



Q & A Guide to ADUs

Town of Fairfield, CT

Are there any size restrictions?

The ADU can be no larger in size than 40% of the total floor area of the original residence or 1,500 square feet whichever is less.

What must an ADU contain?

An ADU must contain its own kitchen and bathroom, as well as its own entrance. Access to an attached ADU may be on the front facade of the residence if separated from the front door by at least ten feet and similar in appearance to the single family dwelling.

Are there any parking requirements?

An ADU must have at least 1 off-street parking space.

How do I apply for an ADU?

Before any ADU conversion or construction is begun, the homeowner must obtain a written permit from the Town Planning Director after providing the following information:

- Architectural drawings or photos showing the exterior building alterations being proposed; and
- Interior floor plans showing the proposed floor area and that of the primary residence.
- A property survey may also be required.

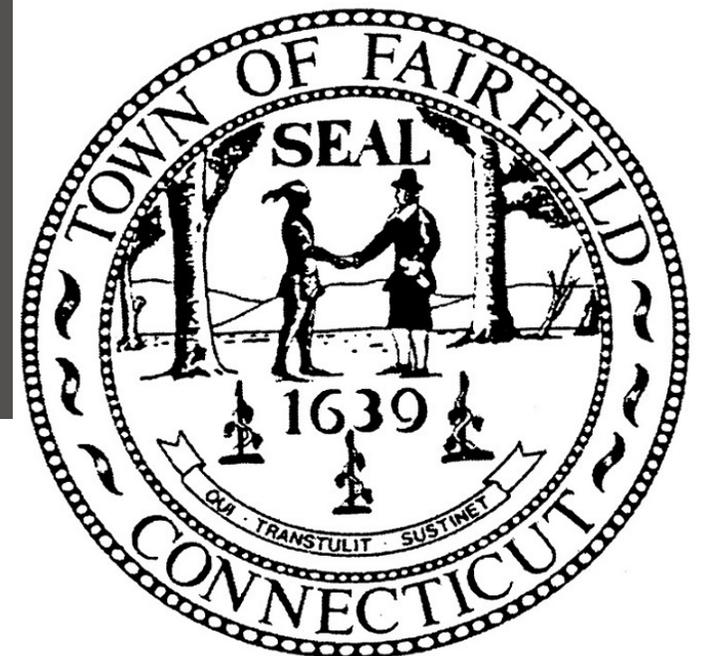
What is the approval process?

- If public water and sewer are not available to the residence, the use of private water and septic systems for the proposed ADU must be approved by the Town Department of Health.
- The ADU must comply with all applicable housing, building, fire and health code requirements.
- The homeowner must file an affidavit with the Town indicating that the primary dwelling and the ADU comply with all requirements.

Want more information?

The Town's zoning regulations spell out ADU requirements in detail. Also, you may want to consult an architect or home designer for more information.

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ADUs come in all shapes and sizes, as depicted above

What is an ADU?

An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU), also referred to as an "accessory apartment", is defined as a separate, self-contained living unit that is smaller in size to an existing single-family residence. In Fairfield an attached ADU is allowed in Zones AAA, AA, R-3, R-2, A, B and C. Free-standing units are allowed in Zones AAA, AA and R-3.

ADUs are designed to preserve and maintain the single-family residential appearance of the existing lot and be consistent with the single-family nature of the neighborhood.

How can an ADU qualify as "Affordable Housing"?

The Town encourages homeowners to create affordable ADUs by deed-restricting the ADU to be rented at an affordable rate as defined in the CT General Statutes Section 8-30g for a period of at least ten years. An ADU may qualify as "affordable housing" provided that:

- The ADU is rented to a tenant whose income is less than or equal to 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI) as their primary residence;
- The application is accompanied by a proposed deed which complies with CGS 8-30g, including a 10-year "affordable housing" deed restriction;
- Before an ADU is occupied, the applicant must submit satisfactory proof that the deed has been recorded on the Land Records;
- Prior to occupancy and thereafter, by January 31 of each year the homeowner certifies that:
 - The ADU is rented at or below the maximum rate prescribed in CGS 8-30g; and
 - The tenant certifies to the owner that their income does not exceed 80% of the AMI.

What are the advantages of an ADU?

ADUs can help older residents remain in their community and "age in place", either by providing for family to live with them and/or providing more income to help with housing costs. An ADU can provide budget friendly housing for family helpers or non-relatives. It can also serve as a potential source of "affordable housing" and make better (environment-friendly) use of our overall Town housing stock

Who can live in the ADU?

The principal owner of the residence must reside in either the primary dwelling or in the ADU. The principal owner is defined as the owner of not less than a 50% interest in the residence. The primary dwelling is defined as the portion of the existing single-family residence that is not converted into an ADU. The occupants of the two units do not have to be related.

Are there occupancy limits?

ADU occupancy is limited to two persons unless the unit is designated as an "affordable housing unit", in which case occupancy is limited to no more than three persons.

Neither the existing house nor the ADU may be rented for a period of less than 60 consecutive days.



What is required for a detached ADU?

In Residence AAA, AA or R-3 Zones, a free-standing structure may be built (or converted) as an ADU provided:

- The structure conforms with required setbacks and other design requirements for the primary structure; and
- The proposed ADU conforms with all Town Health and Building Department requirements.