

CONTRACTORS STATE LICENSE BOARD

GET LICENSED TO BUILD

A Guide to Becoming a
California Licensed Contractor



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About CSLB

The Contractors State License Board (CSLB) operates under the Department of Consumer Affairs. CSLB protects consumers by regulating the construction industry through policies that promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the public in matters relating to construction.

A 15-member board, appointed by the Governor and the Legislature, selects CSLB's executive officer, or Registrar of Contractors, and directs administrative policy for CSLB operations. The Board holds regularly scheduled public meetings throughout the state that provide the public with an opportunity to respond to agenda items and recommend other issues for future meetings.

CSLB licenses and regulates around 285,000 contractors in 45 license classifications that make up the California construction industry. CSLB's Enforcement Division investigates consumer complaints against contractors and, when warranted, takes disciplinary action against contractors and/or refers cases to local prosecutors. The Enforcement Division also executes sting operations and worksite sweeps around the state in an effort to limit unlicensed contracting. The registrar oversees more than 400 employees who work at Sacramento headquarters and field offices throughout the state.



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While this publication is designed to provide accurate and current information about becoming a California licensed contractor, readers should consult the *California Contractors License Law & Reference Book* for specific laws. For information about the Contractors State License Board, visit www.cslb.ca.gov or call 800-321-CSLB (2752).

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in learning more about how to get a California contractor's license. Construction is one of the largest industries in California's diverse economy and offers many opportunities for business and career success.

This publication provides answers to the most frequently asked questions about how to become a licensed contractor in California. CSLB's website (www.cslb.ca.gov) has additional information about the license application, exam procedures, study guides, other business requirements, as well as the forms needed to make changes to your license. You can also find information about complaint procedures, legal actions, the location and hours of CSLB offices, and current topics, such as recently passed laws or regulations. This information is also available by calling 800-321-CSLB (2752).

To fulfill its consumer protection mission, CSLB emphasizes education for both consumers and contractors.

Table of Contents

- SEVEN STEPS TO BECOMING A LICENSED CONTRACTOR 1**
- GENERAL REQUIREMENTS 3**
 - Q1. Who can become a licensed contractor in California?3
 - Q2. Who does CSLB license?3
 - Q3. Who must be licensed as a contractor?4
 - Q4. Is anyone exempt from the requirement to have a contractor license?4
 - Q5. Do I need to live in California to get and keep a CSLB-issued contractor license?5
 - Q6. Does California recognize contractor licenses issued by other states or countries?5
 - Q7. What happens if I contract without a license?5
- WORK EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS 7**
 - Q1. What kind of work experience is required for a California contractor license?7
 - Q2. Are there educational requirements for a license?7
 - Q3. May I substitute any education, technical training, or apprenticeship training for the required work experience?8
 - Q4. Can I use my armed services experience toward getting a contractor license?8
 - Q5. Does CSLB offer assistance to military spouses/domestic partners who want a California contractor license?9
- LICENSE CLASSIFICATIONS 11**
 - Q1. What are the contractor license classifications? 11
 - Q2. What contractor classifications are currently authorized by CSLB to perform solar energy projects?12
 - Q3. Are there any special requirements for contractors who work with asbestos or other hazardous substances?13
- APPLYING FOR A LICENSE 15**
 - Q1. How do I apply for a contractor license?15
 - Q2. Who is the qualifier?17
 - Q3. What is the qualifier required to do?17
 - Q4. Who can be a qualifier?17
 - Q5. Can the same person serve as the qualifier for more than one active license?18
 - Q6. Will a criminal conviction prevent someone from obtaining a contractor license or serving as a qualifier?18
 - Q7. Will CSLB acknowledge receipt of my application?18
 - Q8. How long does it take to complete the license application process?19
 - Q9. How will I know if the initial review of my application is complete?19
 - Q10. How can I check the status of my application?19
 - Q11. What happens if my application is not accepted?20
 - Q12. If my application is not accepted, can CSLB refund my application fee?20
 - Q13. Are there any other requirements to get a license?20

LICENSING EXAMINATIONS	21
Q1. Is there an exam requirement for a contractor license?	21
Q2. Are exams available in languages other than English?	21
Q3. What if the qualifier needs a translator?	22
Q4. Under what circumstances will CSLB grant an exam waiver?	22
Q5. If I think I am eligible for an exam waiver, do I need to complete the experience section of the application?	22
Q6. How will I find out if I need to take the exam?	23
Q7. How soon after submitting the application will CSLB send the “Notice to Schedule an Examination”?	23
Q8. Where can I take the exam?	23
Q9. What are the major parts of the examination?	24
Q10. What does the law and business examination cover?	24
Q11. How can I prepare for the law and business exam?	24
Q12. What does the trade exam cover?	24
Q13. How can I prepare for the trade exam?	25
Q14. What should the applicant bring to the examination site?	25
Q15. What percentage is needed to pass the exam?	25
Q16. What is involved with computer-based testing?	25
Q17. How long does the examination take?	25
Q18. What kind of feedback will I receive?	26
Q19. If I fail to appear for an exam may I reschedule?	26
Q20. If I fail one or both exam(s) may I retake them?	26
Q21. May I review the test questions after the exams?	27
Q22. Are there penalties for disclosing the contents of a state examination?	27
ISSUING A LICENSE	29
Q1. After the qualifier passes the exam(s), are there additional requirements before CSLB will issue a license?	29
Q2. What is the difference between an active and an inactive license?	30
Q3. What will I receive to show that I’m licensed?	31
Q4. How long is a license valid?	31
FINANCIAL REQUIREMENTS	33
Q1. Are there any bond requirements for a contractor license?	33
Q2. Where do I obtain bonds?	33
Q3. What is the total fee amount for a contractor license?	33
Q4. Do I need to be concerned about workers’ compensation insurance?	34
DESCRIPTION OF CLASSIFICATIONS	35

Seven Steps to Becoming a Licensed Contractor



Any construction project in California valued at \$1,000 or more in labor and materials combined must be performed by a contractor licensed by CSLB. If the work requires a permit or workers, a license is required no matter the project cost.

STEP 1 DETERMINE IF ELIGIBLE

Each license requires a qualifier who directly supervises and controls the construction operations conducted under the license. This person must be at least 18 years old and have four years of at least journey-level work experience in the last 10 years in the classification (specific trade) being applied for. The qualifier will need to take and pass the required exam(s) before CSLB can issue a license.

If you don't meet these minimum qualifications, you must either choose someone else who meets the requirements to act as the qualifier, or work for a licensed contractor until you meet the minimum qualifications.

STEP 2 VERIFYING WORK EXPERIENCE

After meeting the basic eligibility requirements, the qualifier could be randomly selected to provide documentation that they meet the minimum work experience requirements. Having this documentation ready beforehand can make this process easier if your application is selected for review.

STEP 3 COMPLETE APPLICATION

Each application requires the submission of various information and documents. All applications require a Social Security number (SSN) or an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN). You can access applications and instructions from the CSLB website (www.cslb.ca.gov) or by calling 800-321-CSLB (2752).

STEP 4 SUBMIT APPLICATION AND REQUIRED FEES

A \$450 fee must accompany each application. Fees are subject to change, so please check the CSLB website for the most up-to-date information: www.cslb.ca.gov (search: fees).

STEP 5 FINGERPRINT REQUIREMENT AFTER CSLB REVIEW OF APPLICATION

Each new applicant must submit fingerprints as part of a mandatory criminal background check. The cost for fingerprints varies depending on the Live Scan location. CSLB will send you a notification about how to meet this requirement once we accept your application and the licensing exam(s) are scheduled.

STEP 6 SCHEDULE AN EXAM

The qualifier must pass two computer-based exams—a law and business exam and a trade exam—unless they meet the requirements for an exam waiver (see the “Licensing Exams” section of this publication for information on waivers).

To request the use of a translator, please check the appropriate box in Field 16 on the application form and CSLB will send additional information.

STEP 7 LICENSE ISSUED

Congratulations! Each application has specific license issuance requirements related to business type and personnel, including an initial license fee of \$200 for a sole owner or \$350 for a non-sole owner (good for two years), necessary bonds, and proof of workers’ compensation and/or liability insurance, if appropriate.

Answers to common questions about each of these steps are included in this publication. A free workshop version of this publication also is available to help you get a California contractor license. CSLB’s Get Licensed to Build is a live, interactive workshop on the first Friday of every month, with a Spanish version every third Friday. You can find more information about the licensing workshop on CSLB’s website at www.cslb.ca.gov (search: licensing workshops).

General Requirements



Q1. Who can become a licensed contractor in California?

An individual must:

- Be at least 18 years old; and
- Have either a valid Social Security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number; and
- Have the knowledge, experience, and skills to manage the daily activities of a construction business (including field supervision) or be represented by someone else with that background who serves as the “qualifier.”

The qualifier must have at least four years of experience within the past 10 years as a journey person, foreperson, supervising employee, or contractor in the trade being applied for.

The experience listed on the application must be verifiable, and people with first-hand knowledge of that experience must certify the accuracy of the information provided to CSLB on the “Certification of Work Experience” form. (Please see the section on “Applying for a License” for more information about the responsibilities of a qualifier.)

Q2. Who does CSLB license?

CSLB issues licenses to five types of business entities:

- Sole Owner
- Partnership
- Corporation
- Joint Venture
- Limited Liability Company (LLC)
- Tribal Business

Q3. Who must be licensed as a contractor?

Any construction work valued at \$1,000 or more in labor and/or materials must be performed by a state-licensed contractor. It is illegal to divide a job into smaller parts to get around the \$1,000 limit. If the work requires a permit or workers, a license is required no matter the project cost.

Contractors, including subcontractors, specialty contractors, and people engaged in the business of home improvement must be licensed before submitting bids.

Q4. Is anyone exempt from the requirement to have a contractor license?

Yes. Exemptions include:

- Work on a project where the combined cost (labor and materials, whether purchased by the contractor or the consumer) is less than \$1,000 and the project does not require a permit or workers;
- Government or other public personnel working on public projects;
- Officers of a court acting within the scope of their office;
- Public utilities working under specified conditions;
- Oil and gas operations performed by an owner or lessee;
- Someone who sells installed carpets who holds a retail furniture dealer's license and contracts with a licensed carpet installer to install the carpet and certifies this to the buyer before the installation;
- Security alarm company operators (licensed by the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services) who install, maintain, monitor, sell, alter, or service alarm systems (fire alarm company operators must be licensed by CSLB);
- Individuals who install satellite antenna systems on residential structures or property (these installers must be registered with the Bureau of Household Goods and Services); and

- Owner-builders who:

Engage in home improvement and: 1) the worksite is your principal residence for 12 months prior to completion of the work; and 2) the work is performed prior to sale of the home; and 3) you do not act as the owner-builder on more than two structures during any three-year period.

