

Home Based Contractor's Instructions

The Howard County Zoning Regulations have provisions to allow County residents to operate small contracting businesses from their homes in the RR (Rural Residential) and RC (Rural Conservation) districts and from residences on lots greater than one acre in the R-ED (Residential, Environmental Development), R-20 (Residential, Single), R-12 (Residential, Single), and R-SC (Residential, Single Cluster) zoning districts, subject to certain limitations. Those limitations are as follows:

- a. The site shall have at least 60 feet of frontage on a public road.
- b. In addition to the commercial or unregistered vehicles which may be parked on the lot according to the accessory use requirements of the applicable zoning district, the following is allowed:
 - (1) In the RC and RR Districts, one additional commercial vehicle may be parked on lots larger than one acre.
 - (2) In the R-ED, R-20, R-12 and R-SC Districts, one additional commercial vehicle may be parked on lots larger than one and less than three acres.
- c. Employees who do not live on the lot may visit the lot for the sole purpose of picking up or returning vehicles or equipment. Such trips shall be limited to:
 - (1) In the RC and RR Districts, no more than four trips per day for lots one acre or less, eight trips for lots larger than one and less than three acres, and twelve trips for lots of three or more acres.
 - (2) In the R-ED, R-20, R-12 and R-SC Districts, no more than eight trips per day for lots larger than one acre.
- d. In addition to the employee visits allowed by Paragraph 2.c, one full-time equivalent employee not residing on the lot, not to exceed two individuals, may work in an office located in the principal dwelling or an accessory building on the lot.
- e. No nonresident employees shall be on the lot and no commercial vehicles or equipment shall be taken from or returned to the lot between 7:00 p.m. and 6:30 a.m.
- f. The total area used for parking and storage of commercial vehicles, equipment and supplies, whether outdoors or indoors, shall be limited to the following:
 - (1) In the RC and RR Districts, no more than two percent of the gross lot area or 5,000 square feet, whichever is less.
 - (2) In the R-ED, R-20, R-12 and R-SC Districts, no more than two percent of the gross lot area or 1,000 square feet, whichever is less.
- g. Parking and storage areas shall be restricted as follows:
 - (1) In the RC and RR Districts, supplies shall be stored within a building, except that mulch, compost, soil, sand, stone and other natural materials may be stored outdoors. Supplies stored outdoors must be screened from surrounding properties and roads by vegetation, fencing or other appropriate means. Equipment shall be either stored within a building or screened from surrounding properties and roads by vegetation, fencing or other appropriate means.
 - (2) In the R-ED, R-20, R-12 and R-SC Districts, vehicles, supplies and equipment shall be parked or stored within a building, except that one commercial vehicle may be parked outdoors on lots of less than three acres, and two commercial vehicles may be parked outdoors on lots of three or more acres. Equipment and supplies may be stored on the commercial vehicles.

- h. All storage areas shall meet the accessory structure setback requirements, except that structures or outdoor areas used for parking, storage or loading of commercial vehicles larger than 5.0 tons gross vehicle weight, or excavating, paving or similar construction equipment shall be at least 50 feet from all property lines.
- i. No major repairs of vehicles or equipment shall be permitted on the lot. Major repairs include body work, engine rebuilding, painting, and similar activities.
- j. Where two or more adjacent lots are under common ownership and used as a single homesite, home-based contracting uses may be located on a different lot than the principal dwelling, if the Director of Planning and Zoning determines that this will allow more effective screening to be provided by using existing features of the site, or will result in decreased impacts on neighboring lots due to noise, dust or fumes. Parking surfaces, fencing and landscaping may be installed; however, no new accessory building shall be constructed and no existing accessory building shall be enlarged unless located on the same lot as the principal dwelling.
- k. A home-based contractor shall operate only upon approval of a permit by the Department of Planning and Zoning, based upon compliance with the requirements listed above. The permit application shall include a plot plan showing the location and dimensions of structures, parking and storage areas, screening, and driveways, and a description of the proposed use.
- l. Certain home-based contractors which do not comply with the requirements of this section may be permitted as special exceptions, subject to the provisions of Section 131.N.27 and other applicable regulations.

In addition, the regulations adopted by the Zoning Board include a conditional use category for home-based contractors. The conditional use requirements allow larger businesses and are in some respects less stringent than the accessory use requirements. Conditional uses must be approved by the Howard County Hearing Authority following a public hearing.

To obtain an accessory use permit from the Howard County Department of Planning and Zoning to operate as a home-based contractor, please complete the attached application form. Attach to the application a copy of a plot plan of your property showing structures to be used, parking areas, fencing and screening (both existing and proposed) drawn to scale. Department of Planning and Zoning personnel will review your application for compliance with the Howard County Zoning Regulations. This may involve an on-site inspection of the site by the staff member to whom the application is assigned. If you have questions regarding the permitting process for home-based contractors, please contact this Department by phoning (410) 313-2350.

Division of Public Service and Zoning Enforcement



HOME-BASED CONTRACTOR PERMIT APPLICATION

CASE #: _____

1. **Property Description:**

Address/Street for Property: _____

Tax Map: _____ Grid: _____ Parcel: _____ Lot: _____

Department of Assessments and Taxation Account No.: _____ — _____

Total Land Area of Property: _____ (__ Acres) (__ Square Feet)

Subdivision Name and Plat No. (If applicable): _____

Lot frontage on public road: _____ feet.

2. **Name of Applicant:** _____

Name of Company: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number(s): (H) _____ (W) _____

Email Address (if any): _____

Type of Contracting Business: _____

3. **Name of Property Owner: [if different]** _____

Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number(s): (H) _____ (W) _____

Email Address (if any): _____

4. **Home-based Contractor Business Description:**

Type of Contracting Business: _____

Hours of Operation: _____

Number of vehicles (including trailers) stored on Property: _____ (Over 5 tons GVW)
_____ (5 tons or less GVW)

Number of employees on the Property: _____ (Non-resident) _____ (Resident)

Number of non-resident employee trips per day: _____ (Excluding office employees)

5. **Equipment stored on Property:**

Total number of individual pieces: _____

Describe types: _____

6: **Description of activities on Property:** (The general business activities on the Property, including such items as vehicle pick-up/return, equipment/supplies storage, business office, and similar activities.)

7. **Plan Requirements:**

You must submit a plan of the Property. This plan must show the boundaries of the Property; all improvements; structures; storage and parking areas; fences; and landscaping. The plan must be drawn to scale and show the distances to property lines for structures, parking and storage areas.

8. **Signatures:**

The Applicant hereby affirms that all of the statements and information contained in, or filed with, this petition are true and correct. The Applicant also affirms that the Property is his/her principal place of residence.

Signature of Applicant

Date

Print Name of Applicant

Signature of Property Owner

(Only if different than Applicant)

Date

Print Name of Property Owner

For DPZ use only:

Application fee: **\$25.00**

Receipt No. _____

(Make checks payable to "Director of Finance")