



# GUILFORD COUNTY PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

## Home Occupation

### OVERVIEW

A Home Occupation is an accessory use that allows the operation of selected businesses with a residence. Home Occupations are permitted in the following zoning districts: Agricultural (AG), all Residential zones (RS & RM), General Office (GO-M & GO-H) and the Neighborhood Business (NB) zones. Home Occupations must be conducted entirely within the residence. Some home office uses do not require a Home Occupation Permit. Home office uses that do not entail physical public interaction on site and do not employ persons from outside the home may not need a Home Occupation Permit. However, an application will still need to be submitted.

### TYPES OF PERMITTED HOME OCCUPATIONS

Home Occupations include, but are not limited to, typing services, beauty parlors, doctor/dentist office, architects, food catering, day care (up to 15 based on square footage), handicrafting, and accountants. This is not an inclusive list. Please contact the Zoning Section if you have a question about the eligibility of a specific business.

### MAXIMUM AREA

The area set aside for the Home Occupation shall occupy no more than twenty-five (25%) percent of the gross floor area of the residence. More than one Home Occupation maybe approved per residence. However, the maximum area occupied by all Home Occupations is still 25% of the gross floor area.

### OUTSIDE STORAGE

No outside storage or display of items associated with the Home Occupation is permitted.

### SIGNS

Home Occupations are allowed one (1) freestanding identification sign with a maximum of four (4) square feet in area and six (6) feet in height. A permit for the sign is not required.

### HANDICAP ACCESSIBLE

Certain Home Occupations are required to meet standards set by the North Carolina State Accessibility Code—contact Planning and Development Engineers for information.

### OPERATION

The Home Occupation must be conducted entirely within the residence. It must be a use which is clearly incidental and secondary to the use of the dwelling unit for residential purposes and does not change the character of the residence. Home Occupations are not permitted in a detached garage or other detached accessory structure, except for an accessory dwelling unit.

No display, stock-in-trade, or commodity sold not made on the premise shall be permitted. No items brought in for resale can be sold. For catering and handicrafting, only handmade items made in the dwelling may be offered for sale.

Only one (1) person who is not an occupant on the residence may be employed as part of the Home Occupation and report to the residence to work or conduct business. All other persons employed as part of the Home Occupation shall not:

- ▶ report to work at or near the residence;
- ▶ go by the residence to pick-up pay checks, orders, supplies, or other items related to the business, and;
- ▶ associate with the residence in any manner which could be interpreted as part of the normal employer/employee relationship.

### APPROVAL PROCEDURES

In order to legally operate a Home Occupation, the operator must obtain approval from the Planning and Development Department. Certain types of uses will require the Home Occupation Permit. A Home Occupation Permit does not include any additional local, state or federal permits or licenses required for a specific business.

To obtain a Home Occupation Permit the operator of the business should make application with the Planning and Development Department. A Zoning Enforcement Officer may contact you determine if the proposed business qualifies or is exempt and may forward your application to the Home Occupation Committee for final approval.

The Permit Section will need the property address, the type of business and a detailed description of activities associated with the business. Contact the Permit Section for the current cost of the permit.

If the residence is on a septic system an evaluation and review by the Guilford County Environmental Health Department may be required.

If the applicant is leasing or renting the property, including persons living in apartments or mobile home parks, a notarized statement of permission to operate the Home Occupation is required from the property owner.

This bulletin is intended for public information purposes only. It summarizes and omits some provisions. It is not to be construed or used as an official Development Ordinance interpretation in any legal proceedings.



**GUILFORD COUNTY  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**

**HOME OCCUPATION APPLICATION  
PERMIT No. \_\_\_\_\_**

A Home Occupation is the operation of a business conducted within a dwelling and carried on by the residents, which is clearly incidental and secondary to the use of the dwelling for residential purposes and does not change the character of the dwelling or neighborhood. A Home Occupation may be approved if it meets all requirements of the Guilford County Development Ordinance. The Home Occupation Permit obtained from the Guilford County Planning and Development Department does not include any additional local, state, or federal permits or licenses required for a specific business.

**Steps to Apply for Home Occupation Permit**

- 1:** Read Home Occupation Development Standards found in the Guilford County Development Ordinance or **Guilford County Planning Bulletin No. P7 - Home Occupation**. If you feel that you meet all the requirements proceed to Step 2.
- 2:** Complete the application and submit, **along with a floor plan drawn to scale**, to the Planning and Development Department - Zoning Section. Do not send the permit fee. (Average review time is 3 to 5 working days)
- 3:** If approved, submit approved application to the Planning and Development Department - Permit Section for permit issuance. This must be done in person. Bring the permit fee, the approved application and the approved floor plan.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Map # \_\_\_\_\_ Block# \_\_\_\_\_ Lot# \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning: \_\_\_\_\_

Type of Home (Check One):  Site Built or Modular  Manufactured (Mobile Home)

Gross Square Footage of Home: \_\_\_\_\_ Square Footage of Home Occupation Area: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of Employees: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of employees not residing in the home: \_\_\_\_\_

Open to the Public:  Yes  No Sign:  Yes  No

Any Planned Alterations to Accommodate Home Occupation:  Yes  No Describe Alterations: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Business: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Business: \_\_\_\_\_

Detailed Description of Business - Include the type of work that will take place in the home, number of employees, materials needed to conduct business, storage of materials, if customers will be coming to the home etc. Attach additional sheets if necessary.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

*I hereby agree to conform to all applicable laws of Guilford County and the State of North Carolina and certify that the information is complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I acknowledge that by filling out this application, representatives from Guilford County Planning and Development may enter the subject property for the purpose of investigation and analysis of this request.*

DENIED \_\_\_\_\_ APPROVED \_\_\_\_\_ APPROVED W/ CONDITIONS \_\_\_\_\_ NO PERMIT REQUIRED \_\_\_\_\_

Environmental Health Review Required \_\_\_\_\_ Permits Required:  Mechanical  Electrical  Construction  Plumbing

By \_\_\_\_\_ Title \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Permits Remarks: \_\_\_\_\_

The decision of the Enforcement Officer can be appealed to the Guilford County Board of Adjustment within fifteen (15) days following the decision. The appeal shall be filed on the appropriate forms and shall be subject to an application fee.