



Gemeente Amsterdam

Sex work and a business bank account

If you are working as a self-employed person in the sex industry, there are certain things that you must do – such as making sure you are registered with the Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel/KvK) and submitting your VAT (BTW in Dutch) tax return. And the bank may ask you to open a business account in addition to your personal account. This brochure contains practical advice about this.



Why have a business bank account as well as a personal account?

Using a business bank account in addition to your personal account helps you to maintain a better overview of your personal and business finances. Your business account is used for all your business transactions – such as paying income tax and VAT. You use your personal account for all your financial transactions that have nothing to do with your work. So you have a clear picture of your financial situation. And you can keep your business money and personal money separate. Besides this, banks do not want their customers to use a personal account for business transactions. This is because the bank is legally obliged to ask for different information for a business account than for a personal account. If a personal account is used in a commercial capacity, the bank is in breach of the law.

The Tax and Customs Administration (Belastingdienst) may require insight into the finances of a self-employed person. Then they will ask to see your bank statements. The advantage of having a business account in that case is that the Tax and Customs Administration (or your accountant/bookkeeper) does not see your personal transactions. A business account costs more than a personal account. However, if you pay an accountant/bookkeeper to do your financial administration, a business account may work out cheaper, as the accountant/bookkeeper will be able to sort out your finances quicker.

A business account also offers you more options than a personal account. For example, you can get your customers to pay using a mobile point-of-sale terminal, iDEAL, credit card or PayPal. A debit payment from your business account only shows your business name and town or city of residence, so your personal name and address are withheld.



Tip: You do not have to use your own name for a business account, instead you can use a business or company name. This helps you to protect your privacy.



Tip: You can register as a sex worker in the Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel/KvK) under the neutral category of 'Personal Services'. Then the precise nature of your work is not visible. Under certain circumstances you can also ask for your home address not to be listed in the trade register.

Other things you should know:

In the Netherlands it is legal to work as a sex worker. You must have the Dutch nationality, come from another EU country, or have a combined work and residence permit (GVVA), not a tourist visa. You must have willingly chosen to do this work yourself. To work in Amsterdam, you must be aged 21 or older.



For business bank accounts, the bank is legally required to know exactly who the account holder is. So they need certain information about you as a self-employed person:

- A copy of your registration at the Chamber of Commerce (Kamer van Koophandel/KvK)
- A valid proof of identity, such as a valid passport, Dutch driving licence or EU identity card

Sometimes the bank may ask for additional information, such as extra proof of your place of residence. You can provide this by requesting an extract from the Municipal Personal Records Database (BRP). This is a document that proves you are registered at your home address.

In the event of unusual financial transactions, the bank may ask for documentary evidence confirming the source of the funds in your account. It will be easier for you to provide this evidence if your business administration is in order. The bank may also ask you to provide more information about the structure of your business.

You can go to the local branch of your bank to open an account, or you can open an account online via the bank's website.



Wat als de aanvraag voor een zakelijke bankrekening wordt afgewezen?

What if your request to open a business account is turned down? Sex workers who can provide proof of identity and who are registered with the Chamber of Commerce should be able to open a business bank account without any problem. But what if your application is turned down? Ask the bank for their reason for this.

If you do not agree with the reason given by the bank for refusing to open a business account for you, or for refusing to give you a mortgage, you can submit an official complaint to the bank.

You can also ask the Confidential Counsellors (Team Vertrouwenspersonen) for help. Or get in touch with PROUD, the Dutch Union for Sex workers.



Can I get a mortgage as a sex worker?

Just like other self-employed people, it can be difficult for sex workers to get a mortgage to buy a house.

However, it is not impossible!

You need to be able to prove to the bank that you have had enough turnover and made enough profit for at least three to five years to be able to make the mortgage repayments. You can provide this proof by asking your accountant for a personal income statement. Banks often ask self-employed people (not just sex workers) for an extra guarantee or deposit. Different banks may also apply their own additional conditions. Make sure you are well prepared if you have an interview with the bank or mortgage advisor. You can also ask your accountant/bookkeeper for advice.

Prostitution & Health Centre (P&G292)

Address: Nieuwezijds Voorburgwal 292, Amsterdam
Tel: 020 531 86 00
Website/email: www.pg292.nl info@pg292.nl
Opening times: Monday to Thursday 13:30 – 21:30, Friday 9:00 – 17:00

PROUD

Address: Enge Kerksteeg 3, Amsterdam
Tel: 06 28 44 55 37
Website/email: www.wijzijnproud.nl info@wijzijnproud.nl
Opening times: Monday to Friday 11:00 – 17:00

Confidential Counsellors

Tel: 06 22 47 97 50
Website/email: vertrouwensvrouw@pg292.nl

Information on getting a mortgage for self-employed workers

Website: www.flexibelwerkenwonen.nl

Prostitution Programme - City of Amsterdam

Website/email: www.amsterdam.nl/prostitutie
prostitutie@amsterdam.nl

Chamber of Commerce (KvK)

Address: De Ruyterkade 5, Amsterdam
Tel: 020 531 40 00
Website: www.kvk.nl
Opening times: Monday to Friday 08:30 – 17:00
Make an appointment to register via www.kvk.nl/afspraakmaken

Tax & Customs Administration

Address: Kingsfordweg 1, Amsterdam
Tel: 0800 0543
Website: www.belastingdienst.nl
Opening times: Monday to Friday 8:00 – 17:00

Dutch Banking Association (NVB)

Website: www.nvb.nl

This flyer was produced with the assistance of PROUD (Dutch interest group for sex workers), P&G292 and the Dutch Banking Association (NVB).

The information in this flyer has been compiled with the utmost care. It may be changed at any time, see amsterdam.nl/prostitutie for updated information. Published: September 2016