



Snohomish County
Planning and Development
Services

Visit us at :

2nd Floor Robert J. Drewel Bldg.
3000 Rockefeller Avenue
Everett, WA 98201

425-388-3311
1-800-562-4367, ext. 3311



ONLINE INFORMATION
www.snohomishcountywa.gov/1190



This Assistance Bulletin only applies to property within unincorporated Snohomish County and does not apply to property within incorporated City limits.

Attached Accessory Dwelling Units

Assistance Bulletin

13

Revised January 2023

WWW.SNOCO.ORG

Keyword: Assistance Bulletins

Q: What is an Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit?

A: An Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a dwelling unit that meets the following criteria:

- It is located on the same lot, in the same structure, under the same ownership, and subordinate to a single-family dwelling unit.
- It is intended for use as a complete, independent living facility; and
- It includes facilities for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation for not more than one family.
- ADU's are also called apartments, mother-in-law or Accessory Apartments.

Q: Can anyone build an Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit?

A: Within the Urban zones, you may establish one Attached and one Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (see PDS Bulletin #12). Outside the Urban Growth Area, Attached Accessory Dwelling Units can be built on all lots that have a legally-established single-family dwelling.

Q: How do I get an Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit permit?

A: A permit application is submitted online at MyBuildingPermit.com. For information on using our online permitting system, please see the following web page: <https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/3920/Online-Permitting>. If you need additional assistance with the online process, please call our office at (425)388-3311.

When applying on MyBuildingPermit.com, please use the following path:

- Application Type: Building
- Project Type: Single Family Residential
- Activity Type: Addition or Interior Alteration
- Scope of Work: Accessory Dwelling Unit Attached

The following items are required to apply for an Attached ADU permit:

- A Residential Building Permit Application submitted via MyBuildingPermit.com.
- Residential Building Permit Fees. A portion of the permit fees are due at application and remaining permit fees are collected at permit issuance (see [PDS Bulletin #18](#))
- A site plan that meets minimum requirements of the [Residential Site Plan Checklist](#).
- Construction/building plans that meet the requirements of the [Minimum Submittal Requirements for Structural Plans Checklist](#).

This bulletin is intended only as an information guide. The information may not be complete and is subject to change. For complete legal information, refer to Snohomish County Code.

- Exterior architectural drawings or photographs of the on site single-family dwelling.
- Verification of water and sewage disposal as follows:
 - ⇒ Water and sewer availability letters for projects on public water and sewer, or
 - ⇒ Completed Snohomish County Health Department Construction Clearance for projects on septic and well.

Q: Do I also need a land use permit?

A: No. Per Ordinance No. 21-018, adopted on June 9, 2021, an Administrative Conditional Use Permit is no longer required for Accessory Dwelling Units.

Q: Are there any other requirements?

A: Yes. The Snohomish County Code requires compliance with the following standards in order to qualify for and retain a permit for an Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit:

- **Floor area:** The floor area for an Accessory Dwelling Unit shall not exceed 1,200 square feet (floor areas do not include garages, porches, and unfinished basements).
- **Architectural character:** The architectural character of the single-family dwelling shall be preserved. Exterior materials, roof form, window spacing, and proportions shall match that of the existing single-family dwelling.
- **Water system:** Documentation must be provided showing that the proposed accessory dwelling unit has physical and legal access to water and that the water supply is potable and of adequate flow.
- **Sewage disposal:** Documentation must be provided showing that the existing or proposed sewage or septic system is capable of handling the additional demand that would be placed upon it by the Attached Accessory Dwelling Unit. We strongly recommend applicants with properties served by septic systems contact the Snohomish County Health Department regarding requirements for establishing an ADU. This should be done PRIOR to hiring experts or paying for plans and designs. Visit [Septic Permitting | Snohomish Health District, WA \(snohd.org\)](https://www.snohd.org/permits/septic-permitting) for more details.
- **Parking:** In addition to the two off-street parking spaces that are required for the single-family dwelling, off street parking must be provided for an Attached Accessory Dwelling Units consistent with the following:
 - ⇒ Within the urban zones: No parking required.
 - ⇒ Within the rural, resource, and other zones: One off-street parking space per Accessory Dwelling Unit
- **Driveways:** Attached Accessory Dwelling Units located in the rural, resource, and other zones are required to be accessed using the same driveway as the single-family dwelling unit.
- **Duplex:** A lot occupied with a duplex is not eligible to also have an Accessory Dwelling Unit.
 - ⇒ [SCC 30.91A.035](https://www.snohd.org/permits/scc-30.91a.035) defines an Accessory Dwelling Unit as “located on the same lot as, under the same ownership as, and subordinate to a single-family dwelling unit.”

Q: Who should I contact if I have questions?

A: You may contact us if you have any questions via:

Online: [Ask A Permit Tech](https://www.snohd.org/permits/ask-a-permit-tech)

Telephone: (425)388-3311

Visit us at: 2nd Floor, Administration East, Robert J. Drewel Building, 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, Everett

If you have a site with a septic system:

Contact the Snohomish County Health Department at (425)339-5250 or www.snohd.org.