








VETTING A CONTRACTOR

Beware of potential **scams** if a contractor...


-  **Asks for all the money** for the project upfront.
-  **Asks you to “take my word for it”** and does not have a contract for you to sign
-  **Says he does *not* need a permit** from a city or county that requires a permit
-  **Says he needs more money** because of “unexpected” problems.
-  Drives a vehicle **with out-of-state license plates.**
-  Works for a company that has an **out-of-state address or only a P.O. Box or hotel address.**
-  Drives a vehicle that displays a **different company name from the name of the company** the contractor is supposed to work for.




CONSTRUCTION DO'S AND DON'TS:

- **DO** ask to see contractor’s license and make sure it matches the person showing it
- **DO** contact the **Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation at 850-487-1395** or **www.myfloridalicense.com** to verify the status of the license
- **DO** determine how long the contractor has been in business
- **DO** ask for references & check them
- **DO** choose several contractors and get estimates from each **AND** make sure an estimate or bid includes:
 - Contractor’s information
 - Detailed description of the work that will be done,
 - Separate costs for labor & material
 - Itemized costs for specific materials the contractor intends to use
 - A timeline for the work
- **DO** get the agreement in writing – read the contract, fill in all the blank spaces, make sure it contains the contractor’s name, address, telephone number, license number, description of the work, completion date and any warranty agreements.
- **DON'T** hire a contractor who requires advance payment – arrange to pay upon completion or in installments
- **DON'T** sign the work completion certificate until **all** the work is satisfactorily completed
- **DON'T** pay cash
- **DON'T** pull the construction permits

DO YOU THINK YOU ARE A VICTIM OF CONTRACTOR FRAUD?



If you or someone you know have been a victim of contractor fraud, contact the **Florida Department of Financial Services' Division of Investigative and Forensic Services** to report the incident. **Contractor fraud is illegal and can lead to an arrest and prosecution.**



You may also file a complaint with the **Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services**, which acts as the State's consumer complaint clearing house.



AVOID CONTRACTOR HOME REPAIR FRAUD

ABOUT US

Dade Legal Aid ("DLA") provides free civil legal services for low-income children, foster youth, individuals and families in need in Miami-Dade County. Since 1949, DLA has been passionately committed to providing "Access to Justice" to residents in dire need of legal representation without means to hire their own attorney. Dedicated Staff Attorneys and Pro Bono Volunteer Attorneys provide life-changing, and often life-saving services, in the areas of Child & Teen Advocacy, Guardian ad Litem, Foster Youth Guardianship, Human Sex Trafficking, Domestic Violence, Family Law, Probate & Guardianship, Consumer, Bankruptcy, Benefits, Evictions, Mort-

Nonprofit Incorporation, Intellectual Property, Patent & Venture Law. Each year, DLA assists thousands of clients involved in legal disputes that are very contentious and emotional, positively impacting the lives of over 10,000 residents annually utilizing a strategic mix of experienced staff attorneys, pro bono attorneys, law firm partnerships, law school stakeholders and dozens of collaborations with diverse organizations and groups with the aim of assisting vulnerable children, families and populations living in poverty.

CONSUMER FRAUD INFORMATION

DFS FRAUD HOTLINE AND PORTAL

1-800-378-0445
First.FLDFS.com

FLORIDA ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE

1-866-966-7226
www.myfloridalegal.com

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

www.floridaconsumerhelp.com

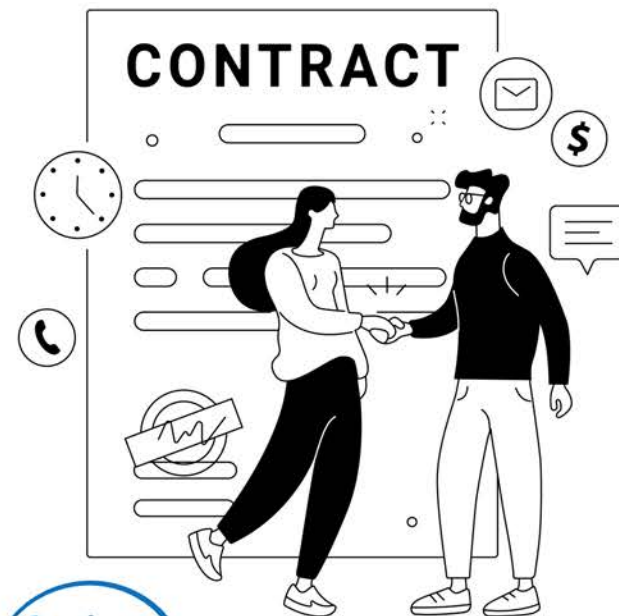
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL REGULATION

850-487-1395
www.myfloridalicense.com

CONTACT US

 **305-579-5733**

 **www.dadelegalaid.org**



Dade Legal Aid
Put Something Back
Est. 1949