

BUSINESS LICENCING

A Guide to the Municipal Approvals Process in Chilliwack
October 2010

Who Requires a Business Licence?

A Business Licence is your formal permission to operate a business within the City of Chilliwack.

Persons are deemed to be carrying on a business if they are involved in any of the following activities:

- ◆ dealing in, buying, selling, bartering, renting, or displaying any commodity for profit or gain;
- ◆ advertising a business;
- ◆ rendering or offering to render professional, personal, contractual, or other service for profit or gain; and
- ◆ renting more than two residential suites in any one building complex.

If your business is located in the City of Chilliwack, your Business Licence **must be posted on the premises in a conspicuous place at all times.**

If you are a non-resident you must carry a Licence while conducting business in the City of Chilliwack.

How do I apply for a Business Licence?

Business Licence applications can be obtained from the Licencing Office located at 8550 Young Road, Chilliwack, BC.

How are Business Licence Applications Processed?

The procedure for processing a Business Licence depends upon the type of commercial operation that is intended to be operated.

The following inspections and approvals may be required prior to issuance of the Licence:

- ◆ **Planning & Strategic Initiatives Department** – approval of proposed business use, lot size, siting of premises, and parking.
- ◆ **Development & Regulatory Services Division** – approval of a Building Permit for proposed building alterations, especially structural changes.
- ◆ **Fire Department** – approval of fire safety equipment installations, alarms, smoke detectors, exits, etc.
- ◆ **Provincial Medical Health Officer** – approval required if the business involves the preparation distribution, and selling of foods (e.g. restaurants, grocery stores, hot dog stands, etc.) other than pre-packaged or pre-bottled foodstuffs.
- ◆ **Provincial Gas Inspector** – approval required of all propane or natural gas equipment installations.

- ◆ **Provincial Motor Dealer Licencing** - approval required for all motor vehicle sales.
- ◆ **Provincial Waste Management** – approval required if business would produce liquid, solid, or airborne wastes.

If for any reason, the business lands and/or premises do not conform to the applicable statutes, regulations, codes, bylaws and standards, the applicant would be advised promptly of the deficiencies. The applicant will be required to **correct the deficiencies before the business licence is issued.**

What if I operate my business out of my place of residence and not a commercial premise?

There are two main categories of businesses operated from a One Family Residence:

- ◆ Accessory Home Occupations; and
- ◆ Cottage Industries.

Proposed cottage industries and home occupation uses may be **permitted subject to zoning and other regulations** outlined in the City of Chilliwack Zoning Bylaw.

An **Accessory Home Occupation** is a use of a gainful nature of a One Family Residence that is **clearly secondary** in nature to the residential use. It is the only type of gainful use permitted in a One Family Residential Zone. i.e. a Cottage Industry is not permitted.

Home occupations may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ◆ domestic crafts such as dressmaking, weaving, tailoring, shoe repair, etc.;
- ◆ barbering, beauty parlour, and other personal services;
- ◆ instruction in music;
- ◆ arts or crafts;
- ◆ child care facility limited to **no more than eight children**;
- ◆ manufacture of novelties, souvenirs and handicrafts as an extension of a hobby;
- ◆ office or workshop of a self-employed person **excluding doctor, dentist or like professional**;
- ◆ office of a clergyman;
- ◆ propagation of plants, shrubs, fruits or vegetables for sale;
- ◆ dog and cat grooming provided there are **no more than three animals** on the premises at one time.

A **Cottage Industry** is a gainful use carried on in a non-residential zone (e.g. an Agricultural or a Rural Zone) at the place of residence of one of the persons so employed. The business use is **clearly secondary** to a One-Family Residential Use of the same lot, and the lot size must generally be over 0.4 ha (0.988 acre) and occupy no more than 100m².

Cottage industries include, but are not limited to, the list of accessory home occupation uses, itemized in the City's Zoning Bylaw.

With respect to home occupation uses the following guidelines among others are outlined in the Zoning Bylaw:

- ◆ shall be accessory to One-Family Residential use and shall be contained within a building or structure;

- ◆ shall be conducted by a resident of the residence to which it is accessory;
- ◆ shall not create a nuisance or cause disturbances;
- ◆ shall have its presence made known by use of one exterior sign only;
- ◆ shall not generate additional vehicular traffic, or parking demand, in the neighbourhood; and
- ◆ the use and related equipment shall not occupy more than 20% of total residence floor areas to a **maximum of 30 m² (325 ft²)**.

The procedure for processing a Business Licence for a home occupation or cottage industry is similar to the procedure for a business located in a commercial premise.

What can I do if I am refused a licence?

If for any reason the Business Licence is denied, the Planning & Strategic Initiatives Department staff may consult with and assist the applicant in further planning to facilitate the start-up of the business operation in accordance with the applicable regulations.

What are the fees for a business licence?

Business licence fees are as follows:

Annual (January 1 to December 31)

- ◆ **Resident Business** - \$100.00 plus the following:
 - \$0.25 per m² of commercial floor space occupied
 - \$0.50 per m² of restaurant/assembly floor space occupied
 - \$0.10 per m² of industrial floor space occupied
- ◆ **Non-resident Business:**
 - \$100.00
- ◆ **Residential Rental Business**
 - \$100.00 plus \$2.00 per rental suite
- ◆ **Accessory Home Occupation/Cottage Industry**
 - \$100.00/\$106.00

Seasonal

- ◆ **Summer** – (May 1 to October 31) – One-half Annual Fee.
- ◆ **Winter** - (November 1 to April 30) – One-half Annual Fee.

All Licence fees must be paid prior to the issuance of the Licence.

The City forwards renewal notices each November and grants the business a \$10.00 reduction in the Licence fee if paid to the City on or before December 15 of the year proceeding the Licence year.

What if my business moves or I sell my business?

If the business operator wishes to:

- ◆ Upon change of location of the business within the City of Chilliwack, a **Change of Address** form must be completed and approved prior to the move.

- ◆ Upon change of ownership of a business, a **Change of Ownership** form must be completed and approved prior to starting operation.
- ◆ A refund of 50% of Licence fees paid may be claimed if a business ceases operation and the refund is claimed prior to June 30 of the Licence year.

How can I find out more?

For information related to your specific application, and the time it will take to process your Business Licence, contact:

Licencing Officer
8550 Young Road
Chilliwack BC V2P 8A4

Telephone: 604-793-2909
Fax: 604-793-2285
Email: blinfo@chilliwack.com

This brochure has been prepared to provide guidance only. It is neither a bylaw nor a legal document. Please consult the *Local Government Act* and its regulations, and the City of Chilliwack Zoning Bylaw and applicable reference for definite requirements and procedures.