Engage in the construction of new single-family residences and: 1) you do the work yourself or hire employees (paid in wages) to complete the work and do not sell the home for one year after completion; or 2) you hire properly licensed subcontractor(s) to perform the work in their specialty trade and do not sell more than four homes in a calendar year.

Q5. Do I need to live in California to get and keep a CSLB-issued contractor license?

No.

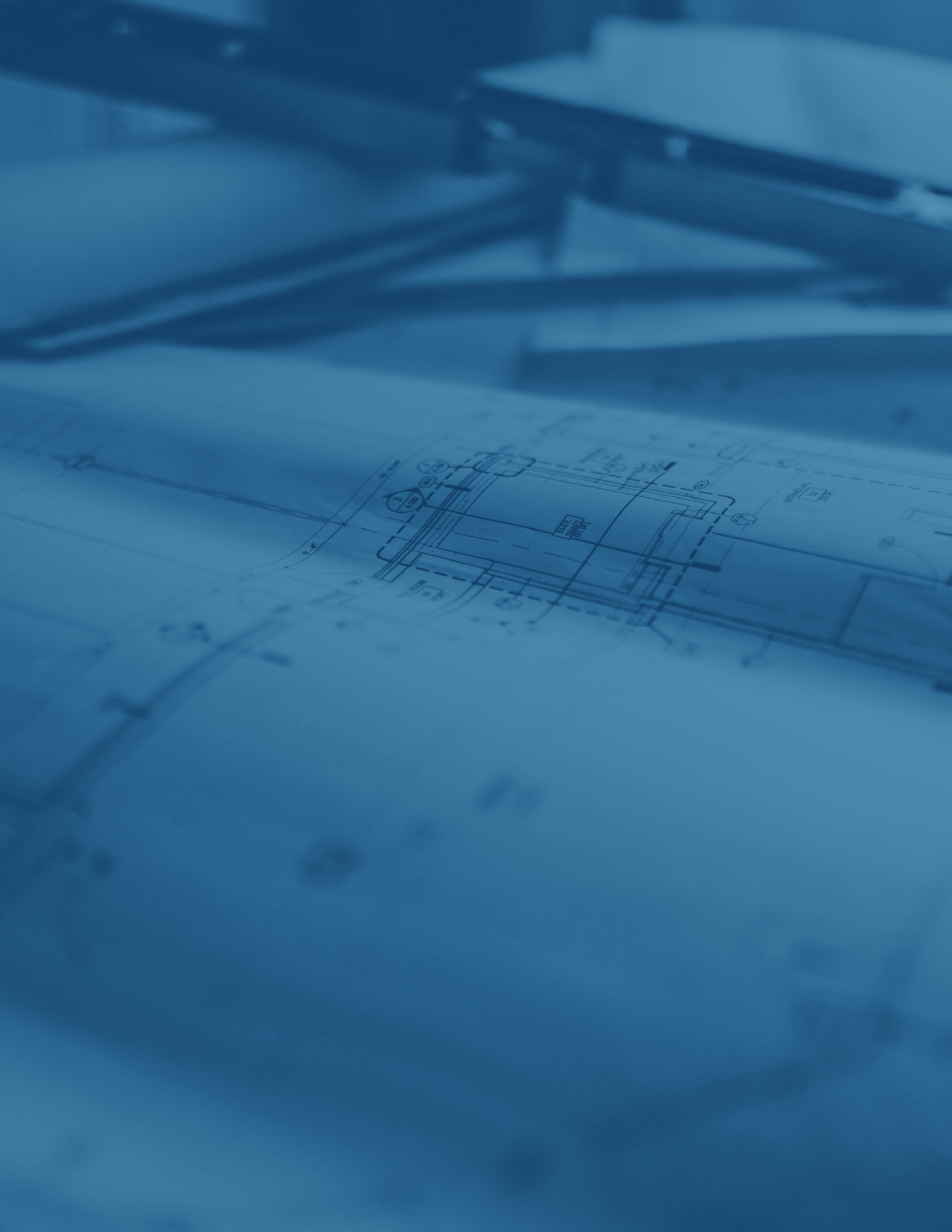
Q6. Does California recognize contractor licenses issued by other states or countries?

No. To work as a contractor in California, you must apply for and be issued a license by CSLB.

However, CSLB does have reciprocity agreements with some other states. Under certain circumstances the CSLB registrar may waive the written trade exam for a contractor licensed in another state; CSLB evaluates requests for reciprocity on a case-by-case basis. Applicants must take and pass the CSLB law and business exam and undergo certification of relevant work experience.

Q7. What happens if I contract without a license?

Contracting for work valued at \$1,000 or more without a license can lead to misdemeanor charges. Unlicensed contractors face a first offense sentence of up to six months in jail, and/or a \$5,000 fine, and potential administrative fines of \$200 to \$15,000. Subsequent violations can result in increased criminal penalties and fines. In addition, you may face felony charges if you contract without a license when one is required in a state or federal declared disaster area.



Work Experience Requirements



Q1. What kind of work experience is required for a California contractor license?

The license qualifier must have at least four years of journey-level work experience in the classification for which they are applying—in the 10 years immediately prior to filing the application. Credit is given only for experience as a journeyperson, foreperson, supervising employee, or contractor.

A journeyperson is an experienced worker, not a trainee, who can perform the trade without supervision or someone who has completed an apprenticeship program.

Someone other than the applicant must verify work experience, such as an employer, fellow employee, other journeyperson, contractor, union representative, building inspector, architect, engineer, business associate, or homeowner or client if the applicant is/was self-employed.

The person who verifies the experience must have observed the relevant work done during the time period in question and complete and sign the “Certification of Work Experience” form, which is included with the application. Be prepared to provide documentation of any experience listed on the form whenever CSLB requests it.

Q2. Are there educational requirements for a license?

No. There are no specific educational or course requirements to get a California contractor license. CSLB is not affiliated with any license preparation schools and cannot make recommendations about them. CSLB does have free study guides for the exams available at www.cslb.ca.gov (search: study guides).

Q3. May I substitute any education, technical training, or apprenticeship training for the required work experience?

Yes. CSLB may grant credit toward the work experience requirement for a completed apprenticeship program, or technical training or completed education at an accredited school. You will need to provide written documentation, including copies of apprenticeship completion certificates and official transcripts with the application. No credit is given for high school coursework. All documents are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Every qualifier must demonstrate at least one year of practical journey-level work experience.

Q4. Can I use my armed services experience toward getting a contractor license?

Yes. The Military Veterans Application Assistance Program helps those transitioning from military service to civilian employment meet the minimum requirements for a contractor license. This program offers expedited processing of veterans' applications by specially trained staff, including the evaluation of any transferable military experience and training, as well as education.

You will be asked to provide evidence of the qualifier's current or previous military service with the application:

- Military orders; or
- Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD 214); or
- Copy of Enlisted Record Brief (ERB); or
- Copy of Officer Record Brief (ORB); or
- Verification of Military Experience and Training (DD 2586); or
- Copy of Joint Service Transcripts (military transcripts); and/or
- Sealed, official educational transcripts of civilian education.

You can obtain copies of service records from www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records.

For more information, visit www.cslb.ca.gov (search: military veterans program).

Q5. Does CSLB offer assistance to military spouses/domestic partners who want a California contractor license?

Yes. The Military Spouse/Domestic Partner Application Assistance Program expedites applications from those who meet both of the following requirements:

- 1) Submits satisfactory evidence that they are married to, in a domestic partnership with, or in another legal union with an active-duty member of the U.S. armed forces who is assigned to a duty station in California under official active-duty orders; and
- 2) Holds a current and valid contractor license in another state, district, or territory of the U.S. in the classification or trade being applied for.

License Classifications



Q1. What are the contractor license classifications?

CSLB issues licenses in particular construction trades. Each trade is recognized as a “classification.” At least four years of verifiable journey-level experience is required for each classification being applied for.

CSLB issues licenses for the following classifications:

- **Class “A” — General Engineering Contractor**
The principal business is in connection with fixed works that require specialized engineering knowledge and skill.
- **Class “B” — General Building Contractor**
The principal business deals with any structure built, being built, or to be built, that requires as part of its construction at least two unrelated building trades or crafts; however, framing or carpentry projects may be performed without limitation. “B” General Building contractors may take a contract for projects that involve one trade only if the contractor holds the appropriate specialty license or subcontracts with an appropriately licensed specialty contractor to perform the work.
- **Class “B-2” — Residential Remodeling Contractor**
The principal business is in connection with any existing residential wood frame structure with nonstructural projects requiring at least three unrelated building trades or crafts.
- **Class “C” — Specialty Contractor**
For contractors whose construction work requires special skill and whose principal contracting business involves the use of specialized building trades or crafts. Manufacturers are considered contractors if engaged in on-site construction, alteration, or repair.

See “Description of Classifications” at the back of this publication for more details about each CSLB license classification.

Q2. What contractor classifications are currently authorized by CSLB to perform solar energy projects?

Only the license classifications below are currently approved to perform solar projects.

- **“A” – General Engineering** contractors are authorized to perform active solar energy projects that require specialized engineering.
- **“B” – General Building** contractors are authorized to perform active solar energy projects in connection with a structure as defined by Business & Professions Code §7057, since an active solar energy system constitutes the use of two unrelated building trades or crafts.
- **C-4 – Boiler, Hot-Water Heating and Steam Fitting** contractors are authorized to perform projects that include solar heating equipment associated with systems authorized by this classification.
- **C-10 – Electrical** contractors are authorized to perform any solar projects that generate, transmit, transform, or utilize electrical energy in any form for any purpose.
- **C-36 – Plumbing** contractors are authorized to perform any project using solar equipment to heat water or fluids to a suitable temperature.
- **C-46 – Solar** contractors install, modify, maintain, and repair thermal and photovoltaic solar energy systems. A C-46 licensee shall not undertake or perform building or construction trades, crafts, or skills, except when required to install a thermal or photovoltaic solar energy system.
- **C-53 – Swimming Pool** contractors are authorized to install solar heating in swimming pool projects.
- **C-61/D-35 – Pool and Spa Maintenance** contractors are authorized to repair existing solar systems that heat pools.

Check with your local utility company, the California Public Utilities Commission, or the California Energy Commission about authorized contractor classifications and any certification(s) that may be necessary to participate in local, state, or federal energy rebate programs.

Q3. Are there any special requirements for contractors who work with asbestos or other hazardous substances?

Yes. Contractors who work with asbestos or other hazardous substances are regulated by the United States Department of Labor's Federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration and the California Department of Industrial Relations' Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH), as well as by CSLB. Contractors working in these areas are subject to a number of certification, registration, reporting, and safety requirements.

