

**Deadlines and Timelines for Recording, Perfecting and Enforcing  
a Mechanics Lien on Private Property in California.**

Start of Work on the Project, or Start of Your Work.

**Within 20 Days of Start.**

Prime Contractors, Subcontractors and Suppliers with no Direct Contract with Property Owner must Serve a Preliminary Notice on Owner, the Prime Contractor and Construction Lender.

“Completion” of Entire Project, or Cessation of all Work on the Entire Project for 60 Days.

If a Valid Notice of Completion or Notice of Cessation of Work was Recorded by the Owner, then the time to Record a Lien is Shorter.

**90 Days  
Maximum if  
Prime Contractor,  
Subcontractor or  
Supplier.**

**60 Days Maximum  
(from Recording)  
if Prime Contractor /  
30 Days if Subcontractor.**

Record Mechanics Lien with County Recorder, and Serve Lien on Property Owner.

**90 Days Maximum  
from Recording,  
unless Recorded  
Extension**

File Suit on Mechanics Lien in Superior Court, and Record Lis Pendens.

**N.B.** Preliminary Notices and Mechanics Liens must be timely served by Certified or Registered Mail. (See Related Articles).

Failure to timely file suit on a Mechanics Lien causes that lien to become invalid, and may allow an Owner to sue You to Release the Lien. If you do not voluntarily record a release of the expired lien.

**N.B.** The contents of this Article **do not constitute legal advice** or create an attorney-client relationship, and **you may NOT rely on it** without seeking legal advice regarding your particular situation from a competent California Construction lawyer or Construction Contracts attorney.

Please also note that factual situations vary, and statutes, regulations and case law are frequently changing and evolving, and these materials thus also may now be or may become outdated or incorrect.

For further information on this topic and how the current law may apply to your unique contract, job, payment claim and issues, Contact Us via email, phone (415)788-1881 or visit our website at [www.wolfflaw.com](http://www.wolfflaw.com) for other contact information.

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