

Facts About Becoming a Telecommunications Contractor



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Effective June 8, 2000, the jurisdiction of telecommunications work was moved from the contractor registration law (chapter 18.27 RCW) to the electrical contracting law (chapter 19.28 RCW). The Specialty Compliance Services division of the Department of Labor and Industries administers the state's telecommunications contracting laws. 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 must be designated as a telecommunications contractor?

State law defines a telecommunications contractor as "a person, firm, partnership, corporation, or other entity that advertises, offers to undertake, undertakes, submits a bid for, or does the work of installing or maintaining telecommunications systems."

I'm a registered contractor. Can I use the same bond for telecommunications contracting?

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

I only install data cabling. Do I need a telecommunications contracting license?

Yes. Telecommunications systems encompass all forms of information generation, processing and transporting of signals conveyed electronically or optically within or between buildings, including voice, data, video and integrated audio paging.

Is there any telecommunications work that can be done without this license?

Yes. "Telecommunications systems" means cabling systems that begin at the demarcation point between the local service provider and the customer's premises structured cabling system. Work done on the service provider's distribution system may still be done as a registered contractor. All work on the customer's "telecommunications systems" requires telecommunications contractor licensing.

How do I become a licensed telecommunications contractor?

You must complete an application form, obtain an electrical/telecommunications contractor's bond or assign a savings account in the amount of \$4,000, obtain a certificate of insurance (minimum \$20,000 property damage, \$100,000 public liability), submit an assignment of administrator's form (completed and signed by a Washington state certified telecommunications administrator), and pay the associated fees. The telecommunications contractor's license fee is \$216.25 for a two-year license. For more information, call your local L&I service location as listed in the government section or white pages of your phone directory.

What is a telecommunications administrator?

A telecommunications administrator has passed the telecommunications administrator's exam and is designated by the telecommunications contractor to supervise work according to chapter 19.28 of the Revised Code of Washington (RCW). He or she is responsible for assuring that all telecommunications work conforms to the National Electrical Code, the Electronics Industry Association/Telecommunications Industry Association (EIA/TIA) Telecommunications Standards, and state laws, rules and regulations.

What if my designated administrator quits?

If this happens, the telecommunications 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 telecommunications contractor has 180 days to secure another administrator.

Is there a reinstatement fee after suspension?

Yes, there is a fee of \$43.50 to reinstate a telecommunications contractor's license once a suspension has occurred.

Could I be penalized for contracting without a telecommunications 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 a telecommunications contractor if your license expires.

Does the jurisdiction of a telecommunications contractor's license cover the entire state?

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

If my telecommunications 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 telecommunications 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 telecommunications 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 a telecommunications contractor's license?

Application packets are available at Department of Labor and Industries offices.

Visit L&I's web site at www.lni.wa.gov/scs/electrical