



Advantages to operating a home-based business



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There are many advantages to operating a business out of your home. You may eliminate time and gas required to commute to work, and you may reduce your business overhead costs. It is important to note that not all home-based businesses are permitted. The City of Ottawa regulates the types of home businesses which are permitted, as well as the size of the business. Before you decide to move your business to your home, first determine whether your business complies with City of Ottawa bylaws.

The business owner does not need a permit or license to operate a home-based business unless the industry they are in requires a license (such as a mortgage broker's license). Section 127-129 of the City of Ottawa Zoning Bylaw states that a home-based business is permitted unless:

- the business becomes a nuisance (including noise, odour and parking);

- the business creates a fire hazard or health risk;

- the business interferes with radio, television, or telecommunications transmissions; and,

- the operator of the business does not reside in the home.

After determining whether the business is permitted, the business owner then must comply with the bylaws relating to the maximum square footage allotted for the business. Section 127(9) states that the business cannot exceed 25% of the unit's gross floor area or 28 m², whichever of the two measurements is bigger). If the business is located in a garage, the business cannot exceed 54 m².

The homeowner may operate multiple home-based businesses as long as the businesses comply with the maximum square footage allotted for business purposes

and the other bylaws relating to home-based businesses.

The business owner may also staff the business, but is only allowed to hire one on-site, non-resident employee per principal dwelling unit. There are no restrictions on the number of residents who may operate the business.

A homeowner who is looking to operate a home-based daycare must comply with the special rules which apply to this type of business under s.129 of the City of Ottawa Zoning By-Law. The home-based daycare must only accommodate up to a maximum of five (5) children and the daycare must be located in the principal dwelling of the home. The daycare also cannot be located in a secondary dwelling or a rooming unit.

We have provided a summary of the basic rules which apply to home-based businesses. Other rules may apply so always confirm with the City of Ottawa the requirements for your specific home-based business.

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