

HOME OCCUPATIONS

MUNICIPAL CODE SECTION 15.465.500



This handout outlines basic information for those with Home Occupations; it answers the most common questions about the city requirements and allowances. Please contact the Planning Division with any questions or concerns you may have.

What is a home occupation?

A home occupation is any business use that occurs in a dwelling (home, apartment, etc.) or accessory structure when such use is clearly incidental and secondary to the use of the dwelling or accessory structure, does not change the character of the dwelling, accessory structure, or neighborhood, and is carried on by a person permanently residing within the dwelling.

Do I need a business license for a home occupation?

Yes.

May non-resident employees work out of my home?

Yes, at least one person living in the home must be an employee of the home business and you may have up to two non-resident employees, provided you have on-site employee parking, approved by the City.

Can I have a sign for my business?

Yes, an unlit sign no larger than two (2) square feet attached to the on-site structure is permitted.

How much space can my home occupation occupy?

The area devoted to the home occupation cannot exceed twenty-five percent (25%) of the living area of the dwelling unit. Garage, out-buildings, unfinished basement, or other areas not prepared for normal dwelling purposes do not count towards living area.

Does a garage sale constitute a home occupation?

No, garage sales, yard sales, bake sales, parties for the display of domestic products, and the like are not considered home occupations provided the following conditions are met:

- They may not occur more than twenty days (20) in any one calendar year;
- Garage and yard sales involve only the sale of household goods, which were not purchased for the purpose of resale.

Are there types of business that aren't allowed?

Yes, the following are not permitted as a home occupation:

1. Automobile and motorcycle repair and body work (including painting);
2. Automobile services, including detailing;
3. Large appliance repair;
4. Large or small engine repair;
5. Commercial kennels or catteries;
6. Commercial painting;
7. Storage of building materials;
8. Parking or storage of heavy equipment or vehicles;
9. Religious facilities;
10. Any use involving dispatch of employees from the property.

Example – Calculating Space



Total sq. ft. of living area X .25
= Home business area allowance

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A home occupation must meet the following criteria:

1. Is carried out exclusively by a member(s) of the family residing in the dwelling unit with no more than two (2) non-resident employees with approved parking;
2. Clearly incidental and secondary to the use of the property with no more than twenty-five percent (25%) of the living area of the dwelling unit devoted to the home occupation;
3. No unlighted sign or display larger than two (2) square feet attached to an existing structure;
4. Has no outside storage nor other exterior indication of the home occupation or variation from the residential character of the property;
5. Truck delivery or pick up is limited to those common to a residential dwelling;
6. Does not involve installation and use of heavy equipment, large power tools, or power sources not common to a residential dwelling, or any other equipment that creates a level of noise, vibration, smoke, dust, odors, heat, or glare beyond that which is common to a residential area;
7. Demand for parking cannot exceed that which is normal to a residential area;
8. Production, generation, storage, or use of hazardous waste is not permitted;
9. Sales from a home occupation are only an incidental use and do not constitute regular retail sales.

What if my business does not meet all of the criteria for home occupations?

If you meet at least seven (7) of the nine (9) criteria listed above, you may apply for a Special Home Occupation Permit (SHOP). The City will review your application for a SHOP to determine if your business will:

- Not be materially detrimental to the public welfare;
- Not have an adverse impact on adjacent properties in the zone or vicinity in which the subject property is located;
- Be consistent with the spirit and purpose of the SeaTac Municipal Code.

How do I apply for a SeaTac business license?

A home occupation addendum will be emailed to you after you apply for a SeaTac endorsement online through the Washington State Department of Revenue's Business Licensing System.

How can I ensure my home occupation is reviewed quickly?

- Determine if your proposed business meets the above referenced criteria;
- Provide a detailed description of your business on the application;
- Make sure the phone number and email on your application is accurate;
- Return any additionally requested information promptly.

This document is intended to provide guidance in applying certain Zoning Code regulations and is for informational use only. It shall not be used as a substitute for the Zoning Code or for other city codes.

Where can I get additional information?

- Municipal Code Section 15.465.500
- Visit us online at www.seatacwa.gov
- For questions on Code requirements, please call the permit center at 206.973.4750
- For questions on how to apply, please call the finance counter at 206.973.4880



City of SeaTac - Department of Community and Economic Development - Planning Division

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