

SECTION 16 HOME OCCUPATIONS

16.1. Neighborhood Home Occupations

Customary home occupations are permitted in residential districts where such occupations are carried on in the residence and/or accessory buildings subject to the following limitations.

1. Such occupations shall be engaged in only by residents of the premises and not more than three additional on-site employees who may be non-residents. The total number of resident and non-resident employees working on-site shall not exceed four. The use shall be clearly incidental and subordinate to its use for residential purposes by its occupants.
2. No more than 25% percent of the heated living space, excluding basements, shall be used for home occupations. Basements may also be used for home occupations in addition to the 25% or a detached garage.
3. No outdoor display of goods or materials shall be allowed on the property.
4. One non-illuminated sign is allowed which shall not exceed four square feet in area.
5. No equipment or process shall be used in such home occupation, which creates noise, vibration, glare, fumes, odors, or electrical interference detectable to the normal senses off the lot. In the case of electrical interference, no equipment or process shall be used which creates visual or audible interference in any radio or television receivers off the premises, or which causes fluctuation in line voltage off the premises.
6. Accessory buildings may be used for home occupations provided the building area is not larger than 1,000 square feet. If multiple buildings are used, the total combined square footage shall not exceed 1,000 square feet.
7. No traffic shall be generated by such home occupation in greater volumes than would normally be expected in a residential neighborhood, and any need for parking generated by the conduct of such home occupation shall be met off the street in an area other than in a required front yard.

The customary home occupations referred to in this subsection may include the merchandising and the sale of goods and products at retail, and the manufacture and assembly of goods and products.

Occupations that have no non-resident employees, no signs, no on-site retail sales, or no visits from the general public do not require a home occupation permit.

16.2. Rural Home Occupations

Rural home occupations are those, which by their nature are not compatible on small lots near other residences, and may require an outdoor storage area for goods and materials associated with the business.

Chatham County Zoning Ordinance

1. Rural home occupations may be allowed on parcels, which are no smaller than three acres in size.
2. Such occupations shall be engaged in only by residents of the premises and not more than three additional on-site employees who may be non-residents. The total number of resident and non-resident employees working on-site shall not exceed four. The use shall be subordinate to its use for residential purposes by its occupants.
3. No more than 25% percent of the heated living space, excluding basements, shall be used for home occupations. Basements may also be used for home occupations in addition to the 25%.
4. One non-illuminated sign is allowed which shall not exceed four square feet in area.
5. No equipment or process shall be used in such home occupation, which creates noise, vibration, glare, fumes, odors, or electrical interference that is a nuisance off the lot. All operations must conform to the Chatham County Noise Ordinance. In the case of electrical interference, no equipment or process shall be used which creates visual or audible interference in any radio or television receivers off the premises, or which causes fluctuation in line voltage off the premises.
6. Accessory buildings may be used for home occupations provided the building is not larger than 2,500 square feet. If multiple buildings are used, the total combined square footage shall not exceed 2,500 square feet.
7. Commercial driveway permits may be required to assure traffic hazards are minimized. The driveway shall be located and improved such that it provides all weather access and does not interfere with other traffic using said drive. Any need for parking generated by the conduct of such home occupation shall be met off the street in an area other than in a required front yard.
8. Buildings, material storage and operations used for home occupations shall be setback from side and rear property lines a minimum of 50 feet except for noise generating operations, as determined by staff, in which case the setbacks shall be a minimum of 100 feet. The front setback shall be a minimum of 40 feet and shall be measured from the property line or the edge of the road right of way, which ever is greater.
9. To lessen the impact on adjacent properties, visual screening shall be installed to provide at a minimum a 15 foot wide opaque buffer. This may include but not be limited to a 6 foot high opaque fence and/or the planting of vegetation that at a minimum provides a continuous all season opaque screen at least 6 feet in height within 4 years of planting. Planting shall be a minimum of 3 gallon shrubbery or 10 gallon trees.
10. All required permits (i.e. Chatham County Central Permitting, Chatham County Environmental Health, North Carolina Department of Transportation or other local and state agencies) must be obtained prior to the issuance of the home occupation permit.

Chatham County Zoning Ordinance

Any person wanting to conduct a home occupation within their residence shall apply for a home occupation permit. A home occupation permit approved by the Zoning Administrator must be received prior to beginning said occupation. Permits are not transferable. The home occupation permit is valid only as long as the use meets the provisions for home occupation specified herein and the permit may be revoked any time the use does not meet the provisions of this or other applicable ordinances.