

Alabama Home-Based Businesses: Are They Legal?

By: Rutledge & Yaghmai

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If you are thinking about starting an [Alabama business](#), basing it out of your home is often the most affordable option. In fact, more than half of all U.S. businesses are based out of an owner's home. However, it is important to understand that you must still take certain steps to ensure that your home-based business complies with all applicable state and local regulations.

One of the most important concerns is zoning. Some Alabama municipalities have strict rules on the types of businesses permitted to operate out of a home, particularly in residential zones. Therefore, it is important to determine if you can legally operate out of your home.

For instance, many zoning laws:

- Prohibit exterior physical changes to the home for the purposes of conducting business;
- Prohibit outside business activities, storage, or displays, and/or restrict or prohibit signage or commercial vehicles;
- Restrict the numbers of visitors to a home-based business;
- Restrict the number of employees working in the home or prohibit employees altogether; and
- Restrict business parking or require that additional parking be provided.

Luckily, many local governments are becoming more willing to work with small business owners that seek to work out of their home.

Another significant concern is insurance. You should contact your insurance agent to determine if your homeowner's insurance will cover the property and liability involved in your new business. Often, you will be able to obtain a rider on your existing policy, but it's always best to find out before you invest any significant money into your home business.

Greg Yaghmai

Greg graduated with honors from The Citadel where he received his bachelor's degree in Business Administration. In 1997, he received his law degree from Cumberland School of Law.

For the first four and half of years of his legal career, Greg served as a Deputy District Attorney for the Jefferson County, Alabama District Attorney's Office. By age 26 he tried his first death penalty case. He went on to try either solo or as lead counsel seven capital murder and six murder cases. He also had the benefit of being the first lawyer in Alabama to be certified by the Alabama State Troopers as a Traffic Homicide investigator. He obtained this after attending a two-week seminar, which required him to live in a closed military base with forty other police officers. He also had the unique experience of being provided alcohol in a controlled setting so he could be utilized by

the Jefferson County Sheriff's training academy in officers learning how to administer field sobriety tests. He is a member of the National College for DUI Defense (NCDD) which is a prestigious organization defending those charged with DUI.

He subsequently left the DA's office to become a partner in a forty lawyer civil litigation firm. This firm concentrated mostly on civil defense work, but Greg continued to expand his plaintiff and criminal defense practice.

In 2006, he co-founded Rutledge & Yaghmai. One of Greg's goals was to reduce the number of cases handled to allow for more individual attention to each case. Rutledge & Yaghmai maintains a general litigation practice. Greg focuses on personal injury, business litigation, and criminal defense cases.

Greg has truly handled cases from all sides: criminal prosecution/defense and civil plaintiff/defense. Overall, Greg has tried more than seventy-five jury trials to conclusion. He has significant experience in using visual presentations and present day media applications in presenting cases to jury. His ultimate jury consultant is his wife, Brandi, who he met when she served on the jury of a rape/kidnapping case he tried.

He has recently been asked to teach Trial Techniques for the International Web based site Solo Practice University. There he will share his expertise in trying jury cases.

Greg is licensed in all state and federal courts in Alabama and the 11th Circuit