

5 Steps to Obtaining Your Washington Electrical Contractor's License

Step 1. Sign up for the exam.

To do electrical work in Washington you must be licensed by the Department of Labor and Industries. The Department issues these electrical licenses -- contractor, administrator, journeyman, specialty, and trainee. To get an application for a license, contact:

Department of Labor and Industries
Electrical Section
P. O. Box 44460
Olympia, WA 98504-4460
(360) 902-5269
<http://www.lni.wa.gov/TradesLicensing/Electrical/default.asp>

You'll have to take an exam to get an electrical contractor's license. The Department issues these electrical contractor licenses:

General -- journeyman, includes all types of wiring
Specialty -- residential, pump and irrigation, signs, limited energy, HVAC/refrigeration
limited energy, non-residential maintenance, non-residential lighting maintenance,
door/gate systems

You must apply to the Department of Labor and Industries before you can take the exam. The application will ask you to include:

- A UBI number (issued by the Master Business License Division of the Department of Licensing);
- Corporation, limited liability corporation or limited liability partnership registration (contact the State Corporations Division to register);
- Application fee;
- Industrial insurance account number, if you have employees or plan to hire employees (issued by the Industrial Insurance Division);
- Administrator designation or master electrician (the administrator/master must either be an owner/principle or a supervisory employee);
- Electrical/telecommunications contractor's bond in the amount of \$4000 or assignment of savings account (for the amount of \$4,000 to the State of Washington).

To qualify for a specialty exam, you must provide proof of two years experience in that specialty. To qualify for the general journeyman exam, you must have 4 years of electrical installation experience with a minimum of 2 years in new commercial/industrial electrical installation.

Once you receive your approval letter to test, you will be referred to the exam agency:

LaserGrade
P.O. Box 87245
Vancouver, WA 98687
(800) 211-2753
<http://lasergrade.com/>

License and Exam Fees: The license will cost \$262.60 (\$228.60 for the license and a \$34 charge for administrator/master designation). The license is good for two years.

Applicants who register to take exams at a LaserGrade Public Testing Center will be charged per hourly schedule. Exams based on separate sections will be billed at the rate for total exam time.

Step 2. Purchase the required books for your exam.

To find out what documents and books the State of Washington requires for this exam, follow this link to your state's exam page of our website <http://www.constructionbook.com/contractor-license/washington/index.asp>. You must purchase these documents and books in preparation for the exam.

Step 3. Start studying!

To fully prepare for your exam it is best to thoroughly study the required documents and books, as well as any recommended studying materials. The amount of preparation time needed will be different for each individual. Be sure to allow yourself enough time to fully prepare for the exam.

Step 4. Follow the rules.

You should arrive 15 minutes before your scheduled exam time on testing day. Candidates must follow these additional rules:

- Present an official, valid government-issued picture identification with signature (i.e., driver's license, passport, state identification or military identification).
- Only approved references are allowed during the examination. Photocopies of reference materials may NOT be used. No handwritten or additional notes are allowed in the reference books (no letters, words, diagrams, etc.). Any reference material that has been written in during the examination will be confiscated. Highlighting and permanent tabbing is acceptable prior to the exam. Please note that Post-it notes are not permanent and will not be allowed. Sharing reference materials is not allowed. Reference materials will be checked at the examination site before and after the examinations.
- Candidates may use a calculator or slide rule. Only silent, handheld, solar or battery-operated, non-programmable calculators (without paper tape-printing capabilities or alphabetic keypads) may be used.

Step 5. Good luck on the exam!

Examinations are based on the minimum knowledge necessary to work at an entry level. All examinations require the candidate to have a working knowledge of the National Electrical Code, Washington laws and rules, and a basic level of electrical theory knowledge. There will be approximately 60 questions based on NEC and Theory, which must be answered within a three-hour time limit. There will be approximately 17 questions based on Washington laws and rules, which must be answered in the one-hour time limit.