

VENDOR EVALUATION CHECKLIST

A Property Manager's Guide to Selecting the Right Painting Partner

Why this matters: As a property manager, your vendors are an extension of your brand. A poor choice doesn't just result in a bad paint job—it leads to tenant complaints, safety liabilities, and budget overruns. This guide helps you look beyond the lowest price to find a long-term partner.

1. Beyond the Bottom Line: Bid Comparison Criteria

When comparing two quotes, price is rarely the most important factor. Evaluate these instead:

- Scope Completeness:** Does the bid include surface prep (sanding, caulking, priming) or just the finish coat?
- Material Specifications:** Are they using commercial-grade coatings or retail-grade "builder's" paint?
- Project Timeline:** Does the schedule minimize disruption to your tenants? (e.g., after-hours or weekend work).
- Supervision:** Will there be a dedicated English-speaking foreman on-site daily?

2. Quality Standards to Look For

- PCA Compliance:** Does the contractor follow Painting Contractor's Association (PCA) standards?
- Warranty:** Look for a 2-5 year labor and material warranty, not just a verbal promise.



INTERVIEW GUIDE

3. Questions to Ask Every Contractor

Use these during your walk-through to separate the professionals from the amateurs:

The Logistics

- "How do you handle tenant notifications and site access?"
- "What is your process for managing overspray in high-traffic parking areas?"

The Crew

- "Are your painters W-2 employees or sub-contractors?" (W-2 employees generally offer better quality control).
- "What PPE (Personal Protective Equipment) is mandatory for your crew on this site?"

The Reliability

- "Can you provide three references for similar commercial properties you've painted in the last 18 months?"
- "How do you handle change orders if we find dry rot or damaged substrate after starting?"

The Golden Rule: A great property manager isn't someone who finds the cheapest vendor; they are the person who finds the vendor that makes the property look great while preventing headaches for the owner and tenants.

Red Flags to Watch Out For

- **The "Too Low" Bid:** Usually means they missed the scope or are cutting corners on insurance/safety.
- **Lack of Proof of Insurance:** Never accept a vendor without General Liability AND Workers' Comp.
- **Vague Contracts:** "Paint exterior of building" is not a scope. It should list number of coats and prep methods.
- **Cash-Only or Large Upfront Deposits:** Reputable commercial vendors usually bill on progress or net terms.