

## **Business License & Home Occupation**

### **Business License**

One of the requirements of operating a business within the city limits is to acquire a Lake Oswego Business License, prior to the operation of the business.

City of Lake Oswego Ordinance LOC 20.02.025 requires that anyone conducting business within the City of Lake Oswego must obtain a business license unless specifically exempted by state law (Real Estate Agents, Insurance Agents). This requirement includes working out of your home and those doing door to door solicitation in Lake Oswego.

For information on how to apply for a business license, please go to the [Finance Department Business License site](#).

Planning Dept. reviews business license application for compliance with zoning and parking requirements. Please check with Planning before applying for a business license.

### **Home Occupations**

The City recognizes the needs and desires of people to engage in small-scale business ventures. Zoning regulations may allow a person to operate a business out of his or her home, depending on the type of business activity and how the business is operated. At the same time, the City understands that business uses, if not carefully regulated, may be incompatible with the purposes of residential zones. A home occupation is **always** secondary to the use of the dwelling as residence, and must be operated by a resident of the dwelling.

### **WHAT TYPES OF BUSINESSES ARE ALLOWED AS HOME OCCUPATIONS?**

The City Code does not specifically identify the types of businesses allowed or prohibited as home occupations. However, a home occupation may be conducted only if the following conditions are continuously complied with:

- The use does not alter the residential character of the neighborhood nor infringe upon the right of residents in the vicinity to the peaceful enjoyment of the neighborhood.
- A current and valid business license is maintained.
- There are no employees other than family residents who reside at the dwelling.
- There is no outside storage of goods or materials other than vegetation.
- No more than 25% of the dwelling is devoted to the non-residential use.

A Business License can be revoked if the permit holder does not comply with the home occupation conditions listed above.

### **DO I NEED A PERMIT FOR A HOME OCCUPATION?**

Yes, the City Code requires that any person doing business within Lake Oswego obtain a valid City business license. Business License applications can be obtained from the City Finance Department or [on-line](#). As part of the review of the Business License application, City staff will verify that the home occupation is located in a residential district. Additionally, the resident business owner must sign a statement agreeing to abide by the home occupation conditions listed above.

### **APPLICATION PROCEDURE**

The business owner planning to conduct the home occupation applies for the Business License using the forms provided by the Finance Department. Staff reviews the application for compliance with zoning regulations; review typically takes a week. Business licenses must be renewed every year.

### WHAT TYPES OF SIGNS MAY I HAVE?

Signage is regulated under the Sign Code (LOC Article 47). The following signs are allowed without permit or fee on a developed residential lot [LOC 47.06.205]:

- Sign Attached to the Building: One sign not exceeding one square foot in area.
- Free-Standing Sign: One non-illuminated sign not exceeding two square feet in area

### Supporting Documents



[Home Occupation Handout](#)

### Web Links

[Business License Information](#)

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