



## Community Development Department

200 W. Oak Street  
3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Fort Collins, CO 80521

970-498-7679

## Larimer County Land Use Code

Rural Occupations, Article 3.4.7.C.

### WHAT ARE RURAL OCCUPATIONS?

Rural Occupations are a use conducted as customary, incidental, and accessory to either a single-family dwelling or an agricultural use.

Rural Occupations are intended to support agricultural and rural enterprises with reasonable operational characteristics, scale, and intensity so that they function as accessory to the principle use on the property without negatively impacting the enjoyment of life, investments, and rural living expectations on neighboring properties.

### DO I NEED COUNTY APPROVAL?

To determine whether county approval is necessary, a Rural Occupation must

- ❖ meet all of criteria listed below, and
- ❖ determine if it is
  - a) Use by Right (requires no county approval) or
  - b) Administrative Special Review (requires county approval). (See Page 2 for more information)



### **Rural Occupations must meet all of the following criteria (Article 3.4.7.C.):**

#### LOT

■ The lot must be outside a Growth Management Area (GMA) Overlay zoning district. (GMA's are areas of the county that are subject to an intergovernmental agreement between the county and the applicable city or town. Fort Collins and Loveland currently have GMAs with Larimer County).

■ The lot must be within the RR-1 Rural Residential, RR-2 Rural Residential, FO-Forestry, O-Open, A-Agriculture, or IR – Interface Residential zone districts. (Visit [www.larimer.org/planning/zoning](http://www.larimer.org/planning/zoning) to determine what zone district your property is located in.) The lot must meet minimum lot size requirements as specified on page 2.

■ Multiple Rural Occupations, home occupations, or a combination of the two, are allowed on any lot provided that totaled together the requirements for single rural occupation are not exceeded.

#### USE

■ The use must be conducted by the owner or lessee of the principal use (single family dwelling or agricultural use) of the property.

■ The use must not significantly change the character of the lot, single-family dwelling, or neighborhood.

■ The use must meet all applicable land use, health, and building codes including special events regulations along with county, state, and federal regulations.

■ Rural Occupations shall keep noise, fumes, dust, odors, vibration, or light to levels that do not interfere with neighboring property owners' enjoyment of life.



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## **RURAL OCCUPATIONS** **USE BY RIGHT VS. ADMINISTRATIVE SPECIAL REVIEW**

Please speak with one of our planners to get details for the specific Land Use Code regulations and additional qualifications required for Rural Occupations.

### **Limited Rural Occupation Use by Right\***

#### **Definition**

A use that meeting the criteria in Article 3.4.7.C. and the following criteria qualifies as Use by Right and does not require county approval prior to commencement.

#### **Lot**

- Lot is at least 5 acres in size

#### **Indoor Size**

- May utilize up to 2,500 square feet of the dwelling.
- The area inside the single-family dwelling, detached building(s), or totaled together must be no more than 5,000 square feet.

#### **Outdoor Activity**

- Not to exceed 2,500 square feet.
- Be at least 100 feet from the property lines.
- Be effectively buffered to the extent practicable from existing residences on adjacent lots.

#### **Traffic**

- Vehicle trips are limited to 10 trips/day for any purpose, including employees, deliveries, and customers.

\*Community members are encouraged to submit a Rural Occupation Registration Certificate to the Planning Division.

\* A vehicle trip is defined as a one-way vehicle movement from origin to destination therefore both the entrance and the exit of a vehicle from the site would be counted for a total of two trips.

### **Large Rural Occupation Administrative Special Review\***

#### **Definition**

Administrative Special Review is required when a Rural Occupation exceeds what is allowed by right. County approval is required prior to commencement of the use.

#### **Lot**

- Lot is less than 5 acres but larger than 2 acres.

#### **Indoor Size**

- May utilize up to 2,500 square feet of the dwelling.
- The area inside the single-family dwelling, detached building(s), or totaled together cannot exceed 10,000 square feet.

