

## A Step By Step Guide to Obtaining Your Contractor License

### **Step One – Determine the type of license your company will need.**

#### **A. *Choose your license class.***

Licenses are issued in one of three license classes; A, B, or C. The class of a license determines what, if any, monetary restrictions are placed on the size of contracts or projects you may perform. A Class C license is restricted to contracts/projects that are less than \$10,000, with the total amount of all contracts/projects performed in a twelve month period remaining below \$150,000. A Class B license is restricted to contracts/projects that are less than \$120,000, with the total amount of all contracts/projects performed in a twelve month period remaining below \$750,000. There are no restrictions for Class A contractors. It is important to select the right class of license for the amount of work your company will be performing as exceeding the limits of your license is a violation of the regulations and could result in disciplinary action against the license holder.

#### **B. *Choose your specialty.***

Now that you have determined how much work you are going to be allowed to perform with your license, you must determine what you are going to do. Contractor licenses have classifications and specialties that identify the type of work that may be performed with the license. These classifications and specialties are identified as three letter abbreviations that are printed on the bottom of the license. The definition of each of the classifications and specialties can be found in the Board for Contractors Regulations. It is important to select the specialty that best describes the work your company

for a Class A license must have five years of experience in the specialty, Class B must have three years of experience, and Class C two years of experience. The type of work that may be counted towards meeting the experience requirements can be found in the definition of each specialty listed in the Board for Contractors Regulations.

Qualified Individuals must have an additional license or certification ***OR*** complete a technical examination that is based on the scope of work allowed by that particular specialty. Trade-related specialties, for example, require that the QI hold a valid Master Tradesman license, issued by the Board for Contractors, in the appropriate specialty. You can find a list of the specialties that have additional QI requirements on the *Trade Related Examinations and Qualifications Information* sheet that is included in the application packet.

### **Step Five – Identify your Designated Employee and complete the examination.**

Class A and Class B contractors must have a Designated Employee who has passed the required portions of the examination. As with the Qualified Individual, the Designated Employee must be a member of Responsible Management or a bona fide full-time employee. All Designated Employees for Class B licenses must successfully complete the *General* and *Virginia* portions of the examination. All Designated Employees for Class A licenses must successfully complete the *General*, *Virginia*, and *Advanced* portions of the examination. Please note that there is no Designated Employee for Class C licenses.

### **Step Six – Complete the pre-license education course.**

All applicants for licensure as a contractor are required to have either a member of Responsible Management or their Designated Employee (for Class A and Class B) successfully complete a pre-license education course that has been approved by the Board for Contractors. There are several dozen approved courses that are available that can be used to meet this requirement. Most are given in the classroom, but some providers offer online or correspondence courses. While the Board approves these courses, the providers are permitted to set their own fees, schedules, and locations, so you should check the list of providers and contact the ones that best meet your needs. You may download a list of approved providers from our website.

### **Step Seven – Complete the entire application.**

It is important that all items on the application be completed. Failing to complete an item will result in a delay in the processing of your application. If you have a question about an item on any application form please email the Board for Contractors at [contractor@dpor.virginia.gov](mailto:contractor@dpor.virginia.gov), or call the licensing staff at (804) 367-8511.

Some of the questions may, depending on your answer, require that you provide additional documentation. Please be sure to carefully read what additional information may be needed, as failure to provide everything that is required will result in a delay in processing your application.

**Step Eight – Send the application to the Board with the appropriate fee.**

You must submit the appropriate fee along with your application. Each form has the fee that must be submitted listed on the first page of that form. Applications received without a fee are returned to the applicant and no additional action is taken. If you send in the wrong fee, it may delay the processing of your application.

**Step Nine – Be patient while the licensing staff processes your application.**

Applications are processed on a first in – first out basis, and the average processing time for most applications is approximately 30 days. If your application is complete and you have met all of the eligibility requirements, the license will be issued at the initial review and will be mailed to you. If your application is incomplete, then a letter will be sent to you outlining what was missing and what we need to finish the review and issue your license.

A note about “non-routine applications:” if an application involves someone with a past criminal history, past adverse financial history, or past disciplinary history, it is considered a non-routine application and often involves an extra step or two in order to be processed. Most of the time this does not result in a delay in the processing of the application, but some non-routine applications must be reviewed by the Board for Contractors at one of their scheduled meetings. If your application must be reviewed by the Board, you will be notified and information will be provided to you regarding the process in place to get your application processed.

