



## Summary of Accessory Dwelling Unit Zoning Regulations

This document is a summary of ADU and JADU zoning regulations currently effective for development in the City of Long Beach. This document supersedes Section 21.51.276 of the Zoning Regulations.

- I. **DEFINITIONS.** The following definitions are established for administration of ADU/JADU regulations. All other terms shall have the meanings defined in Chapter 21.15 (Definitions) of the Zoning Regulations.
  - A. **Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU).** Defined in Section 21.15.045, "Accessory dwelling unit" means an attached or a detached residential dwelling unit which provides complete independent living facilities for one or more persons. An accessory dwelling unit is an accessory use and not a principal use of land. It shall include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation, and shall be located on the same lot as the single-family dwelling to which it is subordinate (the primary dwelling), and shall have a separate exterior entrance. An accessory dwelling unit also includes an efficiency unit, as defined in Section 17958.1 of the California Health and Safety Code, and a manufactured home, as defined in Section 18007 of the California Health and Safety Code<sup>(1)</sup>. Owner occupancy on the property is not required, unless in combination with a JADU (see below), from January 1, 2020 through December 31, 2024.
  - B. **Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU)\*.** "Junior accessory dwelling unit" means a unit that is no more than 500 square feet and contained within or attached to an existing or proposed single-family residence. A junior accessory dwelling unit may include separate sanitation facilities or may share sanitation facilities with the existing SFD. <sup>(2)</sup> A JADU can only be created through conversion of an existing portion of an SFD, an attached addition to an SFD, or conversion of an attached garage. Owner occupancy IS required in one of the units on a lot with a JADU. An efficiency kitchen is always required for a JADU per Section 65852.22(a)(6) of the Cal. Gov't Code.
  - C. **Single-family Dwelling (SFD)\*.** "Single-family dwelling" means one dwelling unit in one building <sup>(3)</sup>, not including an ADU or JADU. Multiple detached SFDs on one lot are still treated as one SFD for ADU/JADU purposes.
  - D. **Multi-family Dwelling (MFD)\*.** "Multi-family dwelling" means two or more dwelling units in one building, or two or more attached dwelling units sharing at least 4 feet of common wall (defined Section 21.15.250), not including an ADU or JADU. Includes LBMC definition of "duplex" <sup>(4)</sup> and "Multi-family dwelling" <sup>(5)</sup> for the purposes of determining the number, type, and development standards of ADUs. Two or more detached units connected only via a breezeway, patio cover, or other roof cover are not considered a multi-family dwelling for ADU purposes.
  - E. **Conversion.** "Conversion" means converting a garage or other accessory building space into an ADU or JADU. For a garage/accessory building at an SFD, and for a detached garage/accessory building at an MFD, "conversion" includes the demolition (defined Section 21.15.750) and rebuild (defined Section 21.15.2250) of the garage/accessory building.

\*Updated June 2021 to reflect guidance from California Department of Housing and Community Development. Reference citations (1), (2), etc. are found at the end of this document.

---

II. **LOCATIONS PERMITTED.** ADUs and JADUs are allowed in residential zoning districts allowing single-family and/or multi-family residential uses; and where residential uses are allowed in mixed-use zoning districts, planned development districts, and specific plans. A principal residential use must be present on the lot where an ADU/JADU is proposed. ADUs/JADUs are not allowed in zones, PDs, or SPs that do not allow residential uses, even if a nonconforming residential use is present. The number and type of ADUs permitted depends on the type of existing residential building(s) as described in the sections below. JADUs are not permitted at multi-family dwellings.

---

III. **REVIEW PROCESSES.** The following review processes shall apply to ADUs and JADUs:

- A. **Historic district or Designated Historic Landmark.** A Certificate of Appropriateness shall be obtained prior to application submittal for building permits.
  - B. **Coastal Zone.** In the Coastal Zone, the required Coastal permit (Coastal Development Permit or Local Coastal Development Permit) shall be obtained prior to application for building permits. No public hearing is required.
  - C. **Multi-Family Dwellings with 5+ Existing Units.** Site Plan Review approval shall be obtained prior to submittal for building permits for any ADU project on a lot that has five or more existing or proposed primary dwelling units (this does not include ADUs). Site Plan Review is an administrative design review process, and no public hearing is required.
  - D. **If none of the above apply,** A building permit application will be reviewed within 60 days of submittal. If there is no existing SFD or MFD on the lot, or an ADU is proposed with a new SFD/MFD, the City may not act on the ADU/JADU until it acts on the SFD/MFD, and the 60-day timeline does not begin until the City acts on the SFD/MFD.
  - E. **For an ADU/JADU proposed with a new or rebuilt principal dwelling,** the City shall not act to approve the ADU/JADU and the 60-day timeline shall not begin until the City acts to approve the principal dwelling.
- 

