTRUCTION ZONE TRAFFIC CONTROL	C-31
DRYWALL	C-9
EARTHWORK AND PAVING	C-12
ELECTRICAL	C-10
ELEVATOR	C-11
FENCING	C-13
FIRE PROTECTION	C-16
FLOORING AND FLOOR COVERING	C-15
FRAMING AND ROUGH CARPENTRY	C-5
GENERAL MANUFACTURED HOUSING	C-47
GLAZING	C-17
INSULATION AND ACOUSTICAL	C-2
LANDSCAPING	C-27
LATHING AND PLASTERING	C-35
LIMITED SPECIALTY	C-61
LOCK AND SECURITY EQUIPMENT	C-28
LOW VOLTAGE SYSTEMS	C-7
MASONRY	C-29
ORNAMENTAL METAL	C-23
PAINTING AND DECORATING	C-33
PARKING AND HIGHWAY IMPROVEMENT	C-32
PIPELINE	C-34
PLUMBING	C-36
REFRIGERATION	C-38
ROOFING	C-39
SANITATION SYSTEM	C-42
SHEET METAL	C-43
SIGN	C-45
SOLAR	C-46
STEEL, REINFORCING	C-50
STEEL, STRUCTURAL	C-51
SWIMMING POOL	C-53
WARM-AIR HEATING, VENTILATING AND AIR-CONDITIONING	C-20
WATER CONDITIONING	C-55
WELDING	C-60
WELL DRILLING (WATER)	C-57

Who can become a licensed contractor?

A licensed contractor must be 18 years of age or older and have the experience and skills necessary to manage daily activities of a construction business, including field supervision, or be represented by a qualifying individual with the necessary experience and skills.

Who must be licensed as a contractor?

All businesses or individuals who construct or alter any building, highway, road, parking facility, railroad, excavation, or other structure in California must be licensed by the Contractors State License Board if the total price (combined labor and material costs) of one or more project contracts is \$500 or more. Contractors must be licensed before submitting bids.

Is workers’ compensation insurance required?

All contractors who have employees are required to present proof of workers’ compensation insurance coverage. Contractors who do not have employees working for them are required to file a certificate of exemption with CSLB. The only exception is C-39 Roofing contractors, who are required to have a Certificate of Workers’ Compensation Insurance or a Certificate of Self-Insurance on file with CSLB; C-39 contractors are not eligible for an exemption from workers’ compensation insurance.

How much does a license cost?

In addition to the financial requirements that must be met, it costs \$300 for an original application fee (nonrefundable) and \$180 for the initial license fee for one classification. The application fee for each additional classification is \$75. The license must be renewed every two years; the current renewal fee is \$360.

How can I apply?

The “Application for Original Contractor License” form is available at any CSLB office. Applications also can be downloaded from www.cslb.ca.gov, by calling CSLB’s 24-hour automated information line, (800) 321-CSLB (2752), or by requesting an application through the mail by writing to P.O. Box 26000, Sacramento, CA 95826.