Commonwealth of Virginia  
Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation  
9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400  
Richmond, Virginia 23233-1485  
(804) 367-8511  
[www.dpor.virginia.gov](http://www.dpor.virginia.gov)



## **Board for Contractors REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALIFIED INDIVIDUALS**

The Virginia Board for Contractors requires licensed contracting firms to identify a Qualified Individual for each license classification and specialty designation printed on the license. The Qualified Individual in a **Class C** business must have at least 2 years of experience in the appropriate classification or specialty designation. The Qualified Individual in a **Class B** business must have at least 3 years of experience in the appropriate classification or specialty designation. The Qualified Individual in a **Class A** business must have at least 5 years of experience in the appropriate classification or specialty designation.

For all new applications for licensure, applications for specialties to existing licenses, or changes to an existing Qualified individual, received after December 1, 2012: In addition to the number of years of experience required, Qualified Individuals will be required to hold a valid Individual License or Certification issued by the Board for Contractors, hold a valid certification from another agency, board or third-party organization, or successfully complete a technical examination in order to meet the requirements set forth in the *Board for Contractors Regulations*.

### ***Requirements for Trade-Related License Classifications and Specialties***

Qualified Individual for the electrical (ELE), plumbing (PLB), and HVAC (HVA) license classifications, as well as the gas-fitting (GFC), liquefied petroleum gas contracting (LPG), and natural gas fitting provider contracting (NGF) specialty designations, must hold a current Master Tradesman Card issued by the Board for Contractors in the appropriate classification/specialty.

### ***Licensure and Certification Requirements for Non-Trade Related Classifications and Specialties***

Qualified Individuals for the asbestos (ASB), blast/explosive (BEC), fire sprinkler (SPR), elevator/escalator (EEC), lead abatement (LAC), manufactured home (MHI), radon mitigation (RMC), sewage disposal systems (SDS), and water well/pump (WWP) specialty designations are required to meet the following additional requirements:

#### **Asbestos Contracting (ASB)**

Business applying for ASB specialty designation must:

1. Employ a Qualified Individual who has a valid Asbestos Supervisor's License issued through the Board for Asbestos, Lead, and Home Inspectors (ALHI); telephone 804.367.8595.
2. Upon receipt of the Qualified Individual's Asbestos Supervisor's License submit a Contractors License application or Additional License Classification/Specialty Designation application along with fee to DPOR, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400, Richmond, VA 23233-1485
3. Upon issuance of the Contractors License, contact the Board for Asbestos, Lead, and Home Inspectors (ALHI) at 804.367.8595 to apply for a (ALHI) Contractors License.

2. Upon approval by the Board, you may then schedule your Qualified Individual for the Certified Water Well Systems Provider exam, contact PSI Examination Services at 3210 E. Tropicana, Las Vegas, NV 89121; [www.psiexams.com](http://www.psiexams.com); telephone 1-800-733-9267; and facsimile 702-932-2666.

3. Upon successful completion of examination and issuance of Water Well Systems Provider Certification, submit a Contractors License application or Additional License Classification/Specialty Designation application along with fee to DPOR, 9960 Mayland Drive, Suite 400, Richmond, VA 23233-1485 (if applicable).

### **Examination Requirements for Other Specialties**

Qualified Individuals for the following specialties, in addition to the experience requirements, must successfully complete a technical examination that has been approved by the Board for Contractors:

Alternative Energy Systems (AES)	Highway Heavy (H/H)
Building (BLD)	Home Improvement (HIC)
Asphalt Paving and Sealcoating (PAV)	Industrialized Buildings (IBC)
Billboard/Sign (BSC)	Landscape Irrigation (ISC)
Commercial Improvement (CIC)	Landscape (LSC)
Concrete (CEM)	Marine Facility (MCC)
Electronic/Communication Service (ESC)	Masonry (BRK)
Environmental Monitoring Well (EMW)	Painting and Wallcovering (PTC)
Environmental Specialties (ENV)	Recreational Facility (RFC)
Equipment/Machinery (EMC)	Refrigeration (REF)
Farm Improvement (FIC)	Roofing (ROC)
Fire Alarm Systems (FAS)	Swimming Pools (POL)
Fire Suppression (FSP)	Vessel Construction (VCC)

**BOARD FOR CONTRACTORS  
CONTRACTOR LICENSING INFORMATION**

CONTRACTOR LICENSES ARE ISSUED TO BUSINESS ENTITIES (regardless of the number of people employed by the business) AND NOT INDIVIDUALS.

