



WETHERSFIELD
ECONOMIC & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Home Occupations/Home Offices

Thank you for your interest in joining the Wethersfield business community! We have put together this guide in an effort to provide you with a summary of some of the steps necessary to acquire the permits you will need to open your home-based business.

In 2004, the Town of Wethersfield adopted new zoning regulations that permit Home Occupations and Home Office in the AA, A-1, A, B and C residential zones. Sections 3.5.2. and 10.2.B. of the zoning regulations establish the regulations and the plan requirements for this type of use.

What is a Home Occupation? – Any use of residential premises carried on for business or as a business by a person or persons residing on the premises.

What is a Home Office? – Any portion of a residential premises use on an occasional basis by a person or persons residing on the premises in conjunction with employment typically occurring elsewhere.

The Town has established the following requirements for home occupations/home offices:

General Requirements

Section 3.5.2 of the Wethersfield Zoning Regulations requires that any home office or home occupation shall conform to the following requirements:

- It shall be carried on only by the inhabitants of the dwelling.
- It shall be operated entirely within the confines of the dwelling.
- It shall be clearly secondary to the use of the dwelling for residential purposes.
- It shall have adequate off-street parking for the home occupation in addition to the dwelling.
- It shall not involve the storage or delivery of significant quantities of goods or materials.
- It shall not require storage of any materials or products on the premises outside of the dwelling unit.
- The home occupation (and any associated parking or other activity) shall not materially change the residential character of the dwelling or the neighborhood.
- It shall not create a health or safety hazard or be considered a nuisance due to objectionable illumination, noise, smoke, odor, toxic fumes, vibration, interference with radio or television reception in the vicinity or unsightly conditions that would set the dwelling apart in its surroundings or degrade residential property values in the neighborhood.
- The home occupation shall not involve any employees stationed on the premises.
- The home occupation shall occupy less than 25% of the gross floor area of the dwelling.
- The home occupation shall not involve customers or clients arriving at the dwelling.
- It shall not involve the retail sales of merchandise except for crafts or art created at the premises.
- It shall not require equipment other than may be typical for a residential household, other than a loom or photographic darkroom or similar craft or art equipment.
- It shall not require a commercial vehicle.

Minor Home Occupations - May Be Permitted by Zoning Permit Issued by Zoning Enforcement Official

If the proposal complies with all of the provisions of Section 3.5.2. as stated above it may be approved administratively as a minor home occupation through the Building Department's issuance of a zoning permit/building permit application.

Be advised that the Zoning Enforcement Official may refer any application to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Commission reserves the right to review any home occupation for compliance with the above requirements and act upon its findings.

Submission Requirements

As part of any application to establish a home occupation, the following documentation shall be provided:

- Submission of a zoning permit application.
- Submission of the required application fee.
- A letter describing how the home occupation will comply with the applicable requirements of Section 3.5.2. of the zoning regulations.
- Two sets of floor plans, drawn to scale, indicating the interior use of the building after the establishment of the home occupation with a calculation of floor area for the residential portion of the home and that portion dedicated to the home occupation.
- If deemed necessary by the Zoning Enforcement Official, two sets of a site plan, drawn to scale, showing the location of structures on the parcel, the utilities to service the home and accessory use, parking and drive areas, and any other pertinent information, both existing and proposed.
- If exterior building modifications are proposed, two sets of building elevations, drawn to scale, indicating the exterior appearance of the building both before and after the establishment of the home occupation, the type and color of siding existing and proposed, and other similar features.
- A copy of the deed for the subject property.

Major Home Occupations - May Only Be Permitted by Special Permit Issued by the Planning and Zoning Commission

Applications that do not comply with the provisions of Section 3.5.2. as stated above are classified as major home occupations and can only be permitted following the submission of an application for, and the approval of, a Special Permit by the Planning and Zoning Commission. (See Special Permit handout for details of this process) This process involves the submission of an application to the Community Development Office, an application fee, notice to neighbors and a public hearing in front of the Planning and Zoning Commission.

Signage Permitted

Section 6.3 of the zoning regulations permit the issuance by the Planning and Zoning Commission through the approval of a Special Permit a detached sign. The details of the process and application requirements are found in our signage guide.

Personal Property Declaration for Tax Assessor

Every municipality in the State of Connecticut levies a Personal Property Tax on all Business Equipment, both owned and leased, as authorized in Sec. 12-63 of the State Statutes. A "Personal Property Declaration" is required from owners of all equipment, to be filed annually with the Assessor on or before November 1. The Declaration of Personal Property is the basis for your tax assessment, and failure to file or an improper filing, will result in an estimated assessment and 25% penalty.

As a new business, a complete list of all furniture, fixtures, and equipment is required. This will become the basis for all future additions, deletions, and depreciation of the business equipment. You are also required to list the owners & details of all leased equipment, so that this equipment is not charged to your business.

If you have any questions, or need any additional information please do not to hesitate to contact the Assessor's Office at (860) 721-2810.

Trade Name Certificate with Town Clerk

Connecticut State Law requires that anyone conducting business under an assumed name must file a Trade Name Certificate in the Town Clerk's Office in the town where business is being conducted.

All persons who are authorized to sign on behalf of the business must sign their name on the Trade Name Certificate.

The trade name filing requirement does not apply to:

- **Partnerships**, if the partnership name includes the true Surname of at least one of the persons composing said partnership;
- **Limited Partnerships** which have registered with the Secretary of State; and
- **Limited Liability Companies** which have registered with the Secretary of State.

Note: A Trade Name Certificate does not protect that name from being used by someone else. The penalty for failure to file a Trade Name Certificate is \$500.00.

Trade Name Dissolutions

Recorded Trade Names are permanent records. Trade Name Dissolution forms must be filled out and recorded when the business ceases to operate. All parties that filled out the original Trade Name Certificate must sign the Trade Name Dissolution form.

FEES:

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| Trade Name Certificate Filing Fee | \$ 10.00 |
| Fee for Notarizing Certificate | \$ 5.00 |
| Trade Name Dissolution Filing Fee | \$ 10.00 |
| Certified Copy (\$1.00 for Copy & \$2.00 Certified Fee) | \$ 3.00 |