

WORKING AT HOME AND ZONING



People thinking about running a business or workshop out of their home should understand the requirements of the City of Fort Wayne Zoning Ordinance. There are different regulations depending on the type of business, and the location. Most businesses fit into one of three categories, Home Occupations, Home-based Businesses, and Home Workshops. Subdivision covenants and deed restrictions are often more restrictive than the City's Zoning Ordinance. This sheet is meant as a summary of some of the requirements in the Zoning Ordinance, for more detail, consult the City of Fort Wayne Zoning Ordinance, or contact the City Planning Department at 427-1129.

Home Occupations are businesses and vocations that can be operated out of the home with no prior City Planning Department approval or permits.

Home Occupations require no prior approval or permits from the city, however, the home occupation must comply with all of the following limitations and requirements:

- no outside employees are allowed;
- no alterations to the structure or residential character;
- occupation must be operated within the dwelling and not from the garage, shed, or other structure;
- only office equipment is permitted and equipment noise shall not disturb adjacent properties or units;
- the occupation shall not occupy more than 20% of the of the dwelling unit;
- one vehicle is allowed to display signs for the occupation, but **no** other signs are allowed;
- occupations are permitted in single, two, and multiple family units;
- the property address may not be used in advertising including newspaper ads, telephone directories, flyers, and on the Internet;
- no clients/customers are permitted to come to the residence; and
- no retail sales are permitted on the property.

Permitted Home Occupations include art studios; business or office bookkeeping and/or accounting; home offices; and typing and other office services.

Prohibited Home Occupations include: amusement enterprises of any public nature; barber shops, beauty salons, nail salons, tanning parlors; care and/or breeding of animals, including animal grooming; catering, or food preparation of any kind; equipment repair and/or service; massage therapy; automobile repair businesses; production, manufacturing, repair, or assembly of products or components of products; and psychic reading business.

If you have any questions or would like additional information on Home Occupations, Home-Based Businesses, or Home Workshops, the Zoning Ordinance is available online at WWW.cityoffortwayne.org or you can contact the Planning Department contact the Land Use Management staff at 427-1129.

Home-Based Businesses are permitted only with Board of Zoning Appeals review and approval in AR, R1, R2, R3, and RP zoning districts. Home-Based Businesses are a possible option available for a business that requires some clients or customers to visit the home or more space than a home occupation allows.

The proposed Home-Based Business must comply with the standards for the home occupations except that the following allowances are possible:

- the business may occupy 25% of gross floor area of the dwelling;
- a limited number of clients or customers may be permitted to come to the home;
- the Board may consider any existing plat or deed restrictions limiting the uses of the property included in the request; and
- the Board may allow limited retail sales as an accessory use.

Permitted Home-Based Businesses may include accounting or bookkeeping offices; architect, engineer, and land surveyor offices; massage therapy; one-chair beauty salon, barber shop, nail salon; photography studio; psychic reading business; real estate, insurance, law office; seamstress or tailor; and teaching/tutoring, including music lessons.

Prohibited Home-Based Businesses include amusement enterprises of any nature; animal grooming, kennel, or pet shop; and production, manufacturing, or repair of products or components.

Home Workshops are permitted only with Board of Zoning Appeals review and approval in AR, R1, R2, R3, and RP zoning districts. This approval may be suitable for home businesses that produce a product, and have some retail element.

The limitations are similar to those for a Home Occupation except for the following:

- the Home Workshop must be secondary to the dwelling and can be operated from an attached or detached garage or accessory structure, as long as the dwelling was occupied first and the structure was not built solely for the workshop purpose;
- the Home Workshop may only use equipment for small scale enterprises;
- the Home Workshop may not occupy more than 25% of the house or 50% of the gross floor area of an accessory space;
- no additions or separate entrances shall be added to the dwelling, garage, or accessory space for the Home Workshop;
- The Home Workshop shall not be permitted in a two family or multiple family dwelling unit; and
- the Board may consider any existing plat or deed restrictions limiting the uses of the property included in the request.

Permitted Home Workshops may include ceramics/pottery making; copy and duplicating service; small electric equipment repair such as television and video cassette recorders; woodworking.

Prohibited Home Workshops include amusement enterprises of any public nature; animal grooming, kennel, or pet shop; cabinet or furniture making; small engine repair; and mechanical or body repair of automotive vehicles, other than routine maintenance and minor repair of personal motor vehicles titled to the occupants of the property.

