

# Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU)

## General Information

### What is an ADU?

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a permanent dwelling unit that may share at least one wall with the primary residence (attached) or be a stand-alone structure (detached) from the primary residence. ADUs provide permanent facilities for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation.

ADUs may be rented separate from the primary residence but may not be sold or otherwise conveyed from the primary residence.

### How Many Can I Build?

The City of Sacramento allows a total of two ADUs on a single lot/parcel that can be attached or detached. There must be an existing (or proposed) primary residential structure on the property (i.e., house, duplex, etc.). The total square footage of **detached ADUs on a single lot/parcel** shall not exceed 1,200 ft<sup>2</sup>. For example, two detached ADUs (400 ft<sup>2</sup> + 800 ft<sup>2</sup> = 1200 ft<sup>2</sup>). Also refer to Planning's zoning requirements for specific information.

## What are the Building Code Requirements?

### What is the Maximum Size (Floor Area) for an ADU?

The maximum size of a detached ADU is 1,200 ft<sup>2</sup>. In addition, the total square footage of two detached ADUs on the property shall not exceed 1,200 ft<sup>2</sup> (excluding garages).

- Attached ADUs may be 50% of the primary structure or a maximum of 850 ft<sup>2</sup>, whichever is greater.
- Attached ADUs with two or more bedrooms may be 50% of the primary residence or a maximum of 1,000 ft<sup>2</sup>, whichever is greater.
- Other than the square footage limitations shown above, ADUs must also comply with all

applicable provisions of the current California Building Code (CBC), Residential (CRC), Energy (CEnC), Plumbing (CPC), Mechanical (CMC), Electrical (CEC), and local ordinances.

- For Planning's zoning requirements please visit our Planning Division website:  
<https://adu.cityofsacramento.org/>

### Building Division Submittal Requirements

- Planning approval or an approval for concurrent review must be obtained prior to submitting a building permit application to the Building Division. You can request a concurrent review by turning in a Memorandum of Understanding Concurrent Plan Review Request. This request must be approved by Senior Planning division staff.
- Plans can be submitted electronically. For electronic plan check submittal please visit our website at:  
<https://www.cityofsacramento.gov/community-development/building/permit-services/electronic-plan-check>
- Alternatively, plans can still be submitted at the public counter via paper submittal:
- Plans must be no less than 11" X 17" paper. Site and civil plans shall be no less than 1/8" = 1' scale; all other plan sheets shall be no less than 1/4" = 1' scale.
- A minimum of two and a maximum of six full plan sets are required to be submitted depending on your project scope.
- Complete plan sets shall include the following: Cover Sheet, Site or Plot Plan, Structural Plans, Electrical Layout Plan, California Energy Code Compliance Documents, Cal Green Compliance Documents, and Photovoltaic (PV) Solar plans. For detailed information please review form [CDD-0312](#).
- If the project involves the demolition of an existing structure, approval for a wrecking permit

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must be obtained first. Review the application instructions [CDD-0233](#) for details.

## Addressing Requirements

- An address shall be required for each attached and detached ADU. Request form(s) must be completed and turned in at the time of submittal according to Resolution No. [2009-0518](#).
- Address Request Form [CDD-0104](#)
- ADUs at Alley Signage Requirements - If your ADU is at an alley and the alley does not currently have an alley/street sign, it shall be the applicant's responsibility to install the alley/street signage.

## Fire Sprinkler Requirements

ADUs meeting all the following are exempt from fire sprinkler requirements:

- 1) Detached ADUs - If the main home is not sprinkled and the ADU (not including the garage) does not exceed 1,200 ft<sup>2</sup>.
- 2) Attached ADUs - If the existing home is not sprinkled, the addition is not more than 50% of the original structure, and the total structure including the addition does not exceed 3,600 ft<sup>2</sup>.

## Water Service Requirements

- Per the City's Department of Utilities (DOU), City code section 13.04.070 requires that each lot or parcel shall have only one water service connection, unless otherwise approved by the Director of Utilities. Thus, a separate water meter tap is not required for ADUs. For additional information on submeter please contact (916) 808-1400.
- Water flow tests may be required when fire area is proposed on a parcel. Refer to the Fire Department's requirements for their plan review and water flow tests [CDD-0235](#).

## Photovoltaic (PV) Requirements

The ADU structure may require PV panels per the California Energy Code. Please consult with a professional energy consultant for requirements and exceptions to installing a PV solar system.

Contact SMUD representatives for the requirements on potential solar PV panel location, existing location/addition of utilities, timelines and cost at [www.smud.org](http://www.smud.org).

## Building Permit Fees and Impact Fees

- 1) Impact fees are waived for ADUs less than 750 ft<sup>2</sup> (SB 13).
- 2) Impact fees are applied for ADUs 750 ft<sup>2</sup> in area and greater (SB 13).
- 3) For an approximation of ADU fees based on different sample square footages please refer to form [CDD-0419](#).

The Building Division offers a building permit fee estimate service. There is a \$164 estimating fee associated with this service. You can request an estimate by completing form [CDD-0278](#) and emailing the completed request to [ezpermit@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:ezpermit@cityofsacramento.org)

- 4) School District impact fees apply for ADUs. For more information please contact your school district directly [CDD-0226](#).

Elk Grove Unified:	(916) 686-7711 x7231
Twin Rivers Unified:	(916) 566-1600 x36219
Robla Elementary:	(916) 649-5248 x502
Natomas Unified:	(916) 567-5468
Sacramento City Unified:	(916) 643-7435
San Juan Unified:	(916) 979-8629

## Additional Notes

This is a live document. Please continue to review this form for future additional changes.