

VENDOR SELECTION GUIDE

The Data Center Cleaning Vendor Vetting Checklist

A practical, print-and-use checklist for facility managers, GCs, and procurement teams evaluating a data center or high-tech cleaning vendor — covering certifications, staffing capacity, screening, pricing, and the red flags that predict a vendor relationship will fail.

● DCCS Certified

● OSHA-10 Trained Crews

● Background + Drug Screened

● Nationwide, All 50 States

1 Certifications & Technical Readiness

Table stakes — nearly every vendor that reaches a final conversation will check these boxes. Confirm them, then move to Section 2.

- ☐ **DCCS Certified (or equivalent data center cleaning standard)**
Indicates personnel and protocols meet defined criteria for critical-environment, controlled-access facilities.
- ☐ **HEPA-filtered equipment and ESD-safe methods**
Standard practice for preventing particulate contamination and electrostatic discharge damage to server hardware.
- ☐ **OSHA-10 trained personnel with site-specific orientation**
Ask whether this applies to every crew member or only supervisors.
- ☐ **Experience in mission-critical environments specifically**
Not just general commercial janitorial — ask for a project example in a comparable facility type.

2 Staffing Capacity

The most overlooked section — and the one that actually predicts whether a vendor delivers.

- ☐ **Can they staff your specific market, or does it require travel labor?**
Get a direct, concrete answer — headcount and timeline — not a general "yes, we're nationwide."
- ☐ **What's the plan if the local labor pool can't support headcount?**
A vendor without travel-crew capability has no real answer beyond "we'll try."
- ☐ **Who supervises the crew on-site — every shift, or just the first?**
Supervision that disappears after day one is a common gap.
- ☐ **What's their process if the schedule compresses?**
A real answer describes a mobilization process for rapid scaling or multi-shift coverage, not just reassurance.

Ask about staffing capacity before you ask about certifications.

Projects stall less often because a vendor lacked the right training, and more often because they couldn't put enough trained people on-site for the schedule — especially in markets without an established local labor pool, or on timelines compressed by earlier delays.

3 Screening, Insurance & Accountability

Ask for specifics, not a checkbox answer.

☐ **Documented background and drug-screening process**

Ask what's screened, at what point in hiring, and by whom. A real process is described consistently; a checkbox answer gets vaguer when you ask for detail.

☐ **Proof of insurance, not just a verbal claim**

Request documentation before signing, not after a problem comes up.

☐ **Named point of contact and an off-hours escalation path**

If something goes wrong at 6 a.m. on a multi-shift deployment, who actually picks up the phone?

4 Pricing & Scope

Price alone is a weak signal. Scope detail is the real comparison.

☐ **Does the quote break down headcount, shift structure, and what's included?**

A vendor that answers with concrete detail is a stronger signal than one who responds with general reassurances — regardless of who quotes lower.

☐ **Is unusually low pricing backed by real scope detail?**

A low quote with no breakdown is more often a sign of underscoping than a good deal — the gap tends to surface later as change orders or understaffing.

☐ **Get it in writing**

A Master Service Agreement (or comparable contract) should document scope, screening standards, and points of contact — not just a sales conversation.

5 Five Red Flags to Watch For

The clearest predictors that a vendor relationship will underdeliver — usually visible before a contract is even signed.

✕ "We're nationwide" with no specifics for your market

"We're nationwide" describes a coverage area, not a delivery plan. A vendor who has actually scoped your project can tell you directly whether local sourcing covers it or a travel crew is needed, with real headcount and timeline numbers attached.

✕ No documented screening or insurance process

Background screening, drug screening, and insurance should be things a vendor can describe specifically — what's screened, when, and by whom — not just a checkbox they claim to have.

✕ No named point of contact or escalation path

If something goes wrong at 6 a.m. on a multi-shift deployment, who picks up the phone? No clear answer means accountability on your project is improvised, not structured.

✕ Suspiciously low pricing with no scope breakdown

A quote well below others with no detail on headcount, shift structure, or what's included is more often a sign of underscoping than a good deal — the gap tends to show up later as change orders or understaffing.

✕ No real answer for a compressed schedule

Ask what happens if the timeline moves up or headcount doubles with two weeks' notice. A vendor with real rapid-scaling capability describes a mobilization process — "we'll do our best" is a hope, not a plan.

6 Six Questions to Ask on the Call

Bring these into your next vendor conversation — word for word if it helps.

1. **"Can you staff this project in our specific market, or would this require travel labor?"** — Listen for a concrete headcount and timeline, not a general capability claim.
2. **"What happens if the local labor pool can't support the headcount we need?"** — A vendor with no travel-crew plan will struggle to answer this directly.
3. **"Who supervises the crew on-site, and are they there every shift?"** — Confirms whether supervision is a real, ongoing part of the engagement.
4. **"Walk me through your background and drug-screening process."** — A real process is described the same way twice. A checkbox answer isn't.
5. **"What's your process if our schedule compresses or headcount doubles with two weeks' notice?"** — Listen for a mobilization process, not a reassurance.
6. **"Can you break down this quote by headcount, shift structure, and what's included?"** — If the answer stays general, treat the number with caution.

Every one of these questions comes down to the same thing.

Can the vendor prove it, or are they just saying it? Staffing capacity, screening, accountability, pricing, and scaling all come down to whether a vendor can describe their process specifically enough that you could sanity-check it.



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