

SB 721 Compliance Checklist & Guide

Your Complete Guide to California Balcony Inspection Requirements

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1. Determine Applicability

Building Eligibility

SB 721 applies to buildings with **3 or more multifamily dwelling units**.

Covered Elements

“**Exterior Elevated Elements**” (EEEs) include balconies, decks, porches, stairways, walkways, and entry structures that:

- Extend beyond exterior walls
- Have a walking surface more than 6 feet above ground
- Rely in whole or in part on wood or wood-based structural materials

Condo Conversion Rule

If a building is converted to condos after January 1, 2019, an inspection must occur **before the first close of escrow**.

2. Hire a Qualified Inspector

Who Can Inspect

The inspector must be:

- Licensed architect
- Licensed civil or structural engineer
- Contractor with Class A (General Engineering), B (General Building), or C-5 (Framing/Rough Carpentry) license with relevant experience

Certifications

In some cases, a certified building inspector or building official may also qualify.

Independence

The inspector must be independent (not employed by the property's management or owner) to avoid conflicts of interest.

3. Schedule & Perform Inspection

Deadline

The first inspection must be completed by **January 1, 2026**.

Frequency

After the initial inspection, subsequent inspections are required **every 6 years**.

Sampling Requirement

The inspection must include **at least 15% of each type of EEE** (by design type) on the property.

Inspection Methods

Visual Assessment

Core method for all exposed surfaces.

Non-Destructive Tests (if necessary)

- Moisture sensors
- Infrared imaging
- Endoscopic probes to look for internal decay or water intrusion

Destructive Exploration (if required)

To access hidden structural elements.

4. Prepare & Submit Inspection Report

Report Contents

The inspection report must include:

- Identification of each type of EEE assessed as potentially hazardous
- Assessment of load-bearing components and waterproofing elements
- Current condition of EEEs, projected service life, and recommendations
- Photos, test results, and narrative establishing baseline for future comparison
- Statement on immediate threats to occupant safety and emergency measures

Delivery Timeline

Standard Report

Provide to building owner (or agent) within **45 days** of inspection completion.

Emergency/Immediate Hazard Report

Must be delivered to owner and local enforcement agency within **15 days**.

Retention

- Keep copies of all inspection reports for **at least two inspection cycles** (minimum 12 years)
- When selling the building, reports must be disclosed and delivered to buyer

5. Repair & Remediation

Urgent Issues (“Immediate Threat”)

- Emergency repairs (or shoring/restricting access) are required
- Must be reported to local enforcement agency
- Inspector must notify authorities

Non-Emergency Repairs

Must be **permitted within 120 days** from date of report or notification, unless an extension is granted by local jurisdiction.

Failure to Repair

- If repairs not completed within **180 days**, local enforcement agency can issue 30-day corrective notice
- Continued non-compliance may lead to **fines (100–500/day)**
- Building safety agency can place a **lien on the property**

6. Tenant / Stakeholder Communication

Notify Tenants/Residents

Inform residents in advance of inspections and update them afterward if repairs are required.

Coordinate with Local Building Department

Some jurisdictions may require submission of inspection reports; check with your enforcement agency.

7. Maintain Compliance & Future Planning

Set Inspection Schedule

Based on the 6-year cycle, create a long-term inspection calendar.

Budget for Repairs

Use the inspection report to forecast repair costs and include in capital/reserve planning.

Use Inspection as Risk Management

Documented inspections help with liability, insurance, and resale.

Train Property Management

Ensure your property management team understands SB 721, its requirements, and the documentation process.

8. Enforcement & Penalties

Civil Penalties

Non-compliance can result in **daily fines of 100–500**.

Liens

Local enforcement agencies may record a building safety lien if non-compliant repairs are not completed.

Disclosure Liability

When selling, failing to provide inspection reports could pose legal risk or reduce buyer confidence.

9. Quick Reference Timeline

Milestone	Deadline
First Inspection	January 1, 2026
Re-Inspection Frequency	Every 6 years
Standard Report Delivery	45 days after inspection
Emergency Report Delivery	15 days after inspection
Repair Permitting	120 days from report
Repair Completion	180 days from report

10. Why Choose PassUP for Your SB 721 Inspection?

48-Hour Report Turnaround

Industry-leading speed to help you meet deadlines quickly.

AI-Enhanced Accuracy

30% higher defect detection rate using advanced thermal imaging and algorithms.

Transparent Pricing

Instant online quotes with no hidden fees.

10-Year Guarantee

Confidence in our work backed by comprehensive warranty.

Licensed California Engineers

Experienced professionals with 300+ inspections completed statewide.

Contact PassUP Today

Don't wait until the deadline!

Schedule your SB 721 inspection now to ensure compliance and protect your property investment.

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Useful Resources

- **California Bill Text (SB 721)** - Official legal language
- **PassUP Blog** - Educational articles on compliance
- **Free Consultation** - Call us to discuss your specific property needs

Disclaimer: This checklist provides general guidance and should not be construed as legal advice. Property owners should consult with qualified legal counsel and licensed professionals regarding specific compliance obligations. Information current as of November 2025.
