

Check your agency before you sign

By Jay Pozo · Reviewed 16 October 2026

Send these questions to the agency. Ask for written answers before agreeing to the work or the next payment.

This is the due-diligence question set: checks that help you assess a supplier before committing. Use a lawyer for contract terms and ownership rights.

Questions to send the agency

What will you deliver?

Ask: Which customer actions will the first release support? What is outside the agreed work?

Evidence: A written scope with acceptance checks, delivery dates and a price. Acceptance checks describe the results you require before approving delivery.

Answer / owner / date: _____

Who will do the work?

Ask: Who makes technical decisions? Who reviews the code, including AI-generated code?

Evidence: Named delivery and review owners with written responsibilities. Include a review example with customer details removed.

Answer / owner / date: _____

Code and account control

Can my company access the code?

Ask: Where will you keep the source code, the files used to build the app? When does my company receive access?

Evidence: A repository invitation and written ownership terms. A repository stores code and its change history. Ask a lawyer to review rights and third-party licences.

Answer / owner / date: _____

Who controls the service accounts?

Ask: Which company accounts will run the app? Who controls billing and account recovery?

Evidence: An account register covering hosting, domain, data and payments. Demonstrate company administrator access and recovery. Give the agency only the access its work requires.

Answer / owner / date: _____

Release acceptance

How will I approve a release?

Ask: Can you demonstrate each agreed customer action with realistic test data? Which checks need an independent engineer?

Evidence: A working test environment and recorded acceptance results. Include failed actions and access restrictions. Agree how open defects affect acceptance and payment.

Answer / owner / date: _____

How will you recover a failed release?

Ask: Who decides to stop a release? How will you restore the working version and recover affected data?

Evidence: A release checklist and a recovery rehearsal. A rollback returns to an earlier app version; database changes can require separate recovery.

Answer / owner / date: _____

Handover and defects

Can another engineer run the app?

Ask: What will you hand over, and who will demonstrate that another person can use it?

Evidence: A handover pack with setup instructions and account access. Include backup procedures. Ask another engineer to build and run the app using that pack.

Answer / owner / date: _____

Who fixes defects?

Ask: What counts as a defect rather than a change request? Who responds after release, and what does that cost?

Evidence: Written support hours and response targets. Include repair terms. A defect is a failure to meet an agreed requirement. A change request adds or alters a requirement.

Answer / owner / date: _____

If the project is already underway

Request access to the current code and service accounts now. Compare a working demonstration with the agreed scope.

List each missing deliverable beside its owner and agreed date. Ask for evidence before approving the next release.

Keep copies of the current agreement and acceptance records. Ask an independent engineer to review technical concerns and a lawyer to review disputed terms.

■ Save the agency's answers with your agreement. Resolve unclear responsibilities before the next commitment.