#### **Outdoor Activity**

- Not to exceed 5,000 square feet.

#### **Traffic**

- Vehicle trips not to exceed a maximum of 20 trips in any day.

\*Administrative Special Review is intended to address potential impacts certain Rural Occupations may have on the land, environment, and surrounding properties. Conditions may be imposed to ensure the proposed use will not exceed air, water, odor, or noise standards established by the county, state, or federal regulations.

## **RURAL OCCUPATION PROHIBITED USES**

Uses specifically prohibited as rural occupations include:

- Lodging facilities
- Adult uses
- Auto body or paint shops
- Assembly uses
- Flea markets
- General industrial uses
- General retail
- Hazardous material storage and/or processing
- Junkyards
- Commercial kennels with outdoor use
- Shooting ranges
- Solid waste disposal or transfer centers
- Uses prohibited by State or Federal law
- Value-added agriculture
- Uses classified as hazardous waste generators under State or Federal legislation
- Outdoor storage of recreational vehicles, boats, and other large items
- Retail marijuana establishments



## Community Development Department

P.O. Box 1190  
200 W. Oak Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Fort Collins, CO 80521

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# Rural Occupation Registration Certificate

Date

Parcel No.

(10-digit number, property identification number on tax record)

Property Address

Property Owner(s) – Please include all property owners and phone numbers

Property Owner Name

Phone Number

Business Name

Email Address

Description of the Rural Occupation (feel free to attach additional pages or site map if needed)

  
  

Indoor square footage used by occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

Outdoor square footage used by occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

Number of vehicle trips per day? (1 vehicle trip in,  
1 vehicle trip out = 2 trips) \_\_\_\_\_  
Lot size? (must be minimum of 5 acres) \_\_\_\_\_

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

**I, owner(s) of said property stated above, certify that:**

- ☐ ✓ I have read and understand the attached standards and requirements for accessory rural occupations as set forth in Article 3.4.7.C. of the Larimer County Land Use Code.
- ☐ ✓ I have contacted applicable agencies to assure that the accessory rural occupation will be in compliance with all applicable land use, health, building and fire codes. **It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in compliance with the agencies' regulations.**
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ Larimer County Building Division      ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ Sewer District      ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ Water District
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ Larimer County Planning      ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ Division of Water Resources
- ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ Larimer County Health Department      ✓ \_\_\_\_\_ Fire District
- ☐ ✓ The rural occupation to be located at this address will be operated in compliance with Land Use Code standards and requirements at all times.

**Property Owner's Signature(s)**

**Date**

  
  

## County Planning Staff Use Only:

Received by \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The lot is in one of the following zoning districts:

FO, A, RR-1, RR-2, O, IR

Y \_\_\_\_\_ N \_\_\_\_\_

The lot is located outside a GMA

Y \_\_\_\_\_ N \_\_\_\_\_

**\*Receipt of this form by Larimer County does not constitute review or approval.**

# RURAL OCCUPATION REQUIREMENTS

## Land Use Code Article 3.4.7.C.

### 1. Purpose

Accessory rural occupations are intended to support agricultural and rural enterprises with reasonable operational characteristics, scale, and intensity so that they function as accessory to the principle use on the property without negatively impacting the enjoyment of life, investments, and rural living expectations on neighboring properties. A use that does not meet the criteria for accessory rural occupations is not considered an accessory rural occupation and must meet other applicable use requirements.

### 2. Permit Requirements

- Accessory rural occupations are allowed by right and by administrative special review as detailed in Table 3-18 below.
- Site plan applications for accessory rural occupations are subject to all applicable transportation capital expansion fees associated with the use and the number of vehicle trips generated by the use.

**Table 3-18: Accessory Rural Occupations**

Classification	Lot Size	Max Indoor Space (SF GFA) Total/ Max SF Per Single Family DU	Max Outdoor Space (SF)	Max Vehicle Trips [1]	Permit Required
Limited	5 acres	5,000/2,500	2,500	10	n/a
Large	2 acres	10,000/2,500	5,000	20	Admin. Special Review

**Notes:**

[1] Associated with the rural occupation. Retail sales events are not included. A vehicle trip is defined as a one-way vehicle movement from origin to destination therefore both the entrance and the exit of a vehicle from the site would be counted for a total of two trips.

