

Accessory Dwelling Units in Scottsdale



An Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU) is a subordinate, self-contained dwelling unit located on the same lot as a main single-family residence, that is designed for living purposes, and includes its own sleeping, kitchen, and sanitary facilities. An ADU may be rented separately from the main single-family residence. An ADU is not a Guest House.

About ADUs

- Scottsdale has allowed ADUs since January 1, 2025
- An ADU may be attached to the existing main single-family residence or detached from the existing main single-family residence as a separate building.



- A qualified single-family lot may have one (1) attