

A Message from the Contractors State License Board

Are you a journeyman who has been working in the building and construction trades for at least four years? Are you presently a contractor wanting to incorporate your business or start a new venture? The California Contractors State License Board wants to help you navigate the process as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

The fastest, most efficient way to contact the Board is through our Web site, www.cslb.ca.gov. Answers to most of your questions can be answered online 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including how to start the process, obtain the necessary forms, and then track the progress of your application after you submit it.

CSLB receives more than 23,000 applications for new licenses every year, and is receiving a record number of application requests this year. Due to recent budget and staffing cuts, license processing times have increased considerably. Therefore, be aware that once you submit your application, it will take several months before it will be pulled for processing. Plan ahead - it takes an average of six months from submission of the application, through the testing process, to the final receipt of the license **if all of the documents are in order and all requirements met.**

To avoid further delays, it is imperative to complete your licensing paperwork carefully and thoroughly so the application will not be returned to you for correction. More than 35% of the applications received by CSLB must be rejected because of incomplete or incorrect information. Don't let this happen to you! The Top Ten reasons for application rejections are as follows:

- } Business namestyle problems: Your business name must reflect the license classification you're applying for **or**, if you haven't decided on a business name, you may use your personal name.
- } Corporation not properly registered: All corporations must be registered with the California Secretary of State. Their website is www.ss.ca.gov.
- } Partnerships not properly registered: Partnerships must provide a Federal Employer Identification Number. Obtain form number SS4 from the Internal Revenue Service website at www.irs.gov.
- } Legal name not listed: You must show the full legal name for all personnel. No nicknames, such as "Mike" for "Michael", unless "Mike" is your legal name. That goes for middle names, too – the full legal middle name is also required, not just an initial – unless your legal middle name is an initial only. Please state this on the application so it is not rejected as an error.
- } Missing signatures: Each person listed on the application must provide their signature and printed name – including you!

- } Apprenticeship experience: Yes, your apprenticeship experience counts! To receive credit, send in your apprenticeship certificate and complete the area on page 3 of the application that requests the beginning and ending dates of your completed apprenticeship program.
- } Incomplete experience #1: When documenting your experience on your application, you must include your dates of employment and the total time worked.
- } Incomplete experience #2: Describe in detail specific trade duties you performed or supervised.
- } Self-employment: If you were self-employed, indicate this on page 3 of the application.
- } Incorrect certification of experience: An individual who has direct knowledge of your work experience must complete the certification. You cannot certify your own work experience.

After you have completed your application and assembled all the necessary documentation, review them for completeness and accuracy. Use the checklist provided with the application package to ensure that you have included all the necessary documents and provided all the necessary information on the application. Make sure you have included your application fee payment -- and if it's a check, make sure it is properly filled out and signed.

When CSLB receives your application, it is entered into the CSLB tracking system. You will receive a confirmation letter, assigning you an application fee number, a Personal Identification Number (PIN), and instructions so you can check the progress of your application. Visit the CSLB's Web site, www.cslb.ca.gov to check your application status. The online system will also display what date the Board is currently working on. This information is updated weekly, and will give you a good idea of when your application will be pulled for processing.

The CSLB is working diligently to provide the best possible service despite current challenges. By planning ahead and submitting complete and accurate documents, you can help yourself sail through the licensing process and help us process your license request more quickly and efficiently.