IV. **DESIGN STANDARDS, ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES, AND OTHER PROVISIONS.**

- A. All exterior changes shall be architecturally compatible with existing structures. When a garage is converted, the garage door shall be removed, and a new framed-in wall shall be provided, which shall include architectural details and finishes compatible with the existing buildings on the site.
- B. Second story ADUs shall be designed to lessen the view onto adjacent lots, including orienting an entrance away from a property line, use of obscured or frosted glass, window placement above eye level, and screen walls. In the Coastal Zone, a second story ADU shall be designed to preserve public view of the beach, bay, ocean or tidelands from public areas.

- C. When a garage is converted to an ADU, a landscaped area with a length equal to the width of the garage, and a width between 18"–36", shall be provided in the area adjacent to where the garage door is eliminated – see Section 21.51.276(D)(3) for exceptions.
  - D. An unused curb cut shall be removed and restored to full-height curb and gutter and the driveway shall be removed and replaced with landscaped area when a garage conversion occurs and the existing or remaining driveway cannot accommodate a code-compliant standard or compact parking stall.
  - E. Conversion of communal laundry rooms, community rooms, fitness centers, and other amenity spaces to an ADU is prohibited, unless these facilities are replaced in-kind (or with individual in-unit laundry for each unit in the case of laundry rooms).
  - F. Any ADU or JADU project type not described in this document is prohibited, unless determined by the Zoning Administrator to be consistent with §65852.2 or §65852.22 of the California Government Code.
- 

V. **ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT REGULATIONS FOR SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLINGS.** The following regulations apply to ADUs at a single-family dwelling.

- A. **Number of ADUs allowed.** One (1) ADU is permitted on a lot with a single-family dwelling. On a lot with multiple single-family dwellings, still only one ADU is permitted for the entire lot. For a lot with both single-family and multi-family dwelling(s), see Section VIII.
- B. **Types of ADU projects allowed.** Any of the following types of ADU projects are permitted at a single-family dwelling:
  - 1. Convert an existing accessory building (including garage) to an ADU.
  - 2. Convert a portion of the SFD to an ADU.
  - 3. Build a new ADU, attached or detached from the SFD.
- C. **Additions.** An addition of floor area that complies with the maximum permitted floor area and other development standards for an ADU (see Subsection E) is permitted for the project types in Subsections (B)(1) through (B)(3) above.
- D. **Demolition and rebuild.**
  - 1. An existing accessory building (including garage) may be demolished and rebuilt in the same or more conforming state if it is essential to the ADU project.
  - 2. A garage that consists of required parking shall not be demolished/rebuilt unless the demolition/rebuild is essential to the ADU project. The rebuilt garage shall cover at least 50% of the footprint of the demolished garage, unless the demolished garage would obstruct access to a new conforming garage that is proposed as part of the ADU project.
  - 3. A portion of an existing single-family dwelling with a nonconforming setback or other physical nonconformity may be demolished and rebuilt in the same or more conforming state if it is essential to the ADU project, but the scope of the demolition/rebuild shall be limited to less than the threshold of the definition of "demolish" (Section 21.15.750) as applicable to the single-family dwelling. Any project that meets or exceeds the definition of "demolish" as applicable to the single-family

dwelling shall cause the rights to any nonconformities to be abandoned per Section 21.27.050.