### 3. Use Standards

- The following uses are specifically prohibited as accessory rural occupations: lodging facilities, adult uses, auto body or paint shops, assembly uses, general industrial uses (except for excavation using agricultural equipment), hazardous material storage and/or processing, flea markets, general retail, junkyards, commercial kennels with outdoor use, shooting ranges, solid waste disposal or transfer centers, uses prohibited by state or federal law, value-added agriculture, uses classified as hazardous waste generators under state or federal legislation, outdoor storage of recreational vehicles, boats and other large items, and retail marijuana establishments.
- Multiple accessory rural occupations or home occupations, or a combination of the two, are allowed on any lot provided that for all totaled together, the requirements for a single accessory rural occupation are not exceeded.
- All applicable land use, health, and building codes shall be met, including 7.3s regulations.
- The operator of the rural occupation not associated with a dwelling on the property shall be conducted by the owner or lessee of the agricultural use on the property.

- e. The operator of the rural occupation associated with a dwelling unit on the property shall occupy the residential dwelling on the property as their primary dwelling unit.
- f. Retail sales of products clearly incidental, secondary, and ancillary to the accessory rural occupation, including the on-site sales of products produced on the premise, may occur throughout the year.
- g. On-site sales events shall be limited to 30 events in a calendar year.
- h. Customers frequenting the accessory rural occupation by a method other than a motor vehicle shall be considered the same as a vehicle trip and count against the max allowed number of vehicle trips per day.
- i. Any property owner who establishes an accessory rural occupation is encouraged to complete and sign an Accessory Rural Occupation Registration Certificate prior to operation.

#### **4. Site Standards**

All accessory rural occupations shall meet the following criteria:

- a. Noise, fumes, dust, odors, or light generated as a result of the rural occupation shall not exceed the County's established standards when measured at the property line. Any noise generating activity that exceeds this standard shall be indoors.
- b. The accessory rural occupation shall not significantly change the character of the lot, single family dwelling, or neighborhood.
- c. All outdoor activity associated with the accessory rural occupation including any storage of vehicles, equipment, or employee parking shall:
  - i. Be at least 100 feet from the property lines.
  - ii. Be effectively buffered to the extent practicable from existing residences on adjacent lots.
  - iii. Setbacks and buffering may be required based on the proposed use and the location of the proposed use on the lot.

Accessory Rural Occupations are allowed within the following zone districts:

The lot is within the FO – Forestry, A - Agriculture, RR-1 Rural Residential, RR-2 Rural Residential, O-Open, or IR – Interface Residential zone districts.

#### **Article 20.2.7.D.3. – Definition of Rural Occupation**

A use conducted as a customary, incidental, and accessory to a single-family dwelling or an agricultural use. An accessory rural occupation may include such business uses as the repair of agricultural equipment or the use of agricultural equipment for excavating, etc., but may not include any of the uses specifically listed in §3.4.7.C.3.a

Please contact the following agencies to assure compliance with code requirements:

- ***Larimer County Building Division***

200 West Oak Street  
Third Floor  
PO Box 1190  
Fort Collins, CO 80522-1190  
(970) 498-7700

- ***Larimer County Department of Health and Environment***

- [Fort Collins Office](#)

1525 Blue Spruce Dr.  
Fort Collins, CO 80524  
(970) 498-6700

- [Loveland Office](#)

205 E. Sixth Street  
Loveland, CO 80537  
(970) 679-4580

- [Estes Park Office](#)

1601 Brodie Avenue  
Estes Park, CO 80517  
(970)-577-2050

- ***Your local Fire District or Department***

- ***For general information regarding opening a business in Larimer County***

<http://www.larimer.org/info/business.htm>