



City of Northglenn
Planning and Development Department
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[Northglenn Planning Department](#)

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS ZONING, BUILDING CODE AND PERMIT REQUIREMENTS GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

Definition: An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a subordinate dwelling unit added to, created within, or detached from a single-family residence. It must include provisions for living, sleeping, cooking, and sanitation. Mobile homes and HUD-Code manufactured homes are not considered ADUs.

Where ADUs are Allowed: ADUs are Permitted in the following zoning districts RS-1, RS-2, RS-3, RM-1, RM-2, or MN and PD.

Zoning Regulations for ADUs

Regulation	Zone district					
	RS-1	RS-2	RS-3	RM-1	RM-2	MN
Front Setback	30'	25'	15'	15'	15'	5' min / 15' max
Side Setback	5'	5'	5'	5'	5'	5'
Rear Setback*	None	None	None	None	None	5'
Height Limit	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'	20'
Size Limit (SF)	750	750	750	750	750	750
Building Coverage	40%	40%	60%	60%	60%	60%
Rear Yard Structure Cover	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%	30%

*Most residential properties have a 5 ft. rear utility easement. ADU placement is subject to easement review.

**** Where ADUs are Not Allowed:** ADUs are generally prohibited in multifamily dwellings or live/work units, if the PD (Planned Development) plan includes multifamily or live/work units, ADUs would not be permitted. To determine if ADUs are allowed on a specific property within a PD district, [Contact the Planning Department](#).

ADU Development Standards

A. General Requirements

- Only one ADU shall be allowed per property.
- Accessory dwelling units occupied for the use of short-term rentals will require the property owner to reside on the property.
- ADUs for multifamily dwellings or live/work units are prohibited.
- No mobile home (pre-1976), trailer, travel trailer, camping trailer, truck camper, or motor vehicle shall be used as an ADU.
- ADUs may be manufactured or prefabricated homes, provided they comply with pre-approved designs designated by the Director of Planning and Development and meet all other ADU requirements.

B. Ownership Requirements

- The property owner must reside in either the primary dwelling or the ADU.
- Under no circumstances may ownership of an ADU be legally separated from ownership of the primary residence or associated lot structures.

C. Size

- Detached ADUs or ADUs added as an addition to the primary structure shall not exceed 750 square feet.
- However, ADUs located entirely within the basement of an existing single-family home may exceed 750 square feet if fully contained within the primary building footprint.

D. Location and Design

- ADUs shall be allowed as both attached and detached structures.
- Attached ADUs shall have a separate exterior entrance from the primary dwelling unit and shall contain cooking, sleeping, and sanitary facilities.
- ADUs shall not have more than one bedroom.
- Pitched, gable, or hip roofs may extend up to five feet above the 20' height limit if at least 70% of the roof area has a minimum pitch of 4:12.

E. Utilities and Services

- Separate water and sewer services are not permitted.
 - See ***Building Code Specific Requirements*** for more details
- Separate electric and gas metering is allowed.
- The plumbing systems in ***attached*** ADUs will typically connect to plumbing systems within the primary dwelling unit.

- The plumbing systems in **detached** ADUs may connect to plumbing systems in the primary dwelling unit or may be installed in the side yard, bypassing the primary unit, and connecting directly to the underground water service pipe and building sewer in the front yard area.
- Existing building sewer pipes may not have sufficient depth to serve detached ADUs. If sufficient depth is not available, a sewage pump or sewage ejector may be required.

Code and Regulatory Requirements

- Building standards and code requirements for ADUs are governed by Northglenn UDO Article 11-4, Article 11-6, and Chapter 10 of the Northglenn Municipal Code.
- State Code: Modular and prefab ADUs must comply with state certification requirements (Colorado Division of Housing) in addition to local building code.