Before completing the application, please review the *Board for Contractors Regulations*. This booklet includes the current statutes or laws (Title 54.1, Chapter 11 of the *Code of Virginia*) and the regulations of the Board for Contractors. Eligibility for a contractor's license is based on the knowledge, skills, abilities, financial position, and other entry requirements set forth in §54.1-1106, §54.1-1108 and § 54.1-1108.2 (subject to the exemptions in §54.1-1101) of the *Code of Virginia*. **Please note that although a Virginia contractor's license may be granted to your business, the business must also comply with local licensing requirements set forth by the localities (cities, towns, and counties) in which your business plans to do work, contact your local Commissioner of the Revenue and Building Official for more information.**

**Licensure**

Contractor licenses consist of two parts, the class of the license, which determines what, if any restrictions are placed on the size of contracts/projects that may be performed and the classification/specialty, which determines what type of work the licensed contractor is allowed to perform.

The Board for Contractors issues licenses in one of three classes: **Class A**, **Class B** and **Class C**. In most cases, the type of license you should apply for is based on the value or contract price of the projects your business will be bidding on or engaged in (see the **Note** below for specific exceptions). Please read the following definitions before deciding which contractor license is suitable for your business.

*Class A* contractors perform or manage construction, removal, repair, or improvements when (i) the total value referred to in a single contract or project is \$120,000 or more, or (ii) the total value of all such construction, removal, repair, or improvements undertaken by such person within any twelve-month period is \$750,000 or more.

*Class B* contractors perform or manage construction, removal, repair, or improvements when (i) the total value referred to in a single contract or project is \$10,000 or more, but less than \$120,000, or (ii) the total value of all such construction, removal, repair, or improvements undertaken by such person within any twelve-month period is \$150,000 or more, but less than \$750,000.

*Class C* contractors perform or manage construction, removal, repair, or improvements when (i) the total value referred to in a single contract or project is over \$1,000 but no more than \$10,000, or (ii) the total value of all such construction, removal, repair, or improvements undertaken by such person within any twelve-month period is no more than \$150,000.

**Note:** Landscape Irrigation and Water Well contractors must be licensed as a **Class A**, **Class B** or **Class C** contractor regardless of the dollar amount of the project or contract.

The classification or specialty (not to be confused with the license class) defines the scope of practice that may be performed by the licensed contractor. You may find a list of all of the different classifications and specialties issued by the

Board for Contractors and a definition of the work that is permitted to be performed by each, in 18 VAC 50-22-20 and 18 VAC 50-22-30 of the Board for Contractors Regulations. It is important to choose the classification or specialty for your license carefully as if you perform work outside of the scope of practice for your license, you may be subject to disciplinary action by the board.

### **Temporary Licensure**

A temporary license is a 45 day licenses that cannot be renewed, reinstated or reapplied for. This license will allow firms to have 45 days to complete all entry requirements for a permanent contractor license. To qualify for a temporary license, a firm must hold a comparable license or certificate in another state. The license must be in good standing and the applicant must provide a Certification/Letter of Good Standing, with their application, from the state where they hold a current license. The cost for the temporary license is \$50. In order to obtain a temporary license, the applicant must submit its application for temporary licensure simultaneously with its application for permanent licensure and pay both application fees.

### **Pre-License Education**

Effective August 21, 2006, the Designated Employee or a member of Responsible Management of all contractors applying for licensure for an entity that is not currently licensed must successfully complete an eight hour business class approved by the Board for Contractors.

You must request that the class provider electronically submit proof of completion to the Board. This submission will identify the course, course provider, date of completion and the name of the individual who took the class.

A list of approved classes is available on our website at [www.dpor.virginia.gov](http://www.dpor.virginia.gov). Just click on "Boards" on the left-hand side of the homepage, then scroll down and click on "Contractors." You may also request a copy of the list from the board's licensing staff by calling (804) 367-8511

### **Designated Employee Examination Requirement**

All business entities seeking a **Class A** or a **Class B** license must declare a Designated Employee who (1) is a full-time employee or one of the business' Responsible Managers (see Part I of the Board for Contractors Rules and Regulations); (2) is at least 18 years of age; and (3) has successfully completed the examination requirements.

