

CITY OF  
*CASTLEGAR*

BUSINESS LICENCE GUIDE

---

*The City of Castlegar has compiled this information to assist you in obtaining your business licence.*

**I NEED A BUSINESS LICENCE? WHERE DO I APPLY AND WHAT IS REQUIRED?**

When you are opening your business don't forget this small but important detail.

Any person wishing to start a business, to expand or to relocate an existing business within the City of Castlegar must obtain a business licence. This requirement is contained in the Municipal Act which gives the City the responsibility of monitoring, in the public interest, the changing business environment within Castlegar. This Act also allows the City to charge annual licensing fees to help defray the expenses of the Business Licence Department.

**WHAT IS THE COST?**

The amount of the fee applicable to a particular type of business is prescribed by Council in the City of Castlegar Business Licence Bylaw 627 and may be changed from time to time. The average fee is \$100.00 per year, per location. The fee is calculated and assessed by the Business Licence Inspector based on the current scale.

At present there is no provision for refunds or rebates of fees for any reason. For example, should you cease business anytime during the year, no refund of the fee is allowed.

If you open for business part way through the year, your annual fee is payable in full, though it is reduced by 50% if you open your business after July 31st.

For additional information please contact:

THE CITY OF CASTLEGAR  
460 Columbia Ave.  
Castlegar, B.C. V1N 1G7  
Phone: (250) 365-7227  
Fax: (250) 365-5074  
E-Mail: [devserv@knet.kootenay.net](mailto:devserv@knet.kootenay.net)

---

## **STARTING YOUR BUSINESS**

- **LOCATION**

One of the first considerations in starting a business is finding the most suitable location. Before any plans are firmed up, however, it will be necessary to consult the zoning regulations which prohibit some businesses from operating in certain areas of the city. The regulations do not restrict the **number** of businesses in a particular area - only the **type** of business which may be carried on is controlled. In addition to your review of the zoning regulations, it is advisable to speak with the City's Planning Department staff.

Preliminary approval - or disapproval - of your location obtained at this early stage can save much time in the long run. There is little use in investing your money and time in a new endeavor only to find out that your licence application will be turned down.

- **BUILDING PLANS**

Once the location has been decided upon, the premises from which the business will operate will have to meet the city's requirements. Here again, it is advisable to consult the City's Building Department as to whether building plans will have to be approved in the case of a new building, whether alterations to existing premises will be necessary or whether proposed alterations to existing premises will meet with city approval. Valuable informal advice may also be obtained at this stage from the Building Department concerning current or future plans for the building.

- **FIRE AND HEALTH**

The next step will be to see the Fire Department to ensure that intended operations can be carried out at the proposed address. Their advice will be particularly useful when a business such as a restaurant is planned.

Lastly, it is advisable to consult with the Health Department if the proposed business must conform to provincial health regulations; e.g. where a restaurant, day care facility or a beauty parlor are under consideration.

- **LICENCE APPLICATION**

Once preliminary discussions with the zoning, building and health departments are completed (in many cases this can be accomplished over the phone) the business licence application form should be completed. This will necessitate a visit to the City's Business Licence Department.

- **PROGRESS OF APPLICATION**

The application is processed by the Licensing Department staff who usually will be able to inform you of the progress being made and any problems which may arise. The business premises must be available for inspection by the various departments should they require it. Depending on the nature of the business, the City's inspectors must be satisfied that all requirements have been fulfilled. Appointments for inspections should be made in advance to minimize delays. Generally, a licence will not be granted until approval has been given by all departments involved and everything is in place for the opening.

## **YEARLY RENEWAL**

Your licence expires on December 31st each year. You will receive a renewal notice each year that is due and payable by January 1st at a fee assessed by the Licence Department.

## **LICENCE CHANGES/TRANSFERS**

The location of the business for which the licence has been issued cannot be changed without first having obtained a transfer of the licence from the Licence Inspector. The Licence Inspector shall charge a fee of \$10.00 for each licence transfer.

Please remember to notify the Licence Inspector of any other change that may take place with regard to the business (e.g. manager name, phone number, change in type of business), of if you are going out of business.

## **NON-RESIDENT BUSINESSES**

A non-resident business is a business not carried on from premises within the municipality.

As a condition of granting a licence to carry on a non-resident business, the applicant may be required to give security, payable in cash or by letter of credit, to the city.

## **HOME OCCUPATIONS**

Home Occupation means an occupation or profession carried on from a dwelling unit in which the person operating the business resides.

*The following is Division 2.4 from Zoning Bylaw 800 which pertains to Home Occupations.*

### Permitted Businesses

2.4.1(1) Only the following types of businesses are permitted as home occupations:

- (a) advertising or promotional agents, insurance agents, financial advisors;
- (b) locksmiths, security system services;
- (c) repair services for household goods, repair or alteration of clothing;
- (d) business administration offices;
- (e) child day care services tending, at one time, less than 6 children per premises;
- (f) clinics;
- (g) hairdressers;
- (h) offices for accountants, lawyers, engineers, consultants, counsellors or other professionals;
- (i) studios for fine arts, graphic design, wood carving, ceramics, photographs, picture framing;
- (j) personal lessons of painting, sculpting, music, dancing and other skills of arts with less than 6 students at one time;
- (k) retail sales of commodities that are manufactured on the same premises; or
- (l) mail order retail sales or rentals that are ordered by mail, telephone or e-mail, provided that the customers do not enter the premises to inspect, rent or purchase.

2.4.1(2) Despite Sentence 2.4.1(1), businesses involving the use of a commercial passenger motor vehicle such as taxis or buses, or use of a motor vehicle weighing more than 5,500 kg (12,000 lb) shall not be deemed to be a home occupation.

### Scale of Home Occupation

- 2.4.2(1) The maximum floor area devoted to a home occupation use shall be 50 m<sup>2</sup> (538 ft<sup>2</sup>) or 25% of the gross floor area, whichever is less.
- 2.4.2(2) The activities of a home occupation shall be conducted entirely within the principal building except where such activity involves horticulture.
- 2.4.2(3) No more than one employee (as defined by the Labour Relations Code) in addition to the resident of the premises may be employed in a home occupation.
- 2.4.2(4) No more than one commercially licensed motor vehicle may be parked on the premises for a home occupation purpose.

### Protection of Neighbourhood

- 2.4.3(1) Despite Sentence 7.1.1(2), a home occupation shall provide one off-street parking space in addition to the minimum number of spaces required for the principal use of the building.
- 2.4.3(2) A home occupation shall not discharge or emit:
  - (a) odorous, noxious or toxic matter or vapour;
  - (b) smoke, fumes, glare, radiation;
  - (c) recurring noise, ground vibration; or
  - (d) fire hazard, electrical interference.
- 2.4.3(3) No internal or external structural alterations of a building shall be made for a home occupation so as to indicate that the building is being utilized for any purpose other than that of a dwelling.
- 2.4.3(4) There shall be no external storage or outdoor display of materials, containers, finished products or equipment for a home occupation business.
- 2.4.3(5) There shall be no external display or advertisement on the lot other than a non-illuminated sign not exceeding 0.3 m<sup>2</sup> (3.2 ft<sup>2</sup>) and bearing only the name and occupations of the owner.
- 2.4.3(6) No sign shall be used to indicate a home occupation within a multi-unit residential building.