Architectural & Site Requirements

F. Permitted Materials

- **Exterior Cladding:** Materials should be consistent with the primary dwelling's design.
- **Roofing:** Must match or complement the primary structure's roofing materials.
- **Windows and Doors:** Should align with the architectural style of the main property.
- ADU building material regulations online: [Article 11-4 Development Standards](#)



Figure 1: Detached

Note: If the main dwelling unit does not include any masonry on its front façade, the 30% masonry requirement for the ADU will not obligate the main dwelling to be retrofitted with masonry. However, the ADU must still meet the 30% masonry requirement on its own front façade unless otherwise approved through the site plan or design review process.



Figure 2: Attached ADU

G. Parking Requirements

- One off-street parking space shall be required per ADU, only if additional parking demand is anticipated beyond what is already provided for the primary residence.

Building Permit Application Requirements

- Apply online: [Building Permit](#) – ***A building permit is required for all ADUs***
- Homeowners or architects may initiate the permit but cannot perform the work themselves.
- The following licensed contractors must be listed before issuance:
 - General Construction
 - Electrical
 - Mechanical
 - Plumbing

Building Code Requirements

- City of Northglenn has adopted the 2021 International Building Codes as amended:
 - Specific Requirements:
 - ADUs must have independent heating and water heaters.
 - ADUs may require 1-hour fire-rated separation if adjacent to the primary structure.
 - Radon control systems required for new ADUs (existing basement conversions may be exempt)
 - Blower door test (air leakage test) may be required before Certificate of Occupancy, exemptions apply based on structure type and construction method.

- In addition to meeting local zoning and building requirements, ADUs that are considered modular, manufactured, or tiny homes, must meet Colorado state certification standards.
 - The Colorado Division of Housing (DOH) regulates the construction, certification, and installation of: Modular Homes (factory-built, permanent foundation); Tiny Homes (factory-built, permanent or temporary foundation); HUD-Code Manufactured Homes (federally regulated, installed under state oversight); Mobile Homes (pre-1976, additional compliance steps required)
 - A condition of building permit approval for these structures requires:
 - Colorado Division of Housing approval of the design and construction plans – to be submitted at time of permitting with the City.
 - Manufacturers, sellers, installers, and special inspectors must be registered with the state and in good standing.
 - For more details, visit the Colorado Division of Housing website: [Home | Division of Housing](#)
- Utility Plan: For detached ADUs a utility plan is required showing the water and sewer connection between the primary dwelling unit's utilities.
 - Application must include the size of the existing water meter on the plan. If you do not know the size, you can contact Utility Billing at [#303.450.8770](#) to request this information.
- ADU applications must include a fixture count of all existing and proposed fixtures in the primary residence and ADU in accordance with Table P2903.6. The total water-supply fixture-unit value shall be converted to a supply demand in gallons per minute using Table P2903.6(1).
- Many residential structures in Northglenn are served with a ¾" water service and equipped with either a ⅝" or ¾" water meter. As flows increase through water service lines and water meters due to higher demand, the pressure loss increases. A ⅝" water meter will provide 18 gallons per minute with 5 psi of pressure loss. A ¾" water meter will provide 24 gallons per minute with 5 psi of pressure loss.
- Detached ADUs located in rear yard areas will increase the length of customer-owned water service piping and may result in a flow rate or flow pressure at an individual fixture supply outlet that is below the required capacities listed in Table P2903.1.
- The ADU application process does not require a sufficient level of detail for the Northglenn Building Division or Public Works Department to determine if the required capacities listed

in Table P2903.1 can be met with the existing water meter, water service, and customer-owned piping. It is strongly encouraged to work with a licensed professional to assess whether or not additional measures would be required to proper water service.

- If it is determined that the required capacity listed in Table P2903.1 cannot be met, then the permittee will need to modify either the customer-owned piping and/or the water service and water meter.
- If the water service and water meter size need to be increased, please contact the *Public Works Department* at #[303.450.8984](tel:303.450.8984). Additional fees will be due if a larger size water service and meter are needed. Tap fees are assessed for water, wastewater, and stormwater based on water tap size.