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Homeowner's Guide to Vetting Mold Remediation Bids

Questions to ask before hiring a remediation professional

A health-conscious checklist for comparing proposals

How to use this guide

Ask each contractor the same questions and request clear, written answers. Compare the proposed work—not only the total price.

This guide is for evaluating remediation plans. It is not medical advice, a diagnosis of illness, or a guarantee that a home can be made completely mold-free.

Contractor: _____ **Date:** _____

1 Qualifications and independence

QUESTION	CONTRACTOR'S ANSWER / YOUR NOTES
☐ What state or local licenses are required for this work, and do you hold them?	
☐ What mold-remediation training and relevant project experience do you have? Can you provide references for similar jobs?	
☐ What written standard or protocol will guide the work? For example, do you follow the current ANSI/IICRC S520 standard for professional mold remediation?	
☐ Can you provide proof of liability and workers' compensation insurance?	
☐ Are you selling the inspection, testing, remediation, and post-work verification? If so, can we use an independent assessor or indoor environmental professional for the assessment and verification?	

Keep in mind: EPA does not certify mold inspectors or remediation companies, and licensing requirements vary by location. Ask for specific qualifications and check state or local requirements rather than relying on a claim of "EPA certification."

2 Finding and fixing the moisture problem

QUESTION	CONTRACTOR'S ANSWER / YOUR NOTES
☐ What do you think is causing the moisture, and how will you verify it?	
☐ Which areas and materials do you believe are affected? Could concealed areas require further inspection?	
☐ Will your written scope identify the moisture source and state who is responsible for correcting it?	
☐ If the source is outside your scope—such as a roof, plumbing, drainage, or HVAC issue—what specialist should address it, and when should that repair happen?	

☐ How will you document moisture readings and confirm materials are dry before rebuilding or closing the area?	

A useful plan addresses the moisture source—not just visible growth. Moisture control is central to addressing mold problems.

3 Containment and protecting occupants

QUESTION	CONTRACTOR'S ANSWER / YOUR NOTES
☐ What containment will you use for this project, and how will you keep dust and debris from spreading to other parts of the home?	
☐ Will you isolate or protect nearby HVAC vents and returns? How will you handle the HVAC system if it may be affected?	
☐ Will you use HEPA-filtered air equipment or other dust controls? How will you check that containment remains effective?	
☐ Which rooms or paths will be off-limits, and when may occupants use them again?	
☐ What should we do with children, pets, food, belongings, and household members with asthma, COPD, mold allergy, or weakened immune systems during the work?	
☐ What protective equipment and decontamination procedures will workers use?	

Ask the contractor to explain the plan for your project's size and location. A generic promise to "use plastic" is not a complete explanation. Isolation, HEPA filtration, and negative-pressure enclosures may be appropriate for extensive projects.

CDC advises people with asthma, COPD, or weakened immune systems not to stay in a moldy home or be present during cleanup.

4 Removal and cleaning methods

QUESTION	CONTRACTOR'S ANSWER / YOUR NOTES
☐ What materials will you remove, and what materials will you clean in place? Why?	
☐ Will you list the materials and tasks in the written scope?	
☐ How will removed materials be contained and taken out of the home?	
☐ What cleaning method will you use on each material?	
☐ Are you proposing a coating, sealant, fogging, or antimicrobial product? What is its specific purpose, and what cleaning or removal will happen first?	
☐ Will you follow the product label? Can you provide product names and safety information?	

☐ What would make you pause the work and revise the scope if you find more damage behind a wall or under flooring?	

> Be cautious if the plan mainly involves spraying, fogging, or painting over affected material without explaining how contamination will be removed and how moisture will be corrected. Ask for exclusions and possible added costs in writing.

5 Post-work verification and documentation

QUESTION	CONTRACTOR'S ANSWER / YOUR NOTES
☐ What must be true before the work area is considered complete?	
☐ Will you provide photos, moisture readings, a list of work performed, and details of any changes to the original scope?	
☐ Will a qualified person independent of the remediation work perform post-remediation verification?	
☐ What will verification include—for example, a visual inspection, checking for dust or debris, moisture measurements, or sampling?	
☐ If sampling is proposed, what question is it intended to answer, who will collect it, and what criteria will be used to interpret the results?	
☐ What happens if the area does not meet the agreed verification criteria?	

> Visible mold generally does not need to be sampled to establish that mold is present. There are no federal standards for airborne mold levels or a universal "safe" result. Ask what a proposed test can actually tell you, and be wary of a promise that one test can prove a home is completely mold-free.

6 Price and contract

QUESTION	CONTRACTOR'S ANSWER / YOUR NOTES
☐ Does the written bid specify the work area, removal and cleaning tasks, containment, equipment, disposal, drying, and verification?	
☐ What is excluded—repairs, rebuilding, HVAC work, moving belongings, or independent testing?	
☐ How will additional work be approved and priced if hidden damage is found?	
☐ What payment schedule, warranty, and closeout documents are included?	
☐ Can I compare this bid with another written scope, rather than comparing only total prices?	

Health-related note

Tell your clinician about symptoms or relevant health conditions, but do not rely on a remediator to diagnose symptoms or promise that a particular cleanup will cure them. If someone in the household has asthma, COPD, or a weakened immune system, ask their healthcare professional about exposure precautions. CDC advises these groups not to remain in a moldy home or be present during cleanup.

Red flags to watch for

- ☒ Pressure to sign immediately.
- ☒ A vague, verbal-only scope.
- ☒ No plan to identify or correct the moisture source.
- ☒ "We'll just fog it," without an explanation of cleaning or removal.

> We know this might sound surprising given that Micro Balance sells foggers, but we don't view fogging as a replacement for remediation. Instead, it's one piece of the puzzle. Fogging can help reduce small airborne particles after remediation, support ongoing mold maintenance, and assist mold-sensitive individuals in keeping their environments cleaner. In situations where moving or remediating immediately isn't possible, it can also help bridge the gap until a more permanent solution is available.

- ☒ Guaranteed health benefits.
- ☒ Claims that one test proves a home is completely mold-free.

Sources and further reading

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), "Who Can Test My Home or Clean, Fix and Remediate My Home for Mold?"
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), "Mold Testing or Sampling."
- U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), "Mold Clean Up."
- ANSI/IICRC S520, Standard for Professional Mold Remediation.

Check current local licensing requirements and consult the relevant agencies or standard-setting organizations for the latest guidance.

Additional notes