



Snohomish County
Planning and Development
Services

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ONLINE INFORMATION

[https://
www.snohomishcountywa.gov/5169/
planning-development-services](https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/5169/planning-development-services)



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

Detached Accessory Dwelling Units

Assistance Bulletin

12

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Q: What is a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit?

A: A Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (DADU) is a dwelling unit that meets the following criteria:

- It is located on the same lot, under the same ownership as, and subordinate to a single-family dwelling unit;
- Is physically separated from and located in a different structure than the primary dwelling;
- It is intended for use as a complete, independent living facility;
- It includes facilities for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation for not more than one family.

Q: Can anyone build a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit?

A: In urban zones listed under SCC [30.22.100](#), you may establish one Attached and one Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit (see [Assistance Bulletin #13](#)) on lots that have a legally established single-family dwelling.

In rural, resource and other zones listed under SCC [30.22.110](#) or SCC [30.22.120](#), you may establish one Attached **OR** one Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit. Detached Accessory Dwelling Units are permitted on lots that have a legally-established single-family dwelling, except that Detached Accessory Dwelling Units are prohibited on the following properties: those that do not meet the minimum required lot area under SCC [30.23.030](#); those that are in the R-5 zone and are less than 5 acres in size (200,000 square feet or 1/128 of a section); or those that are in the RC zone and are less than 100,000 square feet in size.

Q: How do I get a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit permit?

A: Permit applications are submitted online through the PDS Permit Portal. For information on using our online permitting system, please see the following web page: <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/3920/Online-Permitting>. If you need additional assistance with the online process, please call our office at 425-388-3311.

When applying online, please use the following path:

Permit Group:	Construction Permit
Permit Type:	Residential Building Permit
Sub Type:	Accessory Dwelling Detached
Work Type:	New

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.

The following items are required to apply for a DADU permit:

- Residential Building Permit Fees: A portion of the permit fees are due at application and remaining permit fees are collected at permit issuance (see [Assistance 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](#).
- 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 Form 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 Zoning Code requires compliance with the following standards in order to qualify for and retain a permit for a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit:

- **Floor area:** The floor area for a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit shall not exceed 1,200 square feet (floor areas do not include garages, porches, or unfinished basements).
- **Mobile home:** A mobile home may be allowed as a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit on lots ten (10) acres or larger located outside of the Urban Growth Area only if the accessory mobile home is subordinate to the existing single-family dwelling.
- **Exterior features:** When a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit is located within a new structure, the exterior materials, roof form, window spacing, and proportions shall approximate those of the existing single-family dwelling. When a Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit is located within an existing structure or if the Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit is a mobile home, the structure is not required to approximate the exterior features of the existing single-family dwelling.
- **Water system:** Documentation must be provided showing that a proposed accessory dwelling unit has physical and legal access to water that 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 Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit. We strongly recommend applicants with properties served by septic systems contact the Snohomish County Health Department regarding requirements for establishing a DADU. This should be done PRIOR to hiring experts or paying for plans and designs. Visit [Septic Permitting | Snohomish Health District, WA \(snohd.org\)](#) 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 Detached Accessory Dwelling Unit 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:** 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](#) 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.”
- **Septic System:** If you have a site with a septic system, contact the Snohomish County Health Department at (425)339-5250 or [www.snohd.org](#).