



## Working From Home: Home Occupations

### What Is A Home Occupation?

A home occupation is a business, work activity, craft or hobby that is run from a person's home. Many people with small-scale businesses, or who work in certain occupations find it convenient to use their homes as their workplace.

### The Benefits Of Home Occupations

Home occupations can provide the following benefits:

- Help to foster small businesses until they become big enough to move into a commercial or industrial area;
- Provide employment for local people;
- Reduce vehicle use for those who live on the site of the home occupation; and
- Bring a greater mix of activities into suburbs where many residents leave every day to go to work.

### The Environmental Effects Of Home Occupations

Many home occupations have no adverse effects on the environment. Some home occupations have the potential to cause adverse environmental effects on the site of the home occupation, on neighbours and on the wider environment. Common adverse effects include the following:

- Increased vehicle movements to and from the site which can pose traffic safety issues and generate noise problems;
- Vehicle parking that affects public access along footpaths or shared driveways;
- Odour from the home occupation;
- Noise from the home occupation;
- Signs that affect the visual amenity of the street;
- Visual impact of the home occupation (for example outside storage areas and building appearance);
- Old cars, car bodies, car parts and construction materials on the site; and
- Waste issues that arise from the materials used in the home occupation.

### The Operative District Plan Definition

The Operative District Plan defines home occupation as "any commercial activity, profession or service carried out on a site by the occupier which:

- the use of the site is secondary and incidental to the use of the site for residential purposes, and
- the activity meets the terms and standards of the relevant Environment Rules but excludes Any Activity involving spray painting, panel beating, motor and motor vehicle repairs, including fibre-glassing, sheet-metal work and wrecking of motor vehicles

### The Operative District Plan Policy

The Operative District Plan includes home occupations in the general category of "**non-residential activities**". It establishes policies and rules for these activities. Policy 11.18 states that:

*"Non residential activities (other than retail activities) may be located within residential areas of the City, provided the individual and cumulative impacts of such a provision do not adversely affect amenity values and neighbourhood character, or fragment residential activities to the point that essential residential character is lost, and the safety of residents is harmed."*

The Operative District Plan goes on to state that allowing a greater mix of activities in residential neighbourhoods must be carefully managed. This management wants to ensure that residential neighbourhoods are enhanced, rather than creating an environment in which residents do not want to live.

### The Operative District Plan Rules

Home occupations are permitted as of right in the Living, Countryside, Foothills, Rural Villages, Coastal Villages, Bush Living and Waitakere Ranges Environments. The rules for home occupations that apply to all these Environments are as follows:

- No more than five people work at the home occupation, at least one of whom lives at the site;
- The home occupation is carried out in an existing building;

(continued over)

- Heavy vehicle traffic movements to and from home occupation sites number no more than two each week; and
- The home occupation, apart from the parking of one vehicle, is screened from adjoining sites and from the road

Other Rules have been developed specifically for particular Environments, and these are detailed in the following table. A tick in the box in the table below indicates that for that particular Environment, that Rule must also be met.

	Living	Foothills	Countryside	Rural Village	Bush Living	Waitakere Ranges	Coastal Village
Retail sales are confined to front sites with individual driveway access, and have a minimum net site area of 450m <sup>2</sup> , and shall be of goods produced on site (excluding mail or electronically ordered goods redistributed by post or courier)	✓				✓		✓
Retail sales are confined to front sites with individual driveway access, and shall be of goods produced on site (excluding mail or electronically ordered goods redistributed by post or courier)				✓			
Retail sales and services shall be of goods produced on site (excluding mail or electronically ordered goods redistributed by post or courier)		✓	✓			✓	
Retail sales are conducted from buildings on the site	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

**If the home occupation you propose does not meet these standards, you will require a resource consent.**

Rules relating to traffic generation, noise, glare, odour, dust and vibration may also apply.

Home occupations are not specifically provided for in the Community, Working, Open Space and Transport Environments and in Special Areas. However each of these Environments has general standards to which any activity, including a proposed home occupation, must comply. (continued over)

## **Applying For A Resource Consent For A Home Occupation**

Resource consent application forms, fee schedules and other information are available from the Council. When applying for a resource consent, you will need to provide all the details requested on the application form(s), and pay the appropriate fee.

To avoid delays in processing your application, discuss what information is required with the Council's Resource Planners. This will clarify what information you will need to supply, and whether your proposal needs a resource consent for other matters besides the home occupation, for example noise, glare and signage.

If your application has insufficient information, the Council will request that you supply the missing information before the application is processed.

If your home occupation will adversely affect your neighbours, you will need to obtain their written consent on the appropriate Council form. The Resource Planner processing your resource consent application will advise you who is considered to be adversely affected. If your neighbours are unwilling to give their consent, this may affect the Council's decision on whether or not to publicly notify your application. It may also lead to conditions on your resource consent (should it be approved), such as screening or fencing.

## **Complaints About Home Occupations**

If you wish to make a complaint about a home occupation, please contact the Council by phoning (09) 839 0400. A Field Services representative will be sent out to investigate the complaint and take any appropriate action. **Your complaint will be treated with the utmost confidentiality.**

If a neighbour complains about your home occupation, Council will send a Field Services representative to your property to investigate the complaint. If you are found to not be complying with the Operative District Plan, you will be required to obtain a resource consent. If a resource consent is not granted, you may have to close down or relocate your home occupation. If you have a resource consent, but are not complying with the conditions, you will be required to change your work activities to meet the conditions.

**This brochure is only a guide to the Non Residential Activities Rules. The complete Rules are found in Volume Two of the Rules Section of the Operative District Plan. If you have any queries, or require further information please ask the Civic Centre Counter Staff or telephone the Council Call Centre on (09) 839 0400.**