ASBESTOS

CSLB issues a C-22 Asbestos Abatement license and a separate Asbestos Certification. C-22 licensees may contract for asbestos abatement with no limitations; those who are certified may only perform abatement work within the license classification they hold.

To receive either a C-22 license or an Asbestos Certification a contractor must:

- Take and pass an EPA-accredited asbestos abatement training course.
- Register with the Asbestos Contractors' Registration Unit of DOSH.
- Submit an application and all required paperwork to CSLB.
- Demonstrate four years of relevant journey-level work experience.
- Pass the appropriate exam(s).

OTHER HAZARDOUS WASTE

Contractors who perform hazardous substance removal work must be certified by CSLB and:

- Complete an "Application for Hazardous Substance Removal and Remedial Actions."
- Pass a CSLB certification exam.

Any contractor with an "A" General Engineering, "B" General Building, C-36 Plumbing, C-12 Earthwork and Paving, C-57 Well Drilling (Water) or, in some cases, the C-61/D-40 Limited Specialty—Service Station Equipment and Maintenance license is eligible for the hazardous substance removal certification.

UNDERGROUND STORAGE TANKS

Contractors who install or remove underground storage tanks must hold the Hazardous Substance Removal and Remedial Actions certification. CSLB policy currently limits certified contractors doing underground storage tank work as follows:

- **“A” – General Engineering** contractors may install and/or remove underground storage tanks for any purpose at any location.
- **“B” – General Building** contractors may, in the course of work performed under a contract that meets the requirements for the “B” classification (see above), install and/or remove an underground storage tank if they have a Hazardous Substance Removal and Remedial Actions certification.
- **C-36 – Plumbing** contractors may install and/or remove any underground storage tank that provides service to a building, including storage tanks for service stations.

Applying for a License



Q1. How do I apply for a contractor license?

- Complete an “Application for Original Contractor License.” You can fill it out on CSLB’s website: www.cslb.ca.gov (search: application) and then print it; or download and print a blank application and complete it using blue or black ink; or request a paper copy at any CSLB office or by calling 800-321-CSLB (2752).
- Carefully read the general information and follow the instructions included with the application.
- Identify a qualifier for the license. (Please see below for more information about the responsibilities of a qualifier.)
- The qualifier will be required to provide certifications to support the work experience listed on the application; this information cannot be altered after the application has been reviewed and accepted.
- Be sure to sign and date the application before sending it in.
- Proofread the application for any missing information. If CSLB needs to return an incomplete application, the license may be delayed, or the application denied or considered abandoned if corrections are not made within 90 days of CSLB notifying you of the problem.
- Applicants requesting special testing accommodations should complete an “Accommodation Request for Examination” available at www.cslb.ca.gov (search: accommodation request) and include it with the application.
- **IF THE QUALIFIER NEEDS TO TAKE ONE OR BOTH LICENSING EXAMS:**
 - » You may apply for only one classification at a time. After CSLB issues your license, you may apply for any additional classifications.
 - » Submit an application and the application fees. (You may submit the \$450 application processing fee and initial license fee of \$200 for a sole owner or \$350 for a non-sole owner, in addition to \$150 for each additional classification at this time) to:

Contractors State License Board
P.O. Box 26000
Sacramento, CA 95826



ATTENTION

Do NOT submit any bond or the initial license fee with your application.

- » After the qualifier passes the exam(s), CSLB will send information about how to submit the initial license fee of \$200 for a sole owner or \$350 for a non-sole owner and other required documents (bonds, proof of workers' compensation insurance, etc.) before we can issue a license. Please submit all of the required documents together to avoid delays. CSLB cannot issue a license until you meet all issuance requirements.
- **IF THE QUALIFIER DOES NOT NEED TO TAKE AN EXAM:**
 - » You may submit an original application for more than one classification at a time if you meet the statutory requirements for a waiver.
 - » Submit an application and the application fees. (You may submit the \$450 application processing fee and initial license fee of \$200 for a sole owner or \$350 for a non-sole owner, in addition to \$150 for each additional classification at this time) to:

Contractors State License Board
P.O. Box 26000
Sacramento, CA 95826
- The following items are required before CSLB can issue an active license:
 - » A contractor bond, or equivalent, in the business name of the applicant. Also, if appropriate, a bond of qualifying individual or exemption statement for each responsible managing officer or responsible managing employee (the bond of qualifying individual must be in the names of the qualifying individuals and the business). Learn more about bonds at www.cslb.ca.gov (search: bonds).
 - » Proof of workers' compensation insurance or exemption (if you have no employees, you must submit an exemption certificate). Learn more about workers' compensation at www.cslb.ca.gov (search: workers' compensation).

If the license is qualified by a responsible managing employee, the qualifier is considered an employee and workers' compensation insurance is required. An exemption certificate should not be submitted.

All active C-8 Concrete, C-20 Warm-Air Heating, Ventilating and Air-Conditioning, C-22 Asbestos Abatement, C-39 Roofing, and/or C-61/D-49 Tree Service contractors are required to carry workers' compensation insurance or a valid Certification of Self-Insurance, whether or not they have employees.

Q2. Who is the qualifier?

A “qualifier” is the person listed in CSLB records who meets the experience and exam requirements for the license. A qualifier is required for every classification on each license CSLB issues.

Q3. What is the qualifier required to do?

The qualifier for a license must take and pass all required exams, as well as undergo a criminal background check. After the license is issued, the qualifier is responsible for exercising direct supervision and control of the employer’s (or principal’s) construction operations.

Q4. Who can be a qualifier?

- **Sole ownership license:** Either the owner or a responsible managing employee (RME) may serve as a qualifier.
- **Partnership license:** Either one of the general partners (who shall be designated the qualifying partner) or an RME may serve as the qualifier.
- **Corporate license:** Either one of the current officers listed in CSLB records for the license (who shall be designated the responsible managing officer, or RMO) or an RME may serve as the qualifier.
- **Limited liability company license:** A responsible managing member, responsible managing manager, RMO, or RME may serve as the qualifier.

If the qualifier is an RME, they must be a bona fide employee of the firm and may not be the qualifier on any other active CSLB license. The RME must be permanently employed by the firm and actively engaged in the operation of the contracting business at least 32 hours per week or 80 percent of the total business operating hours per week, whichever is less.

Q5. Can the same person serve as the qualifier for more than one active license?

Yes. But only if one of the following conditions exists:

- There is common ownership of at least 20 percent of the equity of each firm for which they act as the qualifier; or
- The additional firm is a subsidiary of, or a joint venture with, the first firm (the parent company must have a CSLB license); or
- In the case of partnerships, corporations, or LLCs, the majority of partners, officers, or members/managers are the same for each firm.

Even if one of the above conditions exists, a person may act as the qualifier for no more than three firms in any one-year period.

Q6. Will a criminal conviction prevent someone from obtaining a contractor license or serving as a qualifier?

Not necessarily. CSLB may deny a license if the criminal conviction is substantially related to the duties, functions, and qualifications of a contractor. However, even under such circumstances, CSLB may issue a license if the individual has demonstrated sufficient rehabilitation.

Q7. Will CSLB acknowledge receipt of my application?

Yes. CSLB will send a letter of acknowledgment, which will have two important numbers: 1) a nine-digit application fee number; and 2) a four-digit personal identification number (PIN). The letter will also include instructions about how to use these numbers to check the status of your application.

The application fee number also will appear on other documents related to the application. Please keep a record of this number and use it in all inquiries about the pending application.

Q8. How long does it take to complete the license application process?

Processing times continually change because of the many factors (i.e., type of application, workload, staff vacancies, etc.) that affect the time it takes to process an application.

If no exams are required and you meet all license requirements, CSLB can issue a license shortly after the application is processed.

If exams are required, CSLB will give you an exam date after the application is initially reviewed and considered acceptable, which means no corrections or additional information is needed.

Once you pass the exam, CSLB will complete its processing of the application. During this time, staff will take a more detailed look at your application to further ensure all requirements are met before issuing the license.

Q9. How will I know if the initial review of my application is complete?

After CSLB reviews and accepts your application, you will receive a “Notice to Schedule an Examination.” If the exam is waived, you will instead receive a request for additional documents and payment of the initial license fee.

A randomly selected percentage of applications undergo additional investigation of work experience claims. If your application is selected for further review, and even though you may take and pass the exams, CSLB cannot issue the license until this process is complete, the work experience claims verified, and you meet all additional issuance requirements.

Q10. How can I check the status of my application?

Each week CSLB updates information on its website at www.cslb.ca.gov and through its automated phone system (800-321-CSLB) about the application date staff are currently processing, which will give you a good idea of when your application will likely be processed.

Additionally, you can use your PIN and application fee number to check the status of your application. While using just the application fee number will provide the basics of your application, using the application fee number with the PIN will provide you more details about your status. If you have a PIN, you will need to select the secured application status page on the website.

Q11. What happens if my application is not accepted?

CSLB will return the application if it is insufficient or incomplete. You must provide any missing information, make any necessary corrections, and return the application to CSLB within 90 days from the date it was returned.

If you do not return the corrected application to CSLB within 90 days, it becomes void. A voided application cannot be reinstated; you will need to submit a new application and the appropriate processing fee if you wish to get a license.

Q12. If my application is not accepted, can CSLB refund my application fee?

No. The \$450 fee is for processing your application, regardless of whether it is accepted. Since CSLB files each application for processing as soon as it arrives, we cannot refund the fee.

Q13. Are there any other requirements to get a license?

Yes. You must be fingerprinted and complete an asbestos open book exam before CSLB can issue a license.

FINGERPRINTING

All license applicants must submit a full set of fingerprints for a criminal background check. Fingerprints will be compared to California Department of Justice and Federal Bureau of Investigation records to determine if a criminal history exists.

After receiving an application, CSLB will send each person listed on the application instructions about how to submit fingerprints. For more information, visit CSLB's website: www.cslb.ca.gov (search: fingerprint).

ASBESTOS OPEN BOOK EXAM

Before CSLB can issue a license, every applicant must take an open book exam on asbestos abatement standards. The exam can be taken on CSLB's website: www.cslb.ca.gov (search: asbestos open book). Paper copies can be requested by calling 800-321-CSLB (2752).

Licensing Examinations



Q1. Is there an exam requirement for a contractor license?

Yes. The applicant for a contractor license must pass both the law and business exam and a specific trade exam, unless they meet the requirements for an exam waiver (see question 4 below). No trade exam is required for the C-61 Limited Specialty license.

Accommodation Request for Examination

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), CSLB provides reasonable accommodations for applicants with disabilities that may affect their ability to take the exam(s). The applicant must notify CSLB about the need for accommodation; CSLB is not required to provide accommodation if it is unaware of specific needs. To request accommodation, submit the “Special Accommodation Request for Examination” available at www.cslb.ca.gov (search: accommodation request) or in any CSLB office.

