

HOME BASED BUSINESS

What is a Home based business?

A Home based business is a business activity conducted in a dwelling or domestic outbuilding, where the business activity is subordinate to the primary use of the dwelling as a residence. A Home based business is a small-scale and do not have an adverse impact on adjoining or surrounding residents. Home based businesses are operated by the residents of the dwelling and do not require more than one non-resident employee.

Examples of a Home based business:

- Bed and breakfast, where the occupant lives on site
- Home office (bookkeeping, tutoring)
- Small-scale beauty or hairdressing services
- Mobile vehicle inspection service (where inspections are carried out off site)
- E-commerce store

Examples of a business that would not be considered home-based:

- Transport depot
- Vehicle repair workshop
- Gym or personal training centre
- Food and drink outlet
- Short term accommodation
- Shop



Is Council approval required?

In each residential zone, a Home based business is 'Accepted development subject to requirements'. That means if the business meets the requirements, you are not required to lodge a development application with council. The requirements vary between zones so you will need to review the applicable zone code for property.

Examples of some of the requirements include:

- Businesses are to operate within an existing Dwelling or ancillary outbuilding (e.g. shed)
- The gross floor area used for the business does not exceed 60m²
- The business must be operated by a permanent resident/s of the home
- Limited hours of operation
- Only one non-resident employee is permitted
- Where a bed and breakfast accommodation does not exceed 3 bedrooms (and does not involve the whole house being rented out)
- Vehicle trips generated by the business are restricted
- Contains visitor parking within the site
- Does not involve hiring out of materials, goods, appliances, or vehicles
- Functional aspects of the use such as service areas, material storage or use activities are not visible from the street
- Does not involve the repair or maintenance of vehicles.

Requirements for your zone

To find the requirements for your property, see the following

1. Visit [eplanning](#) and select 'find a property' to determine the property's zoning.
2. Visit [Townsville City Plan](#) to view the zone code requirements

If the business meets all the Acceptable outcomes, you will not require a Development Permit. If any Acceptable outcomes cannot be complied with, a Material change of use application can be made to council demonstrating compliance with the Performance outcome.

Planning and Development

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When approval is required

If your Home based business requires you to submit a development application, Council encourages you to have a pre-lodgement meeting to assist with streamlining the assessment process. A pre-lodgement meeting allows you to meet with a Council officer to discuss your proposal and ask questions before lodging a development application. To book a pre-lodgement meeting please use the [online pre-lodgement request form](#). If you need assistance with your development application, a consultant town planner can assist in preparing and lodging the development application for you. Any conditions of approval for a Home based business will depend on the scale, nature, and location of the business. Council is likely to set conditions regarding amenity and the operation of the Home based business. For example, Council may set conditions restricting the hours of operation, number of employees and vehicle trips or visitors per day.

What is the application fee?

There are fees to lodge an application for a Home based business. Refer to Council's Fees and Charges Schedule for a full list of the application fees.

Signage

Advertising devices including signage are regulated by the Advertising devices code. Signage permitted for a Home based business that does not require a permit must be:

- either a fence sign or a wall sign;
- limited to 1 advertising device per premises; and
- limited to a maximum sign face area of 1m².

If the signage associated with your Home based business does not meet the above requirements, you may need to lodge a separate development application for operational works.

Other permits/licences

Depending on the activity, you may also be required to obtain additional approvals (licensing or permits) from Council and/or state government departments. These are separate to Council's development approval of a Home based business and may include;

- **Food Licence** - Home based businesses involving the preparation or sale of food to the public may require a food licence. Food licencing is managed by Council's Environmental Health and Regulatory Services Team. See [Licences - Townsville City Council](#) to apply for relevant food licence.
- **Public Health** - Businesses such as beauty services involving tattooing, body piercing and other 'high risk personal appearance activities must also comply with the *Public Health (Infection Control for Personal Appearance Services) Act 2003*. A High-Risk Personal Appearance Services Licence* may be required from Council. See [Personal Appearance Services - Townsville City Council](#) for information on how to obtain a Licence from council.
- **Building work** - A private building certifier must approve any building work, such as structural fit outs and extensions. This is separate to Council's approval of a Home based business. Contact a private building certifier to find out more.

Frequently Asked Questions

What if the business grows?

Like all businesses, home based businesses can grow and change over time. This growth has the potential to disrupt the amenity of your neighbourhood. Examples of this include vehicles parked along the street, excess noise levels and multiple deliveries. As your business grows you will need to continually re-assess your business activities and/or operations to make sure the Home based business meets the requirements of the [Townsville City Plan](#) or your Development Permit. Should your business activities outgrow the limitations of a Home based business, you will need to consider your alternatives, which may include relocation to a more suitable premises that can cater to your business requirements.

Will I have to pay infrastructure charges for a Home based business?

Infrastructure charges are not applicable to Home based businesses.

DISCLAIMER: The contents of this information sheet have been prepared to assist in the understanding of Planning and Development in Townsville. The information sheet is an outline only.

For more information please contact Planning and Development: ☎ 13 48 10 ✉ enquiries@townsville.qld.gov.au 🌐 townsville.qld.gov.au