

# The 12-Point ADU Contractor Checklist

Run every step before you pay anyone. A CSLB license means they passed a test. It doesn't mean they'll finish your house.

## PHASE 1: BEFORE YOU CALL

- 01. Pull up their CSLB license record**  
Verify at [verifiedadu.com/verify-contractor](https://verifiedadu.com/verify-contractor) or [cslb.ca.gov](https://cslb.ca.gov). Confirm: active license, current bond, workers' comp on file, classification matches ADU work.
- 02. Confirm at least 2 years of licensed business history**  
Check the issue date. Under 2 years = no track record. Multitaskr lasted 3 years. Nonna lasted 3. Anchored lasted 4. All collapsed after rapid growth.
- 03. Read every complaint attached to their license**  
CSLB only shows complaints with formal enforcement action. Non-legal complaints are purged after 2 years. Anchored had 55 filed — only 10 were public.
- 04. Search the owner's name, not just the company**  
Google the person behind the license. Check CSLB, court records, Secretary of State. Nonna's principals resurfaced at Blueprint One and Strata-X after collapse.
- 05. Check the California Secretary of State registry**  
[bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov](https://bizfileonline.sos.ca.gov) — confirm the entity is active. Check officers. A "Suspended" entity can still hold an active CSLB license. The systems don't sync.

## PHASE 2: THE FIRST CONVERSATION

- 06. Ask for 3 completed ADU addresses from the last 12 months**  
Real addresses you can drive to. Not renderings, not testimonials. If they stall — hang up. Anchored had a showroom and \$100M in contracts. 450+ families got nothing.
- 07. Compare at least 3 written estimates line by line**  
If one bid is 25%+ below the others, ask why. "100% financing" and "no payments for 12 months" are marketing hooks, not good deals.

## PHASE 3: BEFORE YOU SIGN

- 08. Know California's deposit law — BPC §7159.5**  
Max deposit: \$1,000 or 10% of contract, whichever is LESS. Progress payments can't exceed work completed. The Johnsons paid Nonna \$193,706 on a \$275K contract — 70%.
- 09. Demand a written contract with every legal protection**  
BPC §7159 requires: total price, scope, start/completion dates, deposit cap in 12pt boldface, phase-based payments, Mechanics Lien Warning. 3-day rescission right applies.
- 10. Be cautious of contractor-arranged financing**  
Verify the lender at [dfpi.ca.gov](https://dfpi.ca.gov). Multitaskr ran \$15M through partner lenders — loans to the contractor, not the homeowner. Families still paying \$4K/month on unbuilt ADUs.
- 11. Ask who pays the subcontractors, and when**  
If the GC doesn't pay subs, they can lien YOUR property — even after you paid in full (Civil Code §8200-8494). Nonna owed subs tens of thousands while collecting new deposits.
- 12. Require lien releases at every payment milestone**  
Civil Code §8132-8138. Collect conditional releases from every sub at each payment. Unconditional for the prior payment before issuing the next. No releases = no next check.

## Why I built this

CSLB license checks, complaint records, bond requirements — none of it stopped Multitaskr, Nonna, or Anchored. The \$25,000 contractor bond that's supposed to make you whole? Anchored's 450+ victims are splitting one. This checklist won't catch everything. But if the Johnsons had known step 8, they'd still have \$193,706.25. \$28 million exposed. Those are just the cases that made the news. Run the list.

## Key California Laws Referenced

<b>BPC §7159.5</b>	Max deposit \$1,000 or 10%, whichever is less. Progress payments can't exceed completed work.
<b>BPC §7159</b>	Written contract required: price, scope, dates, deposit disclosure in 12pt boldface, Mechanics Lien Warning.
<b>Civil Code §8200-8494</b>	Mechanics lien rights. Unpaid subs can lien your property even after you've paid the GC in full.
<b>Civil Code §8132-8138</b>	Four types of lien releases: conditional/unconditional, progress/final. Collect at every milestone.

VerifiedADU is an independent verification directory. We are not a law firm. California contractor law is cited for reference only.  
For legal questions about your specific contract, consult an attorney. Contractor data is sourced from public CSLB records.