

Frequently Asked Questions About Private Residences

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Question 1.

Q. What is a Private Residence? What is a Home-Based Business?

A. A private residence is any building, buildings, or part of a building owned by a private entity which serves as a permanent residence. This may be a single-family house, apartment, condo, townhome, etc. that serves the purpose of housing for the tenant. A residence will most often be found in a residential area among other homes or apartments. This is not a facility where patients live in a residential care capacity.



A home-based business is any business or commercial entity that operates from within a private residence. A legitimate home-based business must have indication of the business visible from the street (e.g., business signage readable from the street, designated parking, employee or customer activity).

In the Site Visit form, a Private Residence is a facility type—the kind of structure that exists at the address. For a valid home-based business, Private Residence should be the selected facility type.

Question 2.

Q. What should I look for to determine if a facility is residential or commercial?

A. A residence will most likely:

- Be located in a residential neighborhood surrounded by homes, parks, or schools
- Not have business signage present or readable from the street without approaching
- Only have parking on the street or driveway



A commercial building will most likely:

- Be in an area zoned for commercial use, nearby other businesses
- Have business signage clearly visible from the street
- Have dedicated customer parking and possibly handicapped parking clearly marked
- Have patient activity around the facility/parking area



Question 3.

Q. What do I do if I arrive to find a Private Residence? (Observational Site Visits only)

A. If the facility appears to be a private residence *with no indication that it may be used for a home-based business* (see Question 1), do not approach the facility. Take one photo of the exterior of the building that clearly shows it is a residence from no closer than the street or end of driveway. Do not enter a private fence or approach the door. Instead of the standard entrance photo, take one photo that

proves the address—a marked mailbox, painted curb, attached to the building but zoomed in, etc. Mark the facility type as Private Residence and enter details in Additional Comments explaining what was found to indicate the facility is a residence. ***Do not submit the report. Call or email the Help Desk for further direction.***

If evidence shows the facility is a home-based business (see Question 1), the site visit should be conducted as normal.

Question 4.

Q. What does “business signage” mean?

A. Business signage is any visible sign that includes a business name and indicates that a commercial entity is located at that facility. It may be in the form of a flat sign affixed to the building, a free-standing monument structure, etc. It should be clearly visible and readable from a distance.



Question 5.

Q. What photos do I need to take?

A. If the facility is a private residence *with no indication that it may be used for a home-based business* (see Question 1), take one photo of the exterior of the building that clearly shows it is a residence from no closer than the street or end of driveway. Do not enter a private fence or approach the door. Instead of the standard entrance photo, take one photo that proves the address—a marked mailbox, painted curb, attached to the building but zoomed in, etc.



Question 6.

Q. Does a signed vehicle count as business signage?

A. No. Business signage must be fixed. It should be attached to the building or a permanent/semi-permanent structure near the building.

Question 7.

Q. What do I do if a person approaches me from a private residence?

A. If approached, first identify yourself, making sure your Site Visit Inspector badge is visible. Explain that you are there to conduct a site visit on behalf of CMS and that you just need to take a photo of the facility. ***Do not discuss the outcome of the site visit. Do not share information about the site visit process.*** If questioned, direct them to reach out to their Enrollment MAC. If asked to leave, do so immediately. Always enter detailed notes in Additional Comments describing what occurred.

Question 8.

Q. What if the site visit is for a DMEPOS Detail or IDTF?

A. Site Visits can be conducted as normal at private residences if the job order is for a DMEPOS Detail or IDTF facility.