



LOS ANGELES COUNTY
**CONSUMER &
BUSINESS AFFAIRS**

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

Avoiding Common Scams

Our Mission



"To promote a fair and vibrant marketplace, we serve consumers, businesses, and communities through education, advocacy, and complaint resolution."

Serving Los Angeles County consumers and businesses since 1976

Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)

- An accessory dwelling unit (ADU) is a smaller, independent residential dwelling unit located on the same lot as a stand-alone (i.e., detached) single-family home.
- ADUs go by many **different names** throughout the U.S., including **accessory apartments, secondary suites, second units, and granny flats**.
- ADUs are new stand-alone accessory structures or converted portions of existing stand-alone accessory structures (i.e., detached ADUs).





2016 – SB 1069 & AB 2299

SB 1069

- Provides that a local government may, by **ordinance**, provide for the creation of second units in **single-family and multi-family zones**.
- This bill requires that local agencies create, if they have not done so yet, an **ADU ordinance to approve the creation of an ADU**.

AB 2299

- This bill authorizes the city or county legislative body to **regulate the amount of land use for ADUs**.
- **Reduce or eliminate parking requirements**, if local government so chooses.



2020 – SB 13 & AB 68

SB 13

- The bill would also revise the **requirements** for an ADU by providing **where** the ADU **may be located**, and the **total floor area allowed**.
- There would be **prohibitions** on setting restrictions on **parking** standards on ADUs.
- There would also be **prohibitions** on local agencies establishing a **minimum square footage** requirement for ADUs.

AB 68

- This bill would **remove** any **provisions** authorizing the imposition of standards on **lot coverage**.
- It would **prohibit** an ordinance from imposing requirements on the **minimum lot size**.



2020- AB 670 & AB 881

AB 670

- This bill **voided** any **provision** of a governing document that **prohibit** or restrict the **construction of an ADU** on a lot zoned for a single-family residence that meets the minimum standards.

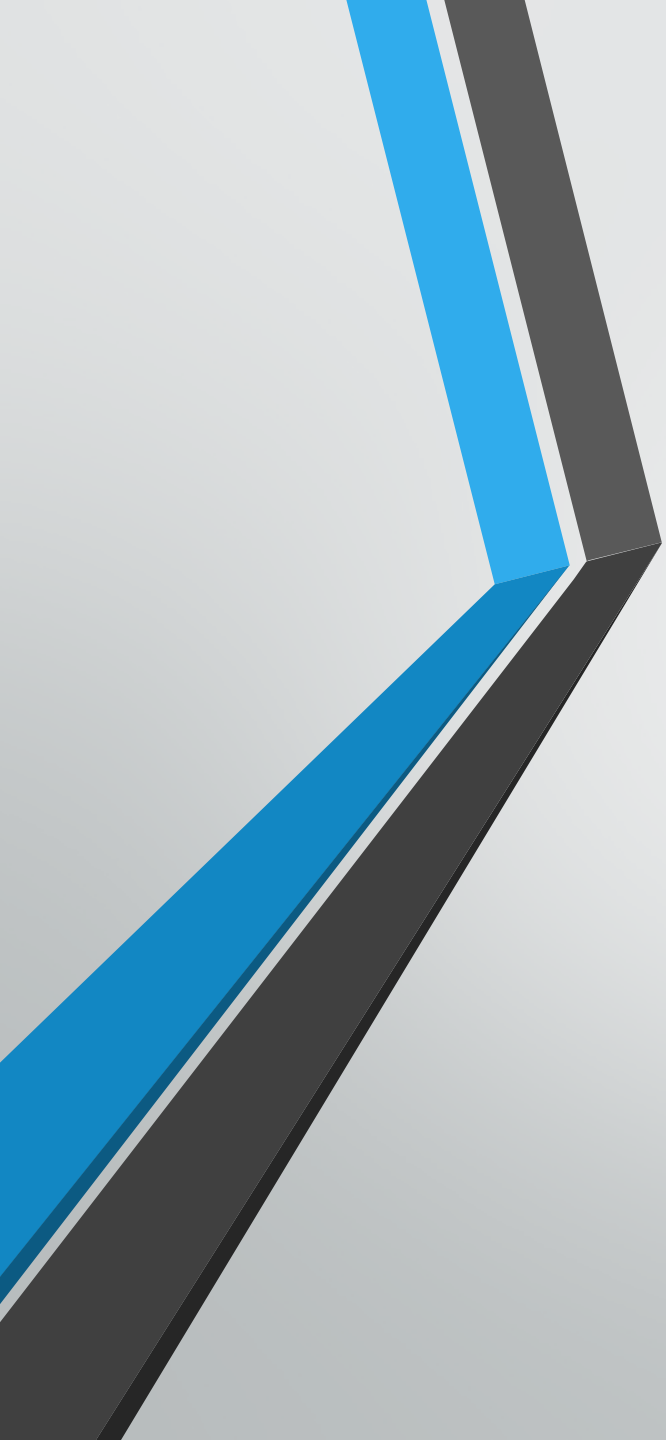
AB 881

- This bill would **allow local agencies to create ADU zones in areas** based on the adequacy of **water and sewer services**, and the impact they have on **traffic flow and public safety**.

What to know if you are considering obtaining an ADU?

- Consult with your planning department to confirm whether ADU's are permitted in your city/area.
 - <https://dpw.lacounty.gov/general/servicelocator/>
- **Los Angeles County Department of Regional Planning**
 - Phone Number: (213) 974-6411
 - Hours of Operation: (M-Thurs. → 7:30-5:30 PM)
- Inquire about limits on square footage, materials, setbacks, utilities, etc.
- Inquire about fees and plan check





Additional information to know if you are considering obtaining an ADU...