- E. **Development Standards.** The following development standards shall apply to an ADU at a single-family dwelling:
1. **Area.** An ADU shall be at least 150 sq. ft. and shall not exceed 800 sq. ft., except as provided below:
    - a. If the lot complies with the lot coverage, open space, and floor area ratio standards of the zoning district, a one-bedroom ADU may be up to 850 sq. ft., and a two-bedroom ADU may be up to 1,000 sq. ft.
      - i. The open space requirement shall apply to and be based on the single-family dwelling only.
      - ii. Lot coverage and floor area ratio shall be calculated based on all structures on the lot, as provided in the Zoning Regulations, and shall include the ADU.
    - b. For conversion of an existing building up to 800 sq. ft. that does not comply with (a) above, an addition of up to 150 sq. ft. is permitted for ingress and egress purposes only.
  2. **Setbacks.**
    - a. **Front yard setback:** As required by the zoning district. If compliance with the front yard setback would not allow an ADU of up to 800 sq. ft., the ADU may encroach into the front yard setback, to the minimum extent feasible, to make possible an ADU up to 800 sq. ft.
    - b. **Side yard setback:** 4 feet, or as required by the zoning district, whichever is less.
    - c. **Rear yard setback:** 4 feet. Measured to centerline of alley if lot abuts an alley.
    - d. **Existing building(s).** An existing, converted, or rebuilt building may maintain nonconforming setback(s) if essential to the ADU project and each setback is sufficient for fire safety as determined by the Building Official. A building with nonconforming setback(s) also may be rebuilt with more conforming setback(s), but the nonconformity shall not be increased.
  3. **Height Limits.** The following height limits apply to an ADU at a single-family dwelling:
    - a. **New construction.** 25 feet and 2 stories, or as required by the zoning district, whichever is less (R-1-S, R-2-S, and PD-11 zones have more restrictive height limits), but not less than 16 feet (18 feet if located within the Transit Priority Area, or if there is an existing multi-story, multi-family dwelling on the lot. If located within the Transit Priority Area, an additional 2 feet in height shall be allowed to accommodate a roof pitch on the ADU that is aligned with the roof pitch of the primary dwelling unit (this applies only to a sloped roof).
    - b. **Existing building(s) with conforming setbacks.** The height of existing building(s) with conforming setbacks may be maintained or increased in conformance with Subsection (E)(3)(a) above.

- c. **Existing building(s) with nonconforming setbacks.** For conversion, demolition, and rebuild of an existing building that encroaches into a required setback area, building height shall not be increased from the height of the existing building *within the encroachment into the required setback area*.
  4. **Parking.** One parking space is required per ADU, except as provided below. Required parking may be provided in an open (driveway) configuration, and may be in tandem with other parking spaces.
    - a. **No parking** shall be required if any of the following apply:
      - i. The accessory dwelling unit is located within one-half mile walking distance of public transit, or
      - ii. The accessory dwelling unit is located within a historic district, or
      - iii. The accessory dwelling unit is part of the proposed or existing primary residence or an accessory structure, or
      - iv. When on-street parking permits are required but not offered to the occupant of the accessory dwelling unit, or
      - v. When there is a car share vehicle located within one block of the accessory dwelling unit.
      - vi. When a permit application for an accessory dwelling unit is submitted with a permit application to create a new single-family dwelling or a new multifamily dwelling on the same lot
    - b. **No parking** shall be required if the ADU project consists of a garage or carport conversion.
    - c. Existing required parking for the single-family dwelling shall be maintained unless excepted per Subsection V(D), or Subsection (b) above.
    - d. In the Coastal Zone, where feasible, inclusion of at least one parking space is highly encouraged for each ADU.
  - F. **Minimum ADU Unit Standards.** See Section IX.
- 

- VI. **JUNIOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT (JADU) REGULATIONS.** The following regulations apply to a Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit.
  - A. **Owner occupancy required.** The property owner shall reside in either the single-family dwelling or the JADU, except that owner-occupancy shall not be required if the owner is another governmental agency, land trust, or housing organization, per Cal. Gov't Code §65852.22, subd. (a)(2).
  - B. **Locations and number of JADUs allowed.** One (1) JADU is permitted on a lot with a single-family dwelling. On a lot with multiple single-family dwellings, still only one JADU is permitted for the entire lot. A JADU is allowed only on a lot with a single-family dwelling, and is not allowed for a multi-family dwelling. For a lot with both single-family and multi-family dwelling(s), see Section VIII.
  - C. **Types of JADU projects allowed.** Any of the following types of ADU projects is permitted at a single-family dwelling:

