

Buying or hiring security services—a consumer guide

People who work within the security industry play a vital role in protecting community safety and property.

The Security Providers Act 1993 (Act) regulates the security industry in Queensland.

The Act helps protect both the general public by setting out the minimum obligations and requirements for the industry to follow.

The information below provides a guide for consumers who are considering hiring or buying security services.

Who is licensed in Queensland?

Under the Act licences are issued to people to perform a range of security roles including:

- Bodyguards, who provide close protection services.
- Crowd controllers, who keep order in or about a public place e.g. a licensed premises.
- Security officers, who guard, patrol or watch property.
- Private investigators, who obtain or gather private information about a person.
- Security advisers, who provide advice about security equipment, security methods and/or security principles. This advice is specifically related to managing the risks faced by clients at a specific location.
- Security equipment installers, who install, repair or maintain security equipment such as alarms, alarm monitoring systems, audio or visual recording systems, access control devices, intrusion detectors, safes or vaults.

What does it mean if someone holds a licence?

If someone holds a security licence it means they have been checked by the Department of Justice and Attorney-General to make sure they do not have any adverse criminal history that makes them unsuitable to work in the security industry.

There are also minimum training requirements in place to make sure bodyguards, security officers, crowd controllers and private investigators have been trained to work in the industry.

While there are no educational or trade qualifications for security advisers or security equipment installers you should satisfy yourself they have the necessary skills and experience to perform the work you are asking them to do.

Only engage licensed security providers

If you are engaging a security provider you should ensure they hold a current licence issued under the Act. Security advisers and security equipment installers have until 1 October 2008 to obtain their licences.

Every individual supplying security services will have a licence, similar to a driver's licence, which displays the person's licence details and their photograph.

Ask to see the security provider's licence to make sure they hold a licence to perform the work you are asking them to do.

What if the licence has expired?

Provided the security provider has a receipt showing they lodged their renewal before their licence expired they can still work in the industry.

Reporting unlicensed or inappropriate activity

The department is keen to ensure only suitable and appropriately licensed people operate in the security industry.

The government has introduced tough new penalties to deal with unlicensed activity and tightened up the standards to obtain and continue to hold a licence.

If you are dealing with someone who does not have a licence, please report them to your local Office of Fair Trading or phone 13 13 04 to report them as an unlicensed security provider.



For more information:

Visit www.fairtrading.qld.gov.au or call 13 13 04 for more information on the changes and when they take effect and to download a copy of the following fact sheets:

- *Changes to legislation affecting security providers*
- *Identification for crowd controllers*
- *Information for the electronic security sector*
- *In-house security officers*
- *Inspections and compliance checks*
- *Refusing or cancelling a security provider's licence*
- *Restricted licences*
- *Security providers licensing categories*
- *Security provider register and register of crowd controllers.*
- *Direct supervision for restricted license holders*
- *Security firm*
- Factsheets on training requirements for each individual security provider licence.

Disclaimer

This factsheet aims to provide businesses and their employees with a general understanding of their rights and obligations in the Queensland marketplace. It is not a comprehensive statement of the law.

The laws referred to in this factsheet are complex and various qualifications may apply to the provisions in different circumstances. You are encouraged to obtain independent legal and financial advice if you are unsure how these laws apply to your situation.

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