The Designated Employee examination tests the candidate's general business knowledge, and their knowledge of the laws and regulations governing contractors.

If your business does not yet have a Designated Employee who has passed the licensure exam, contact:

**PSI Examination Services**  
Telephone: 1-800-733-9267  
Facsimile: 702-932-2666  
Web Address: [www.psiexams.com](http://www.psiexams.com)

The **Class B** licensure examination is a two-part exam comprised of a Virginia Section (to test the candidate's knowledge of Virginia's laws and regulations governing contractors) and a General Section (to test the candidate's general administrative and business knowledge). The **Class A** licensure examination is a three-part exam consisting of the Virginia and General Sections (contained in the Class B exam), as well as, an Advanced Section which tests the candidate's general administrative and business knowledge necessary to engage in **Class A** contracting.

### **Qualified Individual Requirements**

All business entities must have a Qualified Individual for each of the classifications and specialties listed on their application. The Qualified Individual is the person that has the appropriate amount of experience in the classification or specialty being applied for on the application. A person may be the Qualified Individual for more than one classification or specialty. This individual must be either a full-time employee or a member of Responsible Management of the business applying for the license and must have a minimum amount of work experience within the scope of practice of their specialty. Qualified Individuals for Class A applicants must have a minimum of five years experience, three years experience for Class B and two

years of experience for Class C. Some Qualified Individuals must hold additional licenses or certifications in order to meet the current eligibility requirements. These classifications and specialties are identified on the application and in the following table:

Classification/Specialty	Qualified Individual Requirement
Asbestos (ASB)	Valid supervisors license from ALHI Board
Blast/Explosive (BEC)	Valid blaster certification from State Fire Marshal Office
Building (BLD)	Successful completion of the PSI Building Technical examination
Electrical (ELE)	Valid Master ELE Tradesman License
Elevator/Escalator (EEC)	Valid Elevator Mechanic Certification
Fire Sprinkler (SPR)	Valid NICET III certification
Gas Fitting (GFC)	Valid Master Gas-Fitter Tradesman License
HVAC (HVA)	Valid Master HVAC Tradesman License
Lead Abatement (LAC)	Valid supervisors license from ALHI Board
Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG)	Valid Master LPG Tradesman License
Manufactured Home Contracting (MHC)	Valid Manufactured Housing Installer Certification from Department of Housing and Community Development
Natural Gas Fitting Provider (NGF)	Valid Master Natural Gas Fitter Tradesman License
Plumbing (PLB)	Valid Master Plumbing Tradesman License
Radon Mitigation (RMC)	Valid EPA, NRMPP, NEHA or NRSFB certification
Sewage Disposal System (SDS)	Valid Conventional or Alternative Onsite Sewage System Installer License
Water/Well Pump (WWP)	Valid Water Well Systems Provider Certification

**Note:** All other specialties require the Qualified Individual successfully complete a board approved technical examination. If your Qualified Individual has not passed the required exam, contact: PSI Examination Services at [www.psiexams.com](http://www.psiexams.com) or by phone at 1-800-733-9267.

### **Fees**

Please make checks or money orders payable to the "Treasurer of Virginia." Deposit of any fees by the Department of Professional and Occupational Regulation does not indicate that your application will be approved. Fees are valid for one year from the date they are received and are not refunded if a license is not issued.

### **Other Important Information**

1. The *Code of Virginia* (§54.1-111(6)) makes it unlawful to materially misrepresent facts in an application for licensure, certification, or registration. Violations of this section are subject to criminal prosecution, which could result in a conviction with a sentence of up to one year in jail and/or a maximum fine of \$2,500.
2. Original contractor's licenses expire **two years** from the month in which it was issued.
3. The *Code of Virginia* (§59.1-69) requires that fictitious names or trade names be registered in Virginia, even for sole proprietorships, with either the State Corporation Commission or the Circuit Court of the locality within which the company expects to do business.
4. Licensed contractor businesses are responsible for the proper maintenance of its license. See Part V. Standard of Practice and Conduct of the *Board for Contractors Regulations* for specific requirements. The following changes require license maintenance:
  - Any change from the currently licensed business entity to a new business entity that would require a new license;
  - Any change in Responsible Management;
  - Change of Designated Employee;
  - Change of any Qualified Individual(s);
  - Change of business/trade name;
  - Change of street and/or mailing address; and
  - Deletion or addition of a license classification or a specialty designation.