1. Convert an existing *attached* accessory building (including garage) to a JADU.
  2. Convert a portion of the SFD to a JADU.
  3. Build a new JADU, *attached* to the SFD.
  4. An addition of floor area that complies with the maximum permitted floor area and other development standards for a JADU (see Subsection E) is permitted for the project types in Subsections (C)(1) through (C)(3) above.
- D. **Demolition and rebuild.**
1. An existing *attached* accessory building (including garage) may be demolished and rebuilt in the same or more conforming state if it is essential to the JADU project.
  2. A portion of an existing single-family dwelling with a nonconforming setback or other physical nonconformity may be demolished and rebuilt in the same or more conforming state if it is essential to the JADU project, but the scope of the demolition/rebuild shall be limited to less than the threshold of the definition of “demolish” (Section 21.15.750) as applicable to the single-family dwelling. Any project that meets or exceeds the definition of “demolish” as applicable to the single-family dwelling shall cause the rights to any nonconformities to be abandoned per Section 21.27.050.
- E. **Development Standards.** The following development standards shall apply to a JADU:
1. **Area.** A JADU shall be at least 150 sq. ft. and shall not exceed 500 sq. ft.
  2. **Setbacks.**
    - a. **Front yard setback:** As required by the zoning district.
    - b. **Side yard setback:** As required by the zoning district.
    - c. **Rear yard setback:** As required by the zoning district. Measured to centerline of alley if lot abuts an alley.
    - d. **Existing building(s).** An existing, converted, or rebuilt building may maintain a nonconforming setback if essential to the JADU project and the setback is sufficient for fire safety as determined by the Building Official. A building with a nonconforming setback also may be rebuilt with a more conforming setback, but the nonconformity shall not be increased.
  3. **Height Limits.** The following height limits apply to a JADU:
    - a. **New construction.** 25 feet and 2 stories, or as required by the zoning district, whichever is less (R-1-S, R-2-S, and PD-11 zones have more restrictive height limits).
    - b. **Existing building(s) with conforming setbacks.** The height of existing building(s) with conforming setbacks may be maintained.
    - c. **Existing building(s) with nonconforming setbacks.** For conversion, demolition, and rebuild of an existing building that encroaches into a required setback area, building height shall not be increased from the height of the existing building *within the encroachment into the required setback area*.
  4. **Parking.** No parking is required for a JADU.
- F. **Minimum JADU Unit Standards.** See Section X.

VII. **ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT REGULATIONS FOR MULTI-FAMILY DWELLINGS.** The following regulations apply to ADUs at a multi-family dwelling.

- A. **Number and type of ADUs allowed.** ADUs are permitted at a multi-family dwelling in accordance with either (1) or (2) below, but not both:
1. **Attached.** One (1) ADU or twenty-five percent (25%) of the number of legally-permitted principal dwelling units on the lot, whichever is greater, created through conversion of existing attached non-habitable building area, or
  2. **Detached.** Up to two (2) detached ADUs.
- B. **Development Standards for Attached ADUs for a multi-family dwelling:**
1. **Area.** An ADU shall be at least 150 sq. ft. and shall not exceed 1,200 sq. ft.
  2. **Building areas eligible for conversion.** Attached ADUs may be created only through the conversion of existing attached non-habitable building area, including the following: storage rooms, utility rooms, basements, manager's offices, garages, carports, and the like.
  3. **Building areas prohibited from conversion.**
    - a. No part of an existing dwelling unit shall be converted to an ADU or portion thereof, and
    - b. No existing amenity space, including communal laundry rooms, community rooms, fitness centers, and other amenity spaces, shall be converted to an ADU or portion thereof, since these spaces are considered habitable area and are not eligible for conversion. This prohibition shall not apply if the amenity is replaced in-kind (or with individual in-unit laundry for each unit in the case of laundry rooms).
  4. **No additions.** No addition of floor area is permitted to a multi-family dwelling for ADU purposes.
  5. **Setbacks and building height.** Existing setbacks and building height shall be maintained. If a building setback is nonconforming, the setback or building wall assembly shall be made sufficient for fire safety as determined by the Building Official.
- C. **Development Standards for Detached ADUs for a multi-family dwelling:**
1. **Area.** An ADU shall be at least 150 sq. ft. and shall not exceed 1,200 sq. ft.
  2. **Types of detached ADU projects allowed.** The types of detached ADU projects described in Section V.B shall be permitted for detached ADU(s) on a lot with a multi-family dwelling.
  3. **Additions.** An addition of floor area that complies with the maximum permitted floor area and other development standards shall be permitted for a detached ADU on a lot with a multi-family dwelling.
  4. **Setbacks.**
    - a. **Front yard setback:** As required by the zoning district. If compliance with the front yard setback would not allow an ADU of up to 1,200 sq. ft., the ADU may encroach into the front yard setback, to the minimum extent feasible, to make possible an ADU up to 1,200 sq. ft.