Q2. Are exams available in languages other than English?

All exams are offered in English. CSLB recognizes that some candidates may have difficulty reading or understanding the English language. To that end, Spanish versions of 10 exams commonly taken by candidates are available, including:

- Law and Business
- “B” General Building Contractor
- C-8 Concrete
- C-9 Drywall
- C-15 Flooring and Floor Covering
- C-27 Landscaping
- C-33 Painting and Decorating
- C-36 Plumbing
- C-39 Roofing
- C-54 Ceramic and Mosaic Tile

Candidates requesting translators for those exams are required to take the Spanish versions. For all other trade exams, accommodations may be made for you to be joined by an approved translator during your exam.

Q3. What if the qualifier needs a translator?

If the applicant has difficulty understanding or reading English, CSLB may allow the use of a translator to read the exam. CSLB must approve in advance the translator you choose. To request the use of a translator, please check the appropriate box on the application and CSLB will send additional information.

Q4. Under what circumstances will CSLB grant an exam waiver?

The registrar may waive the trade exam if the applicant meets one of the following conditions:

- The person is currently the qualifier for a license in good standing (current and not under suspension) in the same classification being applied for; or
- The person has been a qualifier within the past five years for a license in good standing in the same classification being applied for; or
- Within the last five years, the person has passed both the law and business exam and the trade exam in the same classification being applied for.

Other waiver provisions defined in Business and Professions code sections 7065.1, 7065.2, and 7065.3 may also be granted.

Q5. If I think I am eligible for an exam waiver, do I need to complete the experience section of the application?

Yes. Even if you think you are eligible for an exam waiver, you must complete the work experience section of the application to document a minimum of four years journey-level work out of the previous 10 years.

Someone other than the applicant must verify all experience claims, such as an employer, fellow employee, other journeyperson, contractor, union representative, building inspector, architect, engineer, business associate, or homeowner or client if the applicant is/was self-employed. This person must have observed the work.

Q6. How will I find out if I need to take the exam?

If the applicant needs to take the exam, CSLB will send a “Notice to Schedule an Examination.” CSLB contracts its exams through an outside vendor, PSI Exams, which will also send the qualifier a “Candidate Information Bulletin” with more information on scheduling the exam.

Q7. How soon after submitting the application will CSLB send the “Notice to Schedule an Examination”?

CSLB informs applicants after the application is processed and found acceptable; many factors can affect how long application processing takes. You can check the status of your application either through CSLB’s website www.cslb.ca.gov (search: [application status](#)) or its automated phone system (800-321-CSLB) using your PIN and application fee number. If you have a PIN, you will need to select the secured application status page on the website.

Once you receive your “Notice to Schedule an Examination,” you should be able to schedule your exam on PSI’s website (www.psiexams.com) at a date, time, and location of your convenience.

Q8. Where can I take the exam?

CSLB contracts its exams through PSI Exams, which has test centers located throughout California: Agoura Hills, Atascadero, Bakersfield, Carson, Diamond Bar, Fresno, Irvine, Lawndale, Redding, Riverside, Sacramento, San Diego, San Francisco, Santa Clara, Santa Fe Springs, Santa Rosa, Union City, Ventura, Visalia, and Walnut Creek. CSLB applicants can also take the exams at an out-of-state test center in Wilsonville, Oregon. Applicants may select whichever test center is most convenient for them. Test centers operate Monday through Saturday and have evening hours. PSI’s “Candidate Information Bulletin” sent to each applicant includes the exam locations, travel directions, and information about required identification.

Q9. What are the major parts of the examination?

All applicants must pass: 1) the law and business exam; and 2) a specific trade or certification exam in the classification applied for. (No trade exam is required for the C-61 Limited Specialty classification.)

Q10. What does the law and business examination cover?

The law and business exam consists of multiple-choice questions related to business management and California construction law.

Q11. How can I prepare for the law and business exam?

Review the current edition of the *California Contractors License Law & Reference Book*. Free access to the book is available on CSLB's website www.cslb.ca.gov (search: law book) or copies may be purchased through:

LexisNexis/Matthew Bender & Company
Attn. Inbound Sales
9443 Springboro Pike
Miamisburg, OH 45342
800-833-9844
www.lexisnexis.com/bookstore

You also can find information about the exam topics in the "Candidate Information Bulletin" that PSI sends to applicants. This material is also available on the CSLB website www.cslb.ca.gov (search: study guides).

Q12. What does the trade exam cover?

Exams are developed with assistance from licensed contractors in the specific classifications, and most include questions that refer to accompanying publications containing blueprints and/or drawings. Exams are updated every five to seven years.

Q13. How can I prepare for the trade exam?

CSLB's examination administration vendor PSI will send a "Candidate Information Bulletin." This information is also available on CSLB's website: www.cslb.ca.gov (search: study guides). The study guide lists the topic areas covered by the exam, includes sample questions, shows how each content area is weighted, and recommends resource materials to study.

Q14. What should the applicant bring to the examination site?

The applicant should arrive at the PSI test center 30 minutes before the scheduled exam time. For admission to the test center, applicants need to bring a government-issued photo identification (a current, valid driver license, Department of Motor Vehicles identification card, U.S. passport, military identification card, U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services Resident Alien Card, or U.S.-issued Employment Authorization Card).

Q15. What percentage is needed to pass the exam?

The applicant can inquire with CSLB regarding the percentage needed to pass the exam as it varies for each exam.

Q16. What is involved with computer-based testing?

All exams are taken on a computer and consist of multiple-choice questions. Exams are taken using a system that guides the applicant through an on-screen tutorial about how to use the system prior to the exam.

Q17. How long does the examination take?

You will be given 3½ hours to complete each exam. If you arrive late, you may not be admitted to the examination site and you may forfeit your examination registration fee.

Q18. What kind of feedback will I receive?

Test results will be shared before the applicant leaves the test center. Successful candidates are told that they have passed but are not given detailed information about their score.

Unsuccessful candidates will see on the computer once they finish the exam how well they performed on each section of the exam. Candidates should note which sections they need to improve upon as these sections correspond with the sections described in the Content of the Examination on the exam study guide.

Q19. If I fail to appear for an exam may I reschedule?

Yes. If you fail to appear for an exam, you must pay a rescheduling fee to PSI. You may reschedule the exam as many times as needed within 18 months, as long as you pay the rescheduling fee each time. After 18 months, the application is considered void, and you will have to submit a new application with new fees.

You may cancel and reschedule an examination appointment without forfeiting your fee if your cancellation notice is received two days prior to the scheduled examination date. You need to call PSI at (877) 392-6422.

Q20. If I fail one or both exam(s) may I retake them?

Yes. If you fail the law and business exam and/or the trade exam, you must pay a fee to PSI each time you reschedule. You have 18 months after CSLB accepts your application to pass the exams. After 18 months, the application is considered void, and you will have to submit a new application with new fees.

Exam results are good for five years. If you pass one exam and fail the other, you only have to retake and pass the one you failed within five years.

Q21. May I review the test questions after the exams?

No. However, you may type a comment about a question during the exam at any time before it is scored. You can also contact CSLB for a “Request for Examination Appeal” form after the exam. Once CSLB staff review your appeal request, you will receive a letter informing you of the outcome.

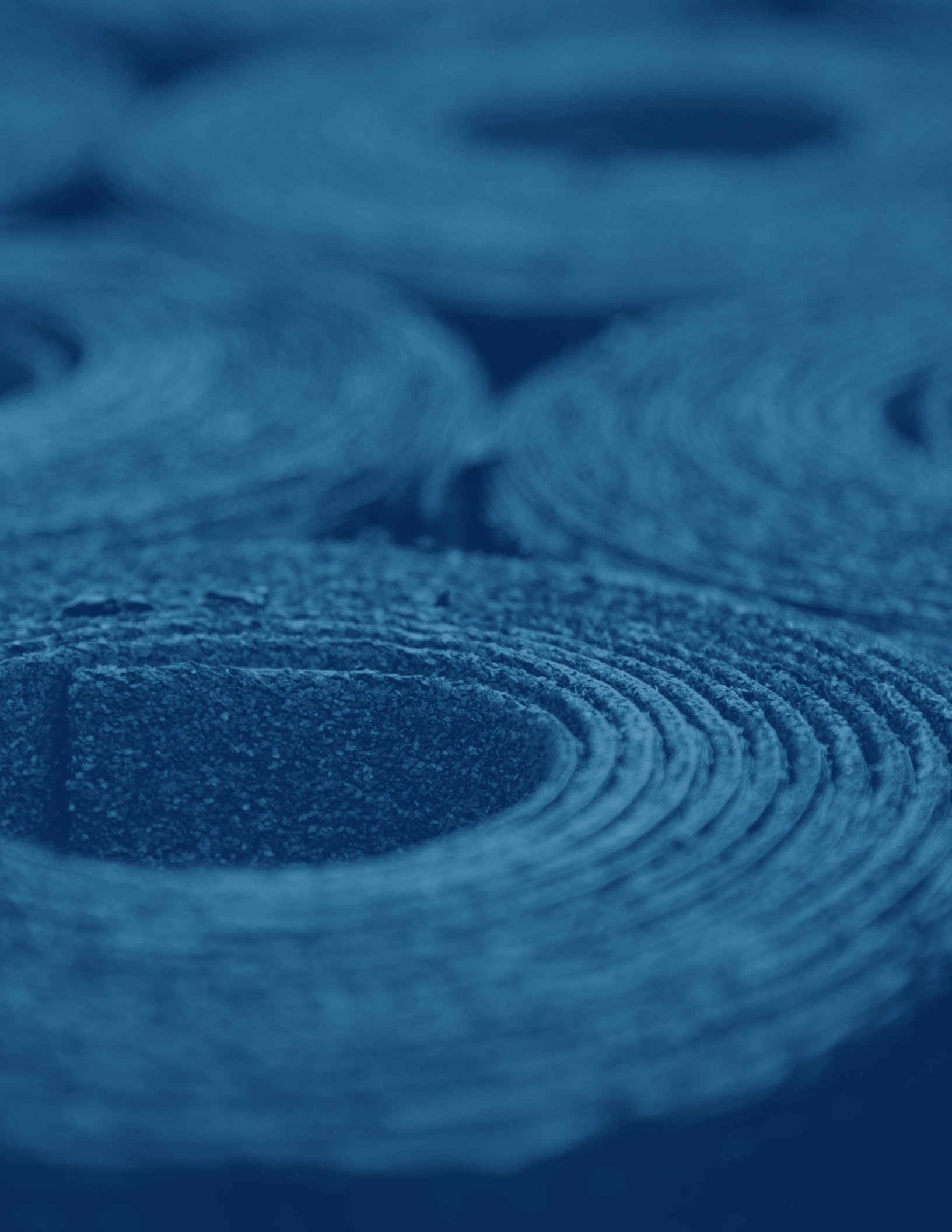
Q22. Are there penalties for disclosing the contents of a state examination?