Should I hire a civil engineer/architect or a draftsman for my plans (blueprints)?

- May not be required but check with your planning/building department.

Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Building and Safety:

- Phone number: **(626)458-3173** remote office hours **(M-Th 7:00-5:00PM)**
- Property owners would need to **pull permits**, unless contractor agrees to obtain them.
- A licensed contractor is not required if it's your principal place of residence, however, property owners are responsible if someone gets injured during construction.
- Make sure that you are involved with ALL stages of the process!

How to verify a contractor's license:

- Contractor's State License Board (CSLB) questions or concerns
 - Remote office #: (800) 321-2725
- Check Contractor's License
 - <https://www.cslb.ca.gov/OnlineServices/CheckLicense/CheckLicense.aspx>
- Find a Licensed Contractor by Zip Code:
 - <https://www.cslb.ca.gov/OnlineServices/CheckLicense/ZipCodeSearch.aspx>



DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
CONTRACTORS
STATE LICENSE BOARD



Consumers



Licensees



Applicants

Or

[Home](#) | [Online Services](#) | [Check A License](#)

▼ Check a Contractor License or Home Improvement Salesperson (HIS) Registration

Look up a contractor license or Home Improvement Salesperson (HIS) registration to verify information, including complaint disclosure. Before hiring a contractor or signing a contract, CSLB recommends you read the [Hiring a Contractor](#) page.



Enter the contractor license number to check the status of their license.

Contractor License #

Q SEARCH

🔍 SEARCH TIPS

A California contractor license number doesn't contain alphabetic characters. Each contractor's plastic pocket license will show the respective license number. Begin entry of your license number at the left position and don't exceed 8 digits in the license number.

Please note: Our database is unavailable Sundays at 8 p.m. through Monday at 6 a.m. due to scheduled maintenance. Trying to hire a licensed contractor and don't know where to start? Click [here](#) to create a list of licensed contractors by City or ZIP code.

What are the requirements for written contracts with contractors:



Required for home improvement projects over \$500



Contracts must include:

Contractor's name, business address, and their contractor license number

A detailed scope of work with the products and materials to be used

How the work will be performed

Payment schedule

Who gets the building permits

Date of completion

Debris cleanup or removal

3-day right to cancel



Any Changes must be done in writing with a 'Change Order'



Keep in mind certain projects may demand additional plans and scale drawings

More information to consider when hiring a contractor:

REMEMBER: Contracts and documents must be written in the same language used in the verbal presentation.



- **Down Payments**

- Cannot exceed \$1,000 or 10% of the total contract price- whichever is less; Regardless of the project size.

- **Solar Projects ONLY**

- As of Jan 1, 2019: Contractors must provide a Solar Energy System Disclosure Document
 - Includes total cost, CSLB information to file complaint, 3-day right to cancel

IMPORTANT: Don't rush. Read the contract before you sign and make sure you understand all the terms.

Mechanic's Liens

WHAT IS A MECHANIC'S LIEN?

- A legal claim on property for unpaid work or supplies
- Can be filed by an unpaid contractor, subcontractor, laborer, or materials supplier
- Must be recorded at the County recorder's office within **90 days of completing the work;** or **60 days after the owner signs a Notice of Completion.**

WHAT IF A MECHANIC'S LIEN IS FILED?

- Determine if it is a valid lien
- Keep GOOD records of the project
- Preliminary Notice to advise you of the lien
- **CONTACT AN ATTORNEY**

Common Contractor Scams

Door-to-door sales

- “Happen to be in the neighborhood...” or “happens to have leftover materials...”
- They typically mention something that can viewed from the street.

Uses high pressure sales tactics

- Offer is only good for ONE day!

Read documents thoroughly before you sign

Incomplete portions of the contract (fill in later)

Requires the money up front or requires a large down payment

Agrees to the job and while doing work, finds other issues to repair

Swaps expensive materials for cheaper materials

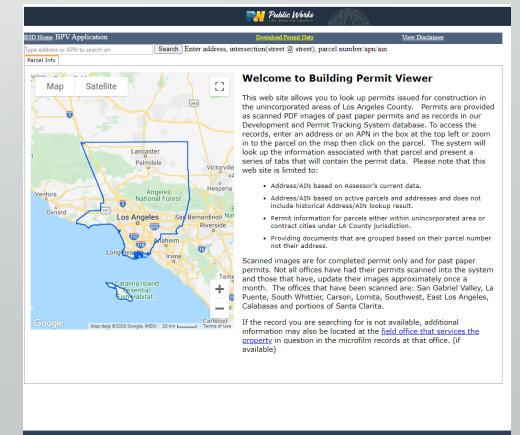
Common Scams Surrounding ADUs and Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE)

Do

- Shop around for prices (**Get 3 bids**)
- Ask for a business card to obtain the **license number** and **contact information** for the contractor
- Look up the contractor on the CSLB website
- Ask ALL of your questions!
- Ask for ALL documents in YOUR preferred language
- Take your time and read everything before signing ANYTHING
- Be involved at every stage of the project
- Make sure that the appropriate permits were COMPLETED by checking your jurisdiction's building and safety department
- Call DCBA if you have any questions!

Don't

- Use PACE funding to finance an ADU
- Provide any of YOUR personal information (i.e. SSN) to the contractor
- Pay cash
- Let them coach you on what to say
- Let them start a project on your property if you are not sure about any aspect of the project





LOS ANGELES COUNTY
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Please Contact Us

Available from 8 AM – 4:30 PM (M-F)

BY PHONE

Consumer Services

(833) 238-4450



Multilingual Staff Available

BY EMAIL

Consumer Services

homehelp@dcba.lacounty.gov



Multilingual Staff Available

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Questions ?