



# Facts About Becoming an Electrical Contractor

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The Specialty Compliance Services division of the Department of Labor and Industries administers the state's electrical contracting laws.

The following information explains the requirements for operating as an electrical contractor. If you have questions, call an L&I service office near you. (Telephone numbers are listed in the government section or white pages of your phone directory.)

## **Who can be designated as an electrical contractor?**

State law defines an electrical contractor as "any person, firm, partnership, corporation or other entity that offers to undertake, undertakes, submits bids for, or does the installing or maintaining of wires or equipment that convey electrical current."

## **I'm a general contractor. Can I use the same bond for electrical contracting?**

No. If you are both a licensed electrical contractor and a registered general contractor, you need two separate bonds.

## **I only install alarm systems. Do I need an electrical contracting license?**

Yes. An electrical specialty contractor license covers low-voltage alarm installations. There are 11 types of specialty electrical contractor licenses as well as the general electrical contracting license.

## **What are the specialty electrical contracting licenses?**

They include, but are not limited to, residential, pump and irrigation, domestic well, signs, domestic appliances, limited energy, limited energy HVAC/Refrigeration, non-residential maintenance, non-residential lighting maintenance and retrofit, residential maintenance, and door, gate and similar systems.

## **I'm a journeyman electrician. Can I just get bonded to do contracting?**

No. An electrical contracting firm must have an electrical contracting license and employ an electrical administrator, as well as obtain a bond or assignment of savings.

## **How do I become a licensed electrical contractor?**

You must complete an application form, obtain an electrical contractor's bond or assign a savings account in the amount of \$4,000, submit a transfer of administrator's form (completed and signed by a Washington state certified electrical administrator), and pay the associated fees. The electrical contractor's license fee is \$222.40 for a two-year license. The fee for an assignment of administrator's certificate is \$33.10. For more information, call your local L&I service location as listed in the government section or white pages of your phone directory.

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**What is an electrical administrator?**

An electrical administrator has passed the electrical administrator's exam and is designated by the electrical contractor to supervise work and electricians according to Chapter 19.28 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW). He or she is responsible for assuring that all electrical work conforms to the National Electrical Code and state laws, rules and regulations.

**What if my designated administrator quits?**

If this happens, the electrical contracting firm has 90 days to secure another administrator. If the administrator is not replaced in that time, the company is placed in a suspended status. If the administrator dies, the electrical contractor has 180 days to secure another administrator.

**Is there a reinstatement fee after suspension?**

Yes, there is a fee of \$44.70 to reinstate an electrical contractor's license once a suspension has occurred.

**Could I be penalized for contracting without an electrical contractor's license?**

Yes. The department can levy a first-offense civil penalty of \$500.

**What if I renew my contractor's license late? Is there a penalty?**

There is no penalty for late renewal. However, you may not work as an electrical contractor if your license expires.

**Does the jurisdiction of an electrical contractor's license cover the entire state?**

Yes. The provisions of the statute relating to electrical contractors' licenses are exclusive. No other political subdivision can require additional licenses for the same purpose.

**If my electrical contracting business fails, can I claim my \$4,000 assignment of savings immediately?**

No. This money cannot be released until one year after the date the electrical contractor notifies the department in writing that the person or firm has ceased to do business.

**If I change the name of my company, do I need a new electrical contractor's license?**

Yes. Any time the business structure is changed, a new application, bond or assignment of savings and assignment of administrator's form and related fees are required so a new license may be issued.

**Where do I get forms to apply for an electrical contractor's license?**

The "Application for Electrical Contractor's License" is available at Department of Labor and Industries offices' or online at [www.LNI.wa.gov/scs/electrical/pubsform.htm](http://www.LNI.wa.gov/scs/electrical/pubsform.htm)

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