Yes. Conduct that violates exam security includes:

- Providing information about test questions to any school, person, or business other than CSLB exam staff
- Removing exam materials from the test site (including taking notes or recording anything electronically)
- Communicating with other test takers during an exam
- Copying or permitting your answers to be copied
- Possessing any written material other than test materials provided by CSLB
- Taking the exam on behalf of another applicant

Penalties for violating exam security include:

- Automatic exam failure
- Forfeiture of any fees already paid
- Prosecution on misdemeanor charges that can result in a \$500 fine; payment of damages of up to \$10,000, plus the costs of litigation; and a county jail sentence
- Inability to apply for any CSLB license for one year from the exam date



Issuing a License

Q1. After the qualifier passes the exam(s), are there additional requirements before CSLB will issue a license?

Yes. After passing the exams, the qualifier will receive a letter at the test site outlining the additional requirements before CSLB can issue a license. These include:

- An initial license fee of \$200 for a sole owner or \$350 for a non-sole owner (active and inactive licenses)
- Completion of the asbestos open book exam and submission to CSLB of the results (active and inactive licenses)
- Every first-time applicant listed (each owner, officer, partner, member, manager, or responsible managing employee) must submit fingerprints for the mandatory criminal background check (active and inactive licenses).
- A \$25,000 contractor's bond or cashier's check (active licenses only)
- Proof of current and valid workers' compensation insurance if any of the following apply (active licenses only):
 - » You hire any employee(s) who reside in California; or
 - » You employ home improvement salesperson(s); or
 - » Your qualifier is a responsible managing employee (RME); or
 - » You hold a C-8 Concrete, C-20 Warm-Air Heating, Ventilating and Air-Conditioning, C-22 Asbestos Abatement, C-39 Roofing contractors, and/or C-61/D-49 Tree Service license (all C-8, C-20, C-22, C-39 and C-61/D-49 contractors are required to carry workers' compensation insurance or a valid Certification of Self-Insurance, whether or not they have employees).
- Submission of an "Exemption from Workers' Compensation" if you do not have employees, the qualifier is not a responsible managing employee, and you do not hold C-8, C-20, C-22, C-39, and/or C-61/D-49 classification (active licenses only)

- A \$25,000 bond of qualifying individual or cashier's check for every responsible managing employee and all responsible managing officers who own less than 10 percent of the voting stock or equity of the corporation or LLC they serve as the qualifier for (corporate and LLC licenses only)
- A \$100,000 LLC/worker bond in addition to the \$25,000 contractor bond (LLC licenses only)
- Liability insurance, with an aggregate limit of \$1 million, for licenses with five or fewer persons listed as personnel; plus an additional \$100,000 for each additional personnel listed on the license; not to exceed \$5 million total (LLC licenses only)

Q2. What is the difference between an active and an inactive license?

ACTIVE LICENSE:

The holder of an active license can contract for work in the classification(s) that appear on the license.

The licensee must have a current contractor bond, a bond of qualifying individual (if required), and workers' compensation insurance, if employees are hired. (All C-8, C-20, C-22, C-39, and C-61/D-49 contractors are required to carry workers' compensation insurance or a valid Certification of Self-Insurance, regardless of whether they have employees.) An active LLC license has additional requirements—a \$100,000 LLC/worker bond and liability insurance.

INACTIVE LICENSE (RENEWED, BUT INACTIVE):

The holder may not bid or contract for work.

Neither the contractor bond nor the bond of qualifying individual is required. Also, the licensee does not need to have either workers' compensation or proof of exemption from workers' compensation insurance coverage on file with CSLB.

Q3. What will I receive to show that I'm licensed?

CSLB will send a wall certificate that shows the name of the person or company on the license, the license number, classification, date of issue, and expiration date; and a plastic pocket license card showing the same information.

State law requires that you display the wall certificate in your main office or chief place of business and provide proof that you have a contractor license when asked. You should carry your pocket license card with you, especially in situations where you may solicit business or talk to potential customers. CSLB encourages consumers to ask to see a contractor's pocket license card.

It takes approximately 5-10 business days from the time CSLB issues the license to receive your wall certificate and pocket license card.

Q4. How long is a license valid?

A contractor license is initially issued, whether active or inactive, for a two-year period. It will expire two years from the last day of the month in which it was issued. For example, if the license was issued on January 15, 2025, it will expire on January 31, 2027.

After the initial two-year license period, active licenses are renewed for two years; inactive licenses for four years.



Financial Requirements



Q1. Are there any bond requirements for a contractor license?

Yes. You must file a \$25,000 contractor license surety bond or cashier's check with CSLB.

If applicable, you must also submit a separate \$25,000 bond of qualifying individual or cash deposit for the responsible managing employee or responsible managing officer. However, a bond of qualifying individual is not required if the RMO certifies that they own 10 percent or more of the voting stock or equity of the corporation for which they serve as the qualifier.

If you have a limited liability company (LLC) license, whether the license is issued as active or inactive, you must file a \$100,000 surety bond (in addition to the \$25,000 contractor bond) for the benefit of any employee or worker damaged by the LLC's failure to pay wages, interest on wages, or fringe benefits, as well as other contributions.

Q2. Where do I obtain bonds?

You may purchase bonds from your insurance agent or from one of the surety companies licensed by the California Department of Insurance. CSLB does not issue bonds. Copies of the approved bond form and information about the option of a cashier's check is available at www.cslb.ca.gov (search: bonds) or by calling 800-321-CSLB (2752).

Q3. What is the total fee amount for a contractor license?

Fees are subject to change. As of this printing, the total fee amount for a contractor license for one classification is \$650 for a sole owner or \$800 for a non-sole owner. This includes both the nonrefundable application processing fee of \$450 and the two-year initial license fee of \$200 for a sole owner or \$350 for a non-sole owner.

Current fees are printed on the application forms and notices that CSLB sends. You may also check www.cslb.ca.gov (search: fees) or call CSLB (800-321-2752) to verify the current fees.

Q4. Do I need to be concerned about workers' compensation insurance?

Yes. To get a license, maintain an active license, or activate an inactive license, contractors with employees must submit proof to CSLB of workers' compensation insurance coverage or a certificate of self-insurance issued by the Department of Industrial Relations; contractors without employees must submit an exemption from that requirement. (All active C-8 Concrete contractors, C-20 Warm-Air Heating, Ventilating and Air-Conditioning contractors, C-22 Asbestos Abatement contractors, C-39 Roofing contractors, and/or C-61/D-49 Tree Service contractors are required to carry workers' compensation insurance or a valid Certification of Self-Insurance, whether or not they have employees.)

If the license is qualified by a responsible managing employee (RME), CSLB will not accept an exemption certificate because the RME is an employee.

Neither proof of workers' compensation insurance coverage nor an exemption is required for an inactive license.

Description of Classifications



The California Contractors State License Board (CSLB) issues licenses to contract in particular trades or fields of the construction profession. Each separate trade is recognized as a “classification.” Licensed contractors may add any classification for which they are qualified, upon application and examination. General contractor classification statutes are cited from California Business and Professions Code (BPC) sections 7056-7059.

CSLB issues licenses for the following classifications:

Class “A” — General Engineering Contractor

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

Class “B” — General Building Contractor

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.

Class “B-2” — Residential Remodeling Contractor

The principal business is in connection with any existing residential wood frame structure with nonstructural projects requiring at least three unrelated building trades or crafts.

Class “C” — Specialty Contractor

There are 42 separate “C” license classifications for contractors whose construction work requires special skill and whose principal contracting business involves the use of specialized building trades or crafts.

GENERAL CONTRACTORS

“A” General Engineering

A general engineering contractor is a contractor whose principal contracting business is in connection with fixed works requiring specialized engineering knowledge and skill, including the following divisions or subjects: irrigation, drainage, water power, water supply, flood control, inland waterways, harbors, docks and wharves, shipyards and ports, dams and hydroelectric projects, levees, river control and reclamation works, railroads, highways, streets and roads, tunnels, airports and airways, sewers and sewage

disposal plants and systems, waste reduction plants, bridges, overpasses, underpasses and other similar works, pipelines and other systems for the transmission of petroleum and other liquids or gaseous substances, parks, playgrounds and other recreational works, refineries, chemical plants and similar industrial plants requiring specialized engineering knowledge and skill, powerhouses, power plants and other utilities plants and installations, mines and metallurgical plants, land leveling and earthmoving projects, excavating, grading, trenching, paving and surfacing work, and cement and concrete works in connection with the above mentioned fixed works. (BPC §7056)

“B” General Building

- (a) A general building contractor’s principal contracting business is in whole or partial connection with any structure built, being built, or to be built, for the support, shelter and enclosure of persons, animals, chattels, or moveable property of any kind requiring in its construction the use of at least two unrelated building trades or crafts, or to superintend the whole or any part thereof. This does not include anyone who merely furnishes materials or supplies under Section 7045 without fabricating them into, or consuming them in the performance of the work of the general building contractor.
- (b) A general building contractor may take a prime contract or a subcontract for a framing or carpentry project. However, a general building contractor shall not take a prime contract for any project involving trades other than framing or carpentry unless the prime contract requires at least two unrelated building trades or crafts other than framing or carpentry, or unless the general building contractor holds the appropriate license classification or subcontracts with an appropriately licensed contractor to perform the work. A general building contractor shall not take a subcontract involving trades other than framing or carpentry, unless the subcontract requires at least two unrelated trades or crafts other than framing or carpentry, or unless the general building contractor holds the appropriate license classification. The general building contractor may not count framing or carpentry in calculating the two unrelated trades necessary in order for the general building contractor to be able to take a prime contract or subcontract for a project involving other trades.
- (c) No general building contractor shall contract for any project that includes the “C-16” Fire Protection classification as provided for in Section 7026.12 or the “C-57” Well Drilling classification as provided for in Section 13750.5 of the Water Code, unless the general building contractor holds the appropriate license classification, or subcontracts with the appropriately licensed contractor. (BPC §7057)

“B-2” Residential Remodeling

- (a) A residential remodeling contractor is a contractor whose principal contracting business is in connection with any project to make improvements to, on, or in an existing residential wood frame structure, and the project requires the use of at least three unrelated building trades or crafts for a single contract.
- (b) (1) A residential remodeling contractor may take a prime contract for trades or crafts which may include, but is not limited to, the following:
 - (A) Drywall.
 - (B) Finish carpentry.
 - (C) Flooring.
 - (D) Insulation.
 - (E) Painting.
 - (F) Plastering.
 - (G) Roof repair.
 - (H) Siding.
 - (I) Tiling.
 - (J) Installing, repairing, or replacing electrical fixtures, such as dimmers, fans, lights, outlets, and switches.
 - (K) Installing, repairing, or replacing plumbing fixtures, such as faucets, sinks, toilets, and tubs.
 - (L) Installing, repairing, or replacing mechanical fixtures, such as air filters, air delivery and return grills, and preassembled exhaust fans.
- (2) A residential remodeling contractor shall not take a contract unless the contract includes three or more unrelated trades or crafts.
- (3) Subject to the limit described in paragraph (2), a residential remodeling contractor may self-perform its contract or may subcontract any of the trades or crafts to appropriately licensed subcontractor or subcontractors.
- (c) A residential remodeling contractor shall conduct its contracting activity in accordance with the following restrictions:
 - (1) A residential remodeling contractor shall not contract for a project that includes the following trades or crafts unless the contractor holds the appropriate license classification or subcontracts with an appropriately licensed contractor:
 - (A) C-16 Fire Protection.
 - (B) C-22 Asbestos Abatement.
 - (C) C-57 Well Drilling.

