



**City of Pismo Beach, Planning Division**  
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## **HOME OCCUPATION PERMITS**

Home Occupation Permits are required for persons who want to operate businesses from their homes in residential zones. A Home Occupation Permit will be granted when the business is secondary or incidental to the residential use of the property, and is located and conducted so that the average neighbor or visitor will not be aware of its existence or operation. For the home occupation permit regulations, see Section 17.115 in the 1983 code if your home is inside the Coastal Zone, or see 17.38.070 in the 1998 Zoning Code if your home is outside the Coastal Zone.

### **To obtain a Home Occupation Permit, you must:**

- 1) Determine if what you want to do is allowed as a home occupation (see below). If it is, then:
- 2) Complete a standard Planning Application and supplemental information form (this supplement is the last sheet of this packet). If you do not own your home, you must obtain the signature of the property owner or rental manager.
- 3) Submit these forms to the Planning Division with appropriate fees.
- 4) Wait until you are notified that your permit has been approved, or check with the Planning Division to find out.
- 5) After the permit has been approved, and after the ten-day appeal period has expired, apply for a Business Tax Certificate at the Finance Department.

Allowed home occupations: If conducted in compliance with the required standards for home occupations, the following and similar uses will be permitted:

- Art work (ceramics, painting, photography, sculpture, similar work)
- Clothing production, millinery, sewing, similar activities
- Small handcrafts
- Office for an architect, attorney, consultant, insurance agent, tutor, writer, counselor, licensed massage therapist, similar services

**Prohibited home occupations: The following uses are not allowed as home occupations:**

- Adult businesses
- Barber and beauty shops
- Commercial photo or film processing laboratories
- Dance or night clubs
- Gun or ammunition sales
- Medical and dental offices, clinics, laboratories (not including counselors, psychotherapists, licensed massage therapists)
- Ministorage
- Storage of equipment, materials, and other accessories for the construction or service trades
- Vehicle repair (body or mechanical), upholstery, automobile detailing or painting
- Welding or machining
- Any other use determined by the Director to be not incidental to or compatible with residential activities, including any use that may produce noise, odors, or unusual levels of traffic.

**Uses that require notification:**

Certain uses may not be appropriate as home occupations. For these uses, you will be required to submit labels with the names of owners and residents of property near your home. The Planning Division will send out notices to these persons, informing them of your request for a home occupation. We may also ask you for more detailed information about the business. Uses in this category include:

- Wholesale sales or distribution of any items, except small items produced in the home (craft)

Notification: For these and similar uses, submit one set of mailing labels with the names and addresses of owners and occupants of property within 300 feet of the home.

**Home occupations must be able to meet the requirements on the following pages:**

**Inside Coastal Zone  
(1983 Zoning Code applies)**

**Requirements for home occupations:**

1. The home occupation permit holder must secure a **business tax certificate**.
2. **Within the residence.** The use shall be conducted entirely within the residence and not in any accessory structure or the yard areas. Storage of materials in a carport or yard area is not permitted. Use of the garage in the home occupation shall not prevent or limit its use for required parking.
3. **Floor area.** No more than one room or 25% of the gross floor area, whichever is less, shall be used for the home occupation.
4. **Utilities use.** The use must not increase the use of utilities or communication facilities beyond that which is normal to the use of property for residential purposes.
5. **Alterations.** The use must not require internal or external alterations to the residence.
6. **Mechanical equipment.** No mechanical equipment larger than that normally associated with a residence may be installed on the exterior of the structure.
7. **Hazardous materials and interference.** The use shall not include storage of hazardous materials or change the fire rating of the structure or the neighborhood, nor shall it create noise, dust, vibration, smell, glare, smoke, radio and television interference, radioactive exposure or any similar condition to any greater extent than normally experienced in an average home.
8. **Employees.** No persons other than residents may be employed on-site.
9. **Advertising.** There shall be no advertising signs, nor shall advertising identify the home occupation by street address.
10. **No products** shall be displayed on or sold from the premises.
11. The use shall **not increase vehicular traffic flow** by more than two vehicles at a time to the site.
12. **Number of clients.** No more than three clients or customers shall visit the site at any one time.
13. **Noise.** The home occupation shall not generate any noises outside the residence between the hours of 9 p.m. and 9 a.m.
14. **Clients or customers** shall not visit the site between the hours of 7 p.m. and 9 a.m.
15. **Commercial vehicle.** No more than one commercial vehicle shall be permitted at the site. This vehicle shall not exceed a  $\frac{3}{4}$ -ton rated capacity.
16. **Delivery of materials** by commercial vehicles shall be limited to one trip per week average.

**Outside Coastal Zone  
(1998 Zoning Code applies)**

**Requirements of home occupations:**

1. **Accessory use only.** The home occupation shall be clearly secondary to the full-time use of the structure as a residence.
2. **Activities, equipment, materials.** Activities conducted and equipment or material used shall not change the fire safety or occupancy classifications of the premises. The use shall not involve the storage of flammable, explosive, or hazardous materials. No use shall create noise, dust, light, vibration, odor, gas, fumes, toxic/hazardous materials, smoke, glare, electrical interference, or other hazards or nuisances;
3. **Exterior evidence of use.** The use shall not require any modification not customarily found in a dwelling, nor shall the use be visible from the street or from neighboring properties. There shall be no window display, advertising sign, or other identification of the home occupation on the premises;
4. **Limitation on employees.** The home occupation shall have no employees on the site other than the residents of the housing unit. This limitation applies only to employees of the home business and does not regulate the use of housekeeping, gardening, child care, and/or cooking personnel which are unrelated to the home business; and
5. **Limitation on clients.** No more than one client shall be allowed on the premises at any time for counseling, music lessons, tutoring, or other purposes.
6. **Location of home occupation.** The home occupation shall be located entirely within an enclosed structure, and shall not be allowed in a trailer or other temporary structure; and
7. **Vehicles, traffic.** Vehicles used and traffic generated by the home occupation shall not exceed the type of vehicles and traffic volume normally generated by a home in a residential neighborhood. All parking needs of the home occupation shall be met off the street and on the same site as the permitted home occupation.