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## The Ultimate Replacement Window Contractor Vetting Checklist

If you are seriously considering a replacement window project, you've probably discovered that there are a lot of decisions to make. Selecting a contractor to install your new windows will be one of the most important decisions you'll need to make.

### So, how do you select a reputable replacement window contractor?

This question is so important because the expertise and integrity of your replacement window and patio door contractor will play a huge role in determining the final outcome of your project.

To assist you in this process, we've put together a checklist to help you vet replacement window contractors. This checklist is based on our experience of serving thousands of replacement window customers throughout Southern New Jersey and the greater Philadelphia area.

So, regardless of where you live or whether you are looking for wood clad, metal, composite or vinyl replacement windows, this checklist will help you identify various criteria to look for when selecting your replacement window contractor.

## The Ultimate Replacement Window Contractor Vetting Checklist

Contractor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### 1. Business Information and Experience

The company is licensed and insured

Note: ask if the name on the license is the same as the company name. If not, find out why.

Find out how many years the company has been in business

Years in business: \_\_\_\_\_

Note: 63% of contractors fail within the first three years after start-up.

## 2. Customer Reviews/References

Ask the following questions of the replacement window contractor:

1. How many replacement window projects have you installed since in business?

\_\_\_\_\_

2. How many were installed last year? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Of those installations, how many reviews/references can you provide in the form of either a social media post (make sure any post is from a valid person with an actual account on the social media platform) from an actual customer, or on a reference list for you to contact? \_\_\_\_\_

Note: if the replacement window contractor provides less than half of their customers as references, **we consider this to be a red flag**. Our experience has been that the vast majority of people when asked are willing to go on a reference list. In our opinion, providing less than half of the customers as references equates to less than a 50% chance of being happy in the end.

\_\_ Satisfy yourself that there are at least 20 good replacement window project customers for this contractor.

**When reviewing social media posts, or contacting references, pay attention to key satisfaction factors like :**

1. The customer would use the replacement window contractor again.
2. The customer enjoyed project experience.
3. The customer was happy with the product style and options.
4. The customer was happy with the price.
5. If issues or problems arose, the customer was happy in the end.

## 3. Reviews and Ratings

\_\_ Collectively, the replacement window contractor has **at least a 5:1 good review to bad review ratio**

\_\_ They responded reasonably to negative reviews when possible.

## 4. Products Used by the Replacement Window Contractor

\_\_ Who manufacturer's the products that the replacement window contractor uses?

\_\_ The products the replacement window contractor uses have good reviews in the marketplace

\_\_ The customer references / reviews gave the products used by the builder positive ratings

\_\_ The products are backed by competitive warranties

\_\_ The contractor will handle any product warranty issues (or do you have to deal with the manufacturer?)

## 5. Installation Workmanship Warranty

Note: an installation workmanship warranty would cover issues that could arise such as window operation, leaks, structural problems, etc. The minimum workmanship warranty by law in most states is one year.

• What is the duration of the replacement window contractor's workmanship warranty?

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• What specifically does the replacement window contractor's workmanship warranty cover? \_\_\_\_\_

• What happens in the event that a repair is needed? (Is there a fee, who pays for materials, etc)? \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Installation Practices

• Does the replacement window contractor have any installation or construction practices that distinguish them from the competition?

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• Are these practices relevant?

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• Does the replacement window contractor utilize sub-contractors or their own employees to install your replacement windows or patio doors? (Subcontractors will require their own insurance and EPA Certifications.)

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## 7. Design and Project Planning

\_\_ The replacement window contractor will present a plan to you before the project begins showing the following:

- Copy of their contractor's license
- Insurance certificate (for any subcontractors as well)
- EPA Lead certification (for pre-1978 residences)
- EPA Renovate Right Pamphlet (for pre -1978 residences)
- Confirm:
  - Custom sizes
  - List exact style and location of each window or patio door
  - List options for each window or patio door.
  - List each type of installation for each opening.
- Copy of the warranty

## 8. Pricing and Contract

\_\_ After assessing the scope of work (product and installation requirements) the replacement window contractor will provide you with a formal written estimate or quotation.

\_\_ Upon your decision to move forward with your project the replacement window contractor will provide you with a separate, detailed contract, that will incorporate the scope of work and the price for all of the work from the estimate, with additional details of specific exclusions, legal jurisdiction, 3 day right of rescission (most states), applicable legal jurisdiction, certification of insurance and warranty, etc.

\_\_ When you decide to proceed, the contractor will confirm all of the details on your estimate and provide you with a legal contract that covers all of the requirements for performance on their part as well as the price that you will pay for all of the work.

\_\_ If changes are made to the scope of work prior to or during the start of work these will be approved by you and documented in a formal "Change Order" and any change in price, up or down, based on the scope of work changes will be reflected. Any Change Order will become part of your contract.

Note: Never sign the estimate! Try to avoid going into an agreement with a handwritten summary "estimate" that lacks all of the detail of a legal contract. This is a tactic some contractors use to make the initial price of the project seem lower than what it will be and also to avoid being held to task in the event something should go wrong.

We hope you will find this helpful on your quest to finding the perfect replacement window and patio door contractor.

If you'd like to see a variety of design examples, take a look at our [Project Gallery](#)

If you would like to have a quick "no hassle" vinyl replacement window and patio door [TeleEstimate/Virtual Estimate](#) we would be happy to provide one!

Thanks and good luck!