- (2) A residential remodeling contractor shall not contract to make structural changes to load bearing portions of an existing structure, including, but not limited to, footings, foundations, load bearing walls, partitions, and roof structures.
- (3) (A) The residential remodeling contractor shall not contract to install, replace, substantially alter, or extend electrical, mechanical, or plumbing systems or their component parts, or the mechanisms or devices that are part of those systems, unless the residential remodeling contractor holds the appropriate license classification or subcontracts with an appropriately licensed contractor.

(B) The residential remodeling contractor may contract to make minor alterations to existing electrical, mechanical, or plumbing systems to effectuate the purpose of installing, repairing, or replacing electrical, mechanical and plumbing fixtures, provided that the contract requires the use of at least three unrelated building trades or crafts.

(C) The board may adopt regulations to further define what activity constitutes the minor alterations described in subparagraph (B), and to further define the electrical, mechanical, or plumbing systems, or their component parts, or the mechanisms or devices that are part of those systems, that are subject to the restriction described in subparagraph (A).
- (d) This contractor classification may be cited as the B-2 Residential Remodeling Contractor. (BPC §7057.5)

SPECIALTY CLASSIFICATIONS

- (a) A specialty contractor is a contractor whose operations involve the performance of construction work requiring special skill and whose principal contracting business involves the use of specialized building trades or crafts.
- (b) A specialty contractor includes a contractor whose operations include the business of servicing or testing fire extinguishing systems.
- (c) A specialty contractor includes a contractor whose operations are concerned with the installation and laying of carpets, linoleum, and resilient floor covering.
- (d) A specialty contractor includes a contractor whose operations are concerned with preparing or removing roadway construction zones, lane closures, flagging, or traffic diversions on roadways, including, but not limited to, public streets, highways, or any public conveyance. (BPC §7058)

The following specialty classifications are found in the California Code of Regulations (CCR) unless otherwise noted.

C-2 Insulation and Acoustical

An insulation and acoustical contractor installs any insulating media and preformed architectural acoustical materials for the purpose of temperature and/or sound control. (832.02 CCR)

C-4 Boiler, Hot-Water Heating and Steam Fitting

A boiler, hot-water heating and steam fitting contractor installs, services and repairs power boiler installations, hot-water heating systems and steam fitting, including fire-tube and water-tube steel power boilers and hot-water heating low pressure boilers, steam fitting and piping, fittings, valves, gauges, pumps, radiators, convectors, fuel oil tanks, fuel oil lines, chimneys, flues, heat insulation and all other equipment, including solar heating equipment, associated with these systems. (832.04 CCR)

C-5 Framing and Rough Carpentry

A framing and rough carpentry contractor performs any form work, framing or rough carpentry necessary to construct framed structures; installs or repairs individual components of framing systems and performs any rough carpentry or associated work, including but not limited to the construction or installation of: sub-flooring, siding, exterior staircases and railings, overhead doors, roof decking, truss members, and sheathing. (832.05 CCR)

C-6 Cabinet, Millwork and Finish Carpentry

A cabinet, millwork and finish carpentry contractor makes cabinets, cases, sashes, doors, trims, non-bearing partitions and other items of “finish carpentry” by cutting, surfacing, joining, gluing and fabricating wood or other products to provide a functional surface. This contractor also places, erects, and finishes such cabinets and millwork in structures. (832.06 CCR)

C-7 Low Voltage Systems

A communication and low voltage systems contractor installs, services and maintains all types of communication and low voltage systems which are energy limited and do not exceed 91 volts. These systems include, but are not limited to, telephone systems, sound systems, cable television systems, closed-circuit video systems, satellite dish antennas, instrumentation and temperature controls, and low voltage landscape lighting. Low voltage fire alarm systems are specifically not included in this section. (832.07 CCR)

C-8 Concrete

A concrete contractor forms, pours, places, finishes and installs specified mass, pavement, flat and other concrete work; and places and sets screeds for pavements or flatwork. This class shall not include contractors whose sole contracting business is the application of plaster coatings or placing and erecting of steel or bars for the reinforcing of mass, pavement, flat and other concrete work. (832.08 CCR)

C-9 Drywall

A drywall contractor lays out and installs gypsum wall board and gypsum wall board assemblies, including nonstructural metal framing members, and performs the taping and texturing operations including the application of compounds that adhere to wall board to produce a continuous smooth or textured surface. (832.09 CCR)

C-10 Electrical

An electrical contractor places, installs, erects or connects any electrical wires, fixtures, appliances, apparatus, raceways, conduits, battery energy storage systems, photovoltaic solar energy systems or any part thereof, which generate, transmit, transform or utilize electrical energy in any form or for any purpose. (832.10 CCR)

**This regulation was amended in October 2024 but its effective date and implementation have been temporarily stayed at the time of this update.*

C-11 Elevator

An elevator contractor fabricates, erects, installs and repairs elevators, including sheave beams, motors, sheaves, cable and wire rope, guides, cab, counter weights, doors (including sidewalk elevator doors), automatic and manual controls, signal systems, and all other devices and equipment associated with the safe and efficient installation and operation of electrical, hydraulic and manually operated elevators. (832.11 CCR)

C-12 Earthwork and Paving

An earthwork and paving contractor digs, moves, and places material forming the surface of the earth, other than water, in such a manner that a cut, fill, excavation, grade, trench, backfill, or tunnel (if incidental thereto) can be executed, including the use of explosives for these purposes. This classification includes the mixing, fabricating and placing of paving and any other surfacing materials. (832.12 CCR)

C-13 Fencing

A fencing contractor constructs, erects, alters, or repairs all types of fences, corrals, runs, railings, cribs, game court enclosures, guard rails and barriers, playground game equipment, backstops, posts, flagpoles, and gates, excluding masonry walls. (832.13 CCR)

C-15 Flooring and Floor Covering

A flooring and floor covering contractor prepares any surface for the installation of flooring and floor coverings, and installs carpet, resilient sheet goods, resilient tile, wood floors and flooring (including the finishing and repairing thereof), and any other materials established as flooring and floor covering material, except ceramic tile. (832.15 CCR)

C-16 Fire Protection

A fire protection contractor lays out, fabricates and installs all types of fire protection systems; including all the equipment associated with these systems, excluding electrical alarm systems. (832.16 CCR)

C-17 Glazing

A glazing contractor selects, cuts, assembles and/or installs all makes and kinds of glass, glass work, mirrored glass, and glass substitute materials for glazing; executes the fabrication and glazing of frames, panels, sashes and doors; and/or installs these items in any structure. (832.17 CCR)

C-20 Warm-Air Heating, Ventilating and Air-Conditioning

A warm-air heating, ventilating and air-conditioning contractor fabricates, installs, maintains, services and repairs warm-air heating systems and water heating heat pumps, complete with warm-air appliances; ventilating systems complete with blowers and plenum chambers; air-conditioning systems complete with air-conditioning unit; and the ducts, registers, flues, humidity and thermostatic controls and air filters in connection with any of these systems. This classification shall include warm-air heating, ventilating and air-conditioning systems which utilize solar energy. (832.20 CCR)

C-21 Building Moving/Demolition

A building moving/demolition contractor raises, lowers, cribs, underpins, demolishes and moves or removes structures, including their foundations. This classification does not include the alterations, additions, repairs or rehabilitation of the permanently retained portions of such structures. (832.21 CCR)

C-22 Asbestos Abatement

An asbestos abatement contractor performs abatement, including containment, encapsulation, or removal, and disposal of asbestos-containing construction materials, as defined in Section 6501.8 of the Labor Code, in and on buildings and structures. All work performed and all documentation prepared by an asbestos abatement contractor shall be done in accordance with regulations and requirements of the Department of Industrial Relations' Division of Occupational Safety and Health (DOSH). The C-22 Asbestos Abatement contractor classification operates as a stand-alone specialty contractor classification for asbestos abatement work, regardless of any other classification(s) that may be held by the licensed contractor, and functions within the scope of the contractor's DOSH registration. (832.22 and 833 CCR excerpts)

C-23 Ornamental Metal

An ornamental metals contractor assembles, casts, cuts, shapes, stamps, forges, welds, fabricates and installs, sheet, rolled and cast, brass, bronze, copper, cast iron, wrought iron, monel metal, stainless steel, steel, and/or any other metal for the architectural treatment and ornamental decoration of structures. This classification does not include the work of a sheet metal contractor. (832.23 CCR)

C-27 Landscaping

A landscape contractor constructs, maintains, repairs, installs, or subcontracts the development of landscape systems and facilities for public and private gardens and other areas which are designed to aesthetically, architecturally, horticulturally, or functionally improve the grounds within or surrounding a structure, or a tract or plot of land. In connection therewith, a landscape contractor prepares and grades plots and areas of land for the installation of any architectural, horticultural and decorative treatment or arrangement. (832.27 CCR)

C-28 Lock and Security Equipment

A lock and security equipment contractor evaluates, sets-up, installs, maintains and repairs all doors and door assemblies, gates, locks and locking devices, panic and fire rated exit devices, manual and automatic operated gate and door closures and releases, jail and prison locking devices and permanently installed or built-in safes and vaults. This classification includes but is not limited to master key systems, metal window guards, security doors, card activated and electronic access control systems for control equipment, motion and other types of detectors and computer systems for control and audit of control systems and other associated equipment. Fire alarm systems are specifically not included in this section. (832.28 CCR)

