INQUIRE BEFORE YOU HIRE

1. Verify that a locksmith company is licensed or that a locksmith company employee is registered with the Bureau prior to conducting business with them. Use "Verify a License" on the Bureau's website at **www.bsis.ca.gov/forms_pubs/online_services/verify_license.shtml** or call **(800) 952-5210** to check on the license status of the company or person.
2. Verify with your city or county whether the locksmith company is required to have a local business permit, and if so, that the company you contacted possesses the required permit.
3. Ask for referrals from friends and family members who have had successful experiences with a locksmith company.
4. If you are locked out of your car, you may want to call your auto insurance company first. It may have a list of recommended locksmiths or may offer locksmith services as part of its benefits.
5. When you call for locksmith services, be sure to ask for an estimate of the charges from the dispatcher.

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

dca

DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

PDE_15-233

ADDITIONAL LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

If a locksmith company performs work on a project where the material and labor of the project cost more than $500, a contractor's license is also required. For more information, contact the Contractors State License Board at **(916) 255-3900** or **(800) 321-2752** or visit **www.cslb.ca.gov**. Local governments may also require a business permit or license.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU HAVE A PROBLEM

You may file a complaint against a locksmith company and/or locksmith company employee. Complaints the Bureau has received include activities such as working unlicensed or failing to complete agreed upon services that have been included on an invoice, work order, or contract. You can file a complaint online at **www.dca.ca.gov/online_services/complaints/index.shtml#bsis** or by calling **(800) 952-5210**.

BUREAU OF SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES
2420 Del Paso Rd., Ste. 270
Sacramento, CA 95834

CONSUMER GUIDE TO LOCKSMITH COMPANIES

BUREAU OF SECURITY AND INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES

REQUIREMENTS FOR DOING BUSINESS

Locksmith companies must be licensed by the Bureau of Security and Investigative Services (Bureau or BSIS) to:

1. Duplicate any key for any vehicle, residence, commercial establishment, or personal property from another key.[1]
2. Re-key, install, repair, open, or modify locks.[2]
3. Electronically duplicate transponder keys or any other electronic programming of automotive keys and electronic operating devices, such as a key fob, door, or ignition key device.[2]

A locksmith license is not required for retail establishments or individuals who only duplicate keys from an existing key.[2]

Local governments may require locksmith companies to have a business permit in order to legally operate in the city or county.

BUREAU OF SECURITY & INVESTIGATIVE SERVICES
BSIS
PROTECTING CALIFORNIA CONSUMERS
STATE OF CALIFORNIA
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS

WHO CAN PERFORM LOCKSMITH SERVICES?

A locksmith company is a business that re-keys, installs, repairs, opens, or modifies locks, or makes keys for locks, which is inclusive of electronically duplicating transponder keys and other electronic programming of automotive keys and electronic operating devices.[2] A locksmith company employee is an individual who works directly for a locksmith company, carries out the functions of a locksmith, and must be registered with the Bureau.[3]

Locksmith business owners, including partners or designated officers of a corporation, and locksmith company employees must undergo a criminal history background review as a condition for BSIS licensure.

Current law[4] allows an employee of a licensed locksmith company to work with a temporary registration card while the Bureau processes his or her locksmith employee application. A temporary registration is valid for 120 days. Please note that individuals working with a temporary registration may not have undergone a criminal history background review by the Bureau.

BE ON GUARD

Ask to see the company license or employee registration card and a photo identification of the locksmith when they arrive. Locksmith companies are required by law to display their company license at their place of business, at each branch office, and in each mobile service vehicle.[5] An owner, partner, or officer of a locksmith company is required to carry a valid pocket identification card and photo identification while working as a locksmith.[6] Registered locksmith company employees are also required by law to carry a Bureau-issued registration card and a California-issued driver's license or identification card while working as a locksmith.[7]

If anything seems wrong, stop the process. If the locksmith threatens you or insists on a charge for showing up, call the police immediately.

As with the purchase of any goods or services, make sure to ask for a receipt that includes the name of the company and company license number.[8] You may also want to write down the name and registration number of the locksmith company employee who completed the job for you and check that the receipt notates the cost of all parts and/or services including the full amount you were charged.

---

[1] BPC 6980.54
[2] BPC 6980 (j)
[3] BPC 6980.42
[4] BPC 6980.42(b)
[5] 6980.26
[6] 6980.33
[7] 6980.48
[8] 6980.55

BPC: Business and Professions Code