

San Mateo County Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) Standards

STANDARDS	
Zones allowed	Bay side: all R zones except R-3 Coast side: R-1
Lot restrictions	None
Minimum lot size	5,000 sq ft
Min / Max ADU size	None / 1,200 sq ft
ADU building height	26 feet
Setbacks	5 feet on all sides, unless: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Any portion of ADU is in front of primary dwelling: then normal setbacks - Garage or other accessory structure conversions: then state law applies
Parking requirements	For 0-2 bedroom units, one space is required and for 3+ bedroom units, two spaces are required, unless state exemptions are met (ADU is within ½ mile of transit, in existing structures, in historic districts, within one block of car share locations, or in an area with residential parking permit rules that do not allow second units to get a permit). Tandem parking and parking in setbacks is allowed. Permeable paving is required.
Owner occupancy	No requirement
Sample fees from recently built projects*	ADU 1 (626 sq ft, attached): \$10,788* ADU 2 (627 sq ft, detached): \$6,577* *does not include school fee which varies by location and is \$1.39-\$3.48 / sf
Other requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADU must comply with California Building Code fire safety requirements. If the primary dwelling has sprinklers, the ADU must have sprinklers. • There are no design requirements, unless the ADU is located in the Coastal Zone, in which case the ADU must be similar in shape, materials and style to the primary dwelling. • Tree removals may require a permit per the Heritage Tree Ordinance. • Daylight plane and floor area ration (FAR) requirements may apply. • No additional parking is required for garage conversions and replacement parking can be uncovered. • Only one ADU per property is allowed. • ADUs are only allowed on single family and duplex sites. • ADUs must conform to all development standards in the zoning district in which they are proposed.
Process	ADUs are subject to the standard permitting process with no additional types of review. Standards are very liberal relative to other types of development. Some ADUs in the County's Coastal Zone are subject to design review (primarily staff level). Making an appointment to meet with a planner in the initial stages of the project can help avoid challenges and is highly recommended.
Exceptions	Normal exception process is allowed.
INFORMATION	
Contact	William Gibson – 650.363.1816
Website	http://planning.smcgov.org/press-release/second-unit-ordinance-update
ADU Ordinance	http://planning.smcgov.org/sites/planning.smcgov.org/files/press-release/files/Chapter%2022%205%20%28Second%20Units%29.pdf

New laws were passed recently, and updates will be coming soon

*Disclaimer: standards and process may vary. Consultation with the contact is recommended before starting any project. *Fees are specific to each project and will vary. Fees change regularly. These are provided as examples only.*