C-29 Masonry

A masonry contractor installs concrete units and baked clay products; concrete, glass and clay block; natural and manufactured stone; terra cotta; and fire brick or other material for refractory work. This classification includes the fabrication and installation of masonry component units for structural load bearing and non-load bearing walls for structures and fences installed with or without mortar; ceramic veneer (not tile) and thin brick that resembles full brick for facing; paving; and clear waterproofing, cleaning and caulking incidental to masonry construction. (832.29 CCR)

C-31 Construction Zone Traffic Control

A construction zone traffic control contractor prepares or removes lane closures, flagging, or traffic diversions, utilizing portable devices, such as cones, delineators, barricades, sign stands, flashing beacons, flashing arrow trailers, and changeable message signs, on roadways, including, but not limited to, public streets, highways, or any public conveyance. (832.31 CCR)

C-32 Parking and Highway Improvement

A parking and highway improvement contractor applies and installs protective coatings, vehicle stops, guard rails and mechanical devices, directional lines, buttons, markers, signs and arrows on the horizontal surface of any game court, parking facility, airport, highway or roadway constructed of concrete, asphalt or similar material. This classification includes the surface preparatory work necessary for the application of protective coatings but does not include the re-paving of these surfaces. (832.32 CCR)

C-33 Painting and Decorating

A painting and decorating contractor prepares by scraping, sandblasting or other means and applies any of the following: paints, papers, textures, fabrics, pigments, oils, turpentine, japan, driers, thinners, varnishes, shellacs, stains, fillers, waxes, adhesives, water and any other vehicles, mediums and materials which adhere by evaporation and may be mixed, used and applied to the surfaces of structures and the appurtenances thereto for purposes of decorating, protecting, fireproofing and waterproofing. (832.33 CCR)

C-34 Pipeline

A pipeline contractor fabricates and installs pipelines for the conveyance of fluids, such as water, gas, or petroleum, or for the containment or protection of any other material, including the application of protective coatings or systems and the trenching, boring, shoring, backfilling, compacting, paving and surfacing necessary to complete the installation of such pipelines. (832.34 CCR)

C-35 Lathing and Plastering

- (a) A lathing and plastering contractor coats surfaces with a mixture of sand, gypsum plaster, quick-lime or hydrated lime and water, or sand and cement and water, or a combination of such other materials that create a permanent coating, including coatings for the purpose of soundproofing and fireproofing. These coatings are applied with a plasterer's trowel or sprayed over any surface which offers a mechanical means for the support of such coating, and will adhere by suction. This contractor also installs lath (including metal studs) or any other material prepared or manufactured to provide a base or bond for such coating.
- (b) A lathing and plastering contractor also applies and affixes wood and metal lath, or any other material prepared or manufactured to provide key or suction bases for the support of plaster coatings. This classification includes the channel work and metal studs for the support of metal or any other lathing material and for solid plaster partitions. (832.35 CCR)

C-36 Plumbing

A plumbing contractor provides a means for a supply of safe water, ample in volume and of suitable temperature for the purpose intended and the proper disposal of fluid waste from the premises in all structures and fixed works. This classification includes but is not limited to:

- (a) Complete removal of waste from the premises or the construction and connection of on-site waste disposal systems;
- (b) Piping, storage tanks and venting for a safe and adequate supply of gases and liquids for any purpose, including vacuum, compressed air and gases for medical, dental, commercial and industrial uses;
- (c) All gas appliances, flues and gas connections for all systems including suspended space heating units. (This does not include forced warm air units.);
- (d) Water and gas piping from the property owner's side of the utility meter to the structure or fixed works;
- (e) Installation of any type of equipment to heat water or fluids, to a temperature suitable for the purposes listed in this section, including the installation of solar equipment for this purpose; and
- (f) The maintenance and replacement of all items described above and all health and safety devices such as, but not limited to, gas earthquake valves, gas control valves, back flow preventers, water conditioning equipment and regulating valves. (832.36 CCR)

C-38 Refrigeration

A refrigeration contractor constructs, fabricates, erects, installs, maintains, services and repairs refrigerators, refrigerated rooms, and insulated refrigerated spaces, temperature insulation, air-conditioning units, ducts, blowers, registers, humidity and thermostatic controls for the control of air, liquid and/or gas temperatures below fifty degrees Fahrenheit (50°), or ten degrees Celsius (10°). (832.38 CCR)

C-39 Roofing

A roofing contractor installs products and repairs surfaces that seal, waterproof and weatherproof structures. This work is performed to prevent water or its derivatives, compounds or solids from penetrating such protection and gaining access to material or space beyond. In the course of this work, the contractor examines and/or prepares surfaces and uses the following material: asphaltum, pitch, tar, felt, glass fabric, urethane foam, metal roofing systems, flax, shakes, shingles, roof tile, slate or any other roofing, waterproofing or membrane material(s) or a combination thereof. (832.39 CCR)

C-42 Sanitation System

A sanitation system contractor fabricates and installs cesspools, septic tanks, storm drains, and other sewage disposal and drain structures. This classification includes the laying of cast iron, steel, concrete, vitreous and non-vitreous pipe and any other hardware associated with these systems. (832.42 CCR)

C-43 Sheet Metal

A sheet metal contractor selects, cuts, shapes, fabricates and installs sheet metal such as cornices, flashings, gutters, leaders, pans, kitchen equipment, duct work (including insulation, patented chimneys, metal flues, metal roofing systems and any other installations requiring sheet metal). (832.43 CCR)

C-45 Sign

A sign contractor fabricates, installs, and erects electrical signs, including the wiring of such electrical signs, and non-electrical signs, including but not limited to: post or pole supported signs, signs attached to structures, painted wall signs, and modifications to existing signs. (832.45 CCR)

C-46 Solar

- (a) A solar contractor installs, modifies, maintains, and repairs thermal and photovoltaic solar energy systems. A licensee classified in this section shall not undertake or perform building or construction trades, crafts, or skills, except when required to install a thermal or photovoltaic solar energy system.
- (b) For the purposes of this section, a battery energy storage system, as defined in Section 810, shall not be considered part of a photovoltaic solar energy system or required to install a photovoltaic solar energy system. Except as provided in subdivision (c), a licensee classified in this section shall not install, connect, modify, maintain, or repair a battery energy storage system.
- (c) For purposes of Section 7059 of the Code and this division, a licensee classified in this section may install a battery energy storage system as “incidental and supplemental” to the installation of a photovoltaic solar energy system if the battery energy storage system does not exceed a rating of 80 kilowatt-hours (kWh). (832.46 CCR)

**This regulation was amended in October 2024 but its effective date and implementation have been temporarily stayed at the time of this update.*

C-47 General Manufactured Housing

- (a) A general manufactured housing contractor installs, alters, repairs, or prepares for moving any type of manufactured home as defined in Section 18007 of the Health and Safety Code, any type of mobile home as defined in Section 18008 of the Health and Safety Code, and any type of multifamily manufactured home as defined in Section 18008.7 of the Health and Safety Code, including the accessory buildings or structures, and the foundations. A manufactured home does not include any recreational vehicle, commercial coach, or factory-built housing as defined in Section 19971 of the Health and Safety Code.
- (b) A general manufactured housing contractor may provide utility services on a single family individual site placement. Utility services mean the connection of gas, water, sewer, and electrical utilities to the home. (832.47 CCR)

C-49 Tree and Palm

A Tree and Palm contractor plants, maintains, and removes trees and palms. The duties include pruning, stump grinding, and tree, palm, or limb guying. This regulation does not apply to, and a license shall not be required for, incidental pruning of trees or guying of planted trees and their limbs by a nurseryperson or incidental pruning of trees by a gardener as described in Section 7026.1 of the Code. (832.49 CCR)

C-50 Reinforcing Steel

A reinforcing steel contractor fabricates, places and ties steel mesh or steel reinforcing bars (rods), of any profile, perimeter, or cross-section that are or may be used to reinforce concrete structures. (832.50 CCR)

C-51 Structural Steel

A structural steel contractor fabricates and erects structural steel shapes and plates, of any profile, perimeter or cross-section that are or may be used as structural members for buildings and structures, including the riveting, welding, rigging, and metal roofing systems necessary to perform this work. (832.51 CCR)

C-53 Swimming Pool

A swimming pool contractor constructs swimming pools, spas or hot tubs, including installation of solar heating equipment using those trades or skills necessary for such construction. (832.53 CCR)

C-54 Ceramic and Mosaic Tile

A ceramic and mosaic tile contractor prepares surfaces as necessary and installs glazed wall, ceramic, mosaic, quarry, paver, faience, glass mosaic and stone tiles; thin tile that resembles full brick, natural or simulated stone slabs for bathtubs, showers and horizontal surfaces inside of buildings, or any tile units set in the traditional or innovative tile methods, excluding hollow or structural partition tile. (832.54 CCR)

C-55 Water Conditioning

A water conditioning contractor installs water conditioning equipment with the use of only such pipe and fittings as are necessary to connect the water conditioning equipment to the water supply system and to by-pass all those parts of the water supply system within the premises from which conditioned water is to be excluded. (832.55 CCR)

C-57 Well Drilling

A well drilling contractor installs and repairs water wells and pumps by boring, drilling, excavating, casing, cementing and cleaning to provide a supply of uncontaminated water. (832.57 CCR)

C-60 Welding

A welding contractor causes metal to become permanently attached, joined and fabricated by the use of gases and electrical energy, which creates temperatures of sufficient heat to perform this work. (832.60 CCR)

C-61 LIMITED SPECIALTIES

California Code of Regulations Division 8, Title 16, Article 3. Classification

- (a) Limited specialty is a specialty contractor classification limited to a field and scope of operations of specialty contracting for which an applicant is qualified other than any of the specialty contractor classifications listed and defined in this article.
- (b) An applicant classified and licensed in the classification Limited Specialty shall confine activities as a contractor to that field or fields and scope of operations set forth in the application and accepted by the Registrar or to that permitted by Section 831.
- (c) Upon issuance of a C-61 license, the Registrar shall endorse upon the face of the original license certificate the field and scope of operations in which the licensee has demonstrated qualifications.
- (d) A specialty contractor, other than a C-61 contractor, may perform work within the field and scope of the operations of Classification C-61, provided the work is consistent with the established usage and procedure in the construction industry and is related to the specialty contractor's classification. (832.61 CCR)

C-61 LIMITED SPECIALTY CLASSIFICATIONS

CSLB lists the C-61 classifications in "D" subcategories for administrative tracking. Definitions for the "D" subcategories were developed by staff and approved by the Board.

D-03 Awnings

An awning contractor installs, modifies or repairs aluminum, metal, vinyl or canvas awnings and patio covers. These installations can be either freestanding or attached to a structure. Patio enclosures or carports are not included in this classification.

