



Department of Planning and Building Services
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HOME OCCUPATIONS

WHAT IS A HOME OCCUPATION?

A home occupation is a business conducted in or on the premises of a dwelling located in a residential zone; a home occupation is *always* secondary to the use of the dwelling as a residence, and must be operated by a resident of the dwelling.

HELPING SMALL BUSINESSES

The City of Lake Oswego recognizes the needs and desires of many people to engage in small-scale business ventures which would not be possible if it were necessary to obtain commercial space. At the same time, the City understands that business uses, if not carefully regulated, may be incompatible with the purposes of residential zones. 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.

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?

There is no permit required for a home occupation; however, 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 at www.ci.oswego.or.us. 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 resident 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 (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.