



# Home Occupations & Cottage Industries

## Bulletin 25

*Division of Building, Safety, and Inspection for 2018 International Codes*

### **Terms**

**PCC** - Pierce County Code

**IBC** - International Building Code

**BPRS** - Residential Building Permit

**WAC** - Washington Administrative Code

**IRC** - International Residential Code

### **General Standards for Home Occupation and Cottage Industry**

The following highlights the **PLANNING** division requirements for home occupations and cottage industries. Both of these terms refer to the operation of a business in the home by the person(s) living there. For **BUILDING** division requirements, see last page.

- Noticeable glare, noise, odor, vibration, smoke, dust, heat, or cause interference with radio or television receivers at or beyond the property lines shall not occur.
- Activities shall be performed inside the residence, an accessory structure, or a combination of the two.
- Structures shall comply with building and fire code requirements for permits, occupancy, and inspection.
- It shall be clearly secondary to the residential use of the property and shall not change the residential character of the dwelling or neighborhood.
- Manufacturing shall be limited to the small-scale assembly of already manufactured parts but does not preclude production of small, individually handcrafted items, furniture, or other wood items.
- Customers are allowed between the hours of 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. and sales in connection with the home occupation are limited to merchandise handcrafted on site or items accessory to a service.
- Signage is regulated by Title 18B PCC, Signs.
- Off-street parking shall include one space per non-resident employee and one for each related vehicle (unless the employee drives the cottage industry vehicle only) in addition to the parking required for the single-family residence.
- Use of hazardous materials or equipment must comply with the requirements of the Uniform Building Code and the Uniform Fire Code.

	Use Permit required	Size: 50% of total floor area of the living space within the residence, or... (whichever less)	Non-resident employees permitted	# of vehicles up to 18,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight permitted	# of vehicles over 18,000 lbs. gross vehicle weight permitted	Outside display or storage related to use	Landscaping required	Outdoor activities permitted	Use or storage of hazardous materials permitted
<b>Home Occupation</b>	Permitted Outright	500 sq. ft.	0	1	0	No	No	No	No
<b>Cottage Industry I</b>	Administrative Use Permit	1,000 sq. ft.	2	2	0	No	Yes <sup>1</sup>	No	Yes
<b>Cottage Industry II</b>	Conditional Use Permit	1,500 sq. ft. <sup>2</sup>	4	3	1	Yes	Yes <sup>1 3</sup>	Yes <sup>4</sup>	Yes

<sup>1</sup> A Level 3 landscape buffer is required between the cottage industry and neighboring residential dwellings

<sup>2</sup> Properties greater than five or more acres in size may exceed this at the Hearing Examiner's discretion

<sup>3</sup> A Level 3 landscape buffer and F1 Fence is required between outside material and vehicle storage and neighboring residential dwellings

<sup>4</sup> Activities involving outdoor events, such as wedding facilities, are limited to six outdoor events per year with no more than one activity a month; at the Hearing Examiner's discretion properties greater than 10 acres in size may exceed this

## Building Permit Requirements

- **Home occupations** that have *no associated construction activity* and are offices, mercantile, personal care salons or similar uses *and* are less than 500 square feet **do not need a building permit.**
- **Home occupations** that *have associated construction activity* and are one of the uses listed above need **building, plumbing, mechanical, and/or electrical permits** for the work being done.
- **Home occupations** which are *not* one of the uses listed in the definition above will require an occupancy separation. Any use that will require an occupancy separation wall **must have a permit** to construct it. The permit for the occupancy separation must be included in the scope of work for any other construction needed for the new use.
- **Cottage Industry Levels I & II** that are not over 500 square feet and have no associated construction activity and are one of the uses listed above **do not need a building permit.**
- **Cottage Industry Levels I & II** that are over 500 square feet or are *not* one of the uses listed above, **need building permits.** Permits are required to construct an occupancy separation. Any use that will require an occupancy separation **must have a permit** to construct it. The permit for the occupancy separation shall be included in the scope of work for any other construction needed for the new use.

*Permit applications will be reviewed under the International Building Code.*

### **If your business requires permitting, you will need the following to apply:**

- Residential Application Form
- Floor Plan showing “before” the remodel and “after”, label all rooms and show new appliances.
- Details of any new construction, including fire separations if applicable.
- Site Plan
- Any other requirements from other divisions.