D-04 Central Vacuum Systems

A central vacuum systems contractor installs, modifies, maintains or repairs central vacuum systems, pneumatic tube dispatching systems or any other type of pipeline which operates systems of reduced pressure for any purpose.

D-06 Concrete-Related Services

A concrete-related services contractor installs reusable steel concrete form sections or interlocking precast pavers; performs post-tensioning work, concrete sawing, breaking, curing, floor hardening treatment, coloring concrete, concrete restoration, coring work or operates a concrete pumping service; and also includes the application of gunite, but does not include the installation of reinforcing steel.

D-09 Drilling, Blasting and Oil Field Work

A drilling, blasting and oil field work contractor does core and post hole drilling, horizontal drilling (no piping) and drilling for placement of charges and performing blasting work; performs drilling for site dewatering, oil well drilling and other oil field-related specialty work. (DOES NOT INCLUDE WATER WELL DRILLING)

D-10 Elevated Floors

An elevated floors contractor installs wood or metal framed elevated computer flooring systems. This work does not include the construction of mezzanines.

D-12 Synthetic Products

A synthetic products contractor installs:

- (a) Synthetic counter tops and wall coverings; fiberglass, plastic, vinyl and epoxy products; plastic tile board and decorative art work; and synthetic turf;
- (b) Bathtub and enamel refinishing, resin and epoxy application, and synthetic caulking and sealants;
- (c) Reservoir liners, vinyl swimming pool relining, pier piling wrap, and rodent guards; and
- (d) PVC piping systems for irrigation and drainage; and subsurface irrigation drip systems.

D-16 Hardware, Locks and Safes

A hardware, locks and safes contractor installs, modifies or repairs power and/or manually activated door and window locks with related hardware, built-in safes, and vaults.

D-21 Machinery and Pumps

A machinery and pumps contractor installs, removes, modifies or repairs:

- (a) Pumps; conveyors; cranes; dock levelers; various hoisting and material handling equipment; and meters;
- (b) Dumb waiters; handicap lifting and assistance equipment; automated speed-rail trolley systems for garment hanging; and
- (c) Automatic car washing racks and auto body paint finishing booth equipment.

NOTE: Construction of buildings and/or roof structures for this equipment is not included.

D-24 Metal Products

A metal products contractor installs, modifies or repairs the following:

- (a) Metal cabinets, lockers, modular storage structures, mail chutes, cable racks; and aluminum or vinyl storm doors and windows;
- (b) Metal wall tiles; aluminum fascia covers; and metal gutters; and
- (c) Aluminum studs and trusses; metal railings and turnstiles; metal prison cell accessories such as welded-to-structure cell furniture; grills; and cabinets.

D-28 Doors, Gates and Activating Devices

A doors, gates and activating devices contractor installs, modifies or repairs all types of residential, commercial or industrial doors including overhead or sliding door assemblies. This includes but is not limited to: wood and screen doors, metal-clad doors, glass sliding/stationary doors and frames, automatic revolving doors, hospital cubical doors and related installations; power-activated doors, gates, movable sun shades/shutters; card-activated equipment and other access control device; and any low-voltage electronic or manually operated door hardware/device.

D-29 Paperhanging

A paperhanging contractor applies all types and varieties of decorative wall coverings, except painting or paneling, including paper and vinyl goods, cork, burlap and carpet-type wall coverings.

D-30 Pile Driving/Pressure Foundation Jacking

A pile driving/pressure foundation jacking contractor provides a pile driving and/or caisson drilling or auger service. This work also includes but is not limited to the injection of concrete or mortar into foundations for stabilization purposes.

D-31 Pole Installation and Maintenance

A pole installation and maintenance contractor installs wood or precast poles to support the wiring or cable that is installed by others or installs and maintains flag poles.

D-34 Prefabricated Equipment

A prefabricated equipment contractor performs installation of prefabricated products/equipment, including but not limited to the following:

- (a) Theater stage equipment, school classroom equipment, playground equipment, bleacher bench/seat component parts (no installation or renovation of any supporting or structural member); store fixtures, and display cases (either prefabricated or modular form); all forms and types of toilet/shower room partitions/accessories; and prefabricated closet systems.
- (b) Laboratory and medical equipment, and dust-collecting systems; factory-built fireplaces and accessories (no masonry facing); major appliance installations and ventilating hoods in connection with existing fuel and energy lines which are installed by others.
- (c) Bus stop shelters, prefabricated phone booths; prefabricated sound proof environmental clean rooms; panelized refrigerated walk-in boxes (not to include the work of refrigeration contractor); all types of modular office, institutional or home improvement systems including, but not limited to, all types of pre-finished and/or UL listed pre-wired wall panels.

D-35 Pool and Spa Maintenance

A pool and spa maintenance contractor installs, replaces or repairs pool motors, pumps, filters, gas heaters and any above-ground piping in connection with pools; includes electrical switches, breakers, pool lights, diving boards, existing solar systems that heat pools, pool and spa acid baths, and applies vinyl liners to existing surfaces.

D-38 Sand and Water Blasting

A sand and water blasting contractor uses the force of compressed air in conjunction with abrasive materials or water to clean or prepare surfaces for any protective, decorative and/or functional treatment.

D-39 Scaffolding

A scaffolding contractor erects metal or wood scaffolding including temporary sidewalk sheltered construction work barricades.

D-40 Service Station Equipment and Maintenance

A service station maintenance contractor installs, repairs, maintains or calibrates monitoring equipment for underground fuel storage tanks up to 20,000 gallons which have been or are to be used for dispensing gasoline, diesel fuel, waste oil or kerosene (no chemicals). This includes the installation of vapor probes in back fill areas of the tanks and any associated calibration work, including but not limited to the testing and adjustment of leak detection and vapor recovery equipment, such as automatic tank gauges, leak line detectors, vapor recovery lines, and in-station diagnostics.

Note for Those Holding a License with this Classification Issued Prior to January 18, 2001: *You may perform all the work as described above, as well as install and/or remove the underground fuel storage tanks themselves, including the installation and/or removal of all incidental tank related piping and electrical work, and the installation of auto hoisting equipment, grease racks, compressors, air hoses, and other service station equipment.*

D-41 Siding and Decking

A siding and decking contractor applies or installs all types of exterior siding including wood, wood products, vinyl, aluminum and metal siding to new or existing buildings. This contractor also constructs wooden decks and related handrails. This work shall not include the construction or installation of covers or enclosures of any kind.

D-42 Non-Electrical Sign Installation

A non-electrical sign installation contractor fabricates and installs all types of nonelectrical signs including, but not limited to: post or pole-supported signs, signs attached to structures, painted wall signs, and modifications to existing signs.

D-50 Suspended Ceilings

A suspended ceilings contractor installs, modifies or repairs all types of suspended ceilings including, but not limited to: lay-in-grid and other types of systems involving solid, perforated or translucent ceiling panels (no electrical work).

D-52 Window Coverings

A window coverings contractor installs or applies decorative, architectural/functional window/glass treatment or covering products including, but not limited to: all types of materials and fabrics that make up louvers, shutters, Venetian and mini-blinds; residential or commercial draperies and screens; expanded metal window and door guards; plastic film window treatment and/or any other window treatment applied for temperature control or as a screening device.

D-53 Wood Tanks

A wood tanks contractor erects or repairs elevated wooden storage tanks and related cooling towers. (Hot tubs are not included.)

D-56 Trenching

A trenching contractor is limited to trenching only for foundations, pipelines, conduit and related trenching work.

D-59 Hydroseed Spraying

A hydroseed spraying contractor applies seeds through any liquid media to any type of surface that has been prepared or contoured by others.

D-62 Air and Water Balancing

An air and water balancing contractor installs any device and performs any work related to providing a specified flow of air in all types of existing heating and cooling systems and/or related to providing a specified flow of water in water piping systems.

D-63 Construction Cleanup

A construction cleanup contractor cleans up and/or removes from building grounds or structures any debris resultant from any construction project including, but not limited to: concrete, dirt, scrap lumber, plaster, drywall, any paint or adhesive products from windows, floors, ceramic tile and bathroom fixtures.

D-64 Non-specialized

A non-specialized contractor installs, modifies, maintains, removes, and repairs products and/ or installations which are not defined in any section herein or defined in any license classification authorized by the Board under Chapter 9, Division 3 of the Business and Professions Code (Contractors License Law).

D-65 Weatherization and Energy Conservation

A weatherization and energy conservation contractor installs, removes, modifies or repairs or provides maintenance services for energy conservation products limited to the following: door and window weather stripping, caulking, water heater pipe wrap, water heater blankets, insulating gaskets for electrical outlet covers, shade screens, shutters, storm windows, tinted window film, residential water flow restricting devices installed onto existing fixtures. (DOES NOT INCLUDE INSULATION, GLAZING OR HEATING VENTILATING AND AIR-CONDITIONING WORK).

OBSOLETE C-61 LIMITED SPECIALTY CLASSIFICATION SUBCATEGORIES

CSLB no longer issues licenses in these C-61 limited specialty subcategories and cannot accept new applications for them. However, some CSLB licensees may still hold a valid, current, and renewable license in these subcategories.

D-05 Communication Equipment

(Converted to C-7)

D-07 Conveyors-Cranes

(Now under D-21)

D-08 Doors and Door Services

(Now under D-28)

D-13 Fire Extinguisher Systems

(Now under C-16)

D-17 Industrial Insulation

(Now under C-2)

D-19 Land Clearing

(Now under C-12 or "A" if license is required)

D-20 Lead Burning and Fabrication

(Now under D-64)

D-22 Marble

(Now under C-29)

D-23 Medical Gas Systems

(Now under C-36)

D-25 Mirrors and Fixed Glass

(Now under C-17)

D-27 Movable Partitions

(Now under D-34)

D-32 Power Nailing and Fastening

(Now under D-64)

D-33 Precast Concrete Stairs

(Now under C-23)

D-36 Rigging and Rig Building

(Now under "A")

D-37 Safes and Vaults

(Now under D-16)

D-43 Soil Grouting

(Now under C-32, C-12 or "A")

D-44 Sprinklers

(Now under D-12)

D-45 Staff and Stone

(Now under C-29)

D-46 Steeple Jack Work

(Under relevant class)

D-47 Tennis Court Surfacing

(Now under C-12 or "A")

D-48 Theater and School Equipment

(Now under D-34)

D-49 Tree Service

(Now under C-49)

D-51 Waterproofing and Weatherproofing

(Now under C-39, C-33, C-29 or C-54)

D-54 Rockscaping

(Now under C-15 or C-27)

D-55 Blasting

(Now under C-12 or "A")

D-58 Residential Floating Docks

(Now under "A")

D-60 Striping

(Now under C-32)

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