- b. **Side yard setback:** 4 feet, or as required by the zoning district, whichever is less.
  - c. **Rear yard setback:** 4 feet. Measured to centerline of alley if lot abuts an alley.
  - d. **Existing building(s).** An existing, converted, or rebuilt building may maintain nonconforming setback(s) if essential to the ADU project and each setback is sufficient for fire safety as determined by the Building Official. A building with nonconforming setback(s) also may be rebuilt with more conforming setback(s), but the nonconformity shall not be increased.
5. **Height Limits.** The following height limits apply to a detached ADU at a multi-family dwelling:
- a. **New construction.** As required by the zoning district.
  - b. **Existing building(s) with conforming setbacks.** The height of existing building(s) converted to an ADU with conforming setbacks may be maintained or increased in conformance with Subsection (C)(5)(a) above. A building that is demolished or rebuilt shall comply with the height limits of Subsection (C)(5)(a).
  - c. **Existing building(s) with nonconforming setbacks.** For conversion, demolition, and rebuild of an existing building that encroaches into a required setback area, building height shall not be increased from the height of the existing building *within the encroachment into the required setback area*.
- D. **Parking.** Parking shall be provided as required in Subsections V(E)(4)(a) and (b).

---

VIII. **ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT REGULATIONS ON A LOT WITH SINGLE-FAMILY DWELLING(S) AND MULTI-FAMILY DWELLING(S).** On a lot with both a single-family dwelling and a multi-family dwelling, an ADU/JADU project may be permitted for the single-family dwelling using the standards applicable to single-family dwellings, or an ADU project may be permitted for the multi-family dwelling using the standards applicable to multi-family dwellings, but not both; nor shall the standards for a multi-family dwelling apply to a single-family dwelling or vice-versa. In cases where the applicable standard is unclear, the Zoning Administrator is authorized to determine the applicable standard.

---

- IX. **MINIMUM UNIT STANDARDS FOR AN ADU.** An ADU shall contain, at a minimum, the following:
- A. An independent exterior entrance directly to ADU. No internal communication (interior door) is allowed with other unit(s).
  - B. Sanitation facilities consisting of a toilet, lavatory sink, and a shower or bath, all located in a bathroom separated by walls from the other rooms of the ADU.
  - C. A kitchen, containing the following:
    - 1. A kitchen sink with at least a 1½-inch drain line, separate from the bathroom lavatory sink,
    - 2. A permanent cooking appliance,



3. Sufficient countertop space for food preparation and sufficient cabinet space for non-perishable food storage,
  4. Space for a refrigerator of sufficient size for the ADU (Suggested guide: 4–6 cubic feet of refrigerator space per person).
- D. For an ADU at a multi-family dwelling, a trash enclosure shall be provided as required by Section 21.45.167, to the greatest extent feasible.

- 
- X. **MINIMUM UNIT STANDARDS FOR A JADU.** A JADU shall contain, at a minimum, the following:
- A. An independent exterior entrance directly to JADU. Internal communication (an interior door) is allowed with the primary SFD.
  - B. Sanitation facilities, if not shared with the primary SFD, shall include a toilet, lavatory sink, and shower stall or bathtub in a bathroom separated from the remainder of the JADU with demising walls.
  - C. An efficiency kitchen, including a permanent cooking appliance, and a food preparation counter and storage cabinets that are of reasonable size in relation to the size of the JADU.
- 

**References:**

- (1) California Government Code Section 65852.2(j)(1), as amended (AB 881, Section 1.5).
- (2) California Government Code Section 65852.22(h)(1), as amended (AB 68, Section 2).
- (3) "Single-family Dwelling," Section 21.15.2410, LBMC.
- (4) "Duplex (two-family dwelling)," Section 21.15.890, LBMC.
- (5) "Dwelling, multiple-family," 21.15.920, LBMC.
- (6) Minimum size of an "efficiency unit," defined in California Health and Safety Code Section 17958.1

This information is provided as a convenience to the public and is based upon the provisions of the California Government Code regulating accessory dwelling units, and the non-severed clauses of Section 21.51.276 and other applicable sections of the Zoning Regulations, Title 21, Long Beach Municipal Code. It is not intended to address every possible situation arising out of ADU regulation. Please contact Planning staff at (562) 570-6194 before proceeding on any assumptions based on this guide. No form of approval, verbal, written, or otherwise, is valid for construction until plans are stamped and a building permit is issued by the Building & Safety Bureau.

**Authority:** California Government Code Sections 65852.2 and 65852.22; all other code citations from Title 21 (Zoning Regulations), Long Beach Municipal Code.

To request this information in an alternative format or to request a reasonable accommodation, please contact the Community Development Department at [longbeach.gov/lbcd](http://longbeach.gov/lbcd) and 562.570.3807. A minimum of three business days is requested to ensure availability; attempts will be made to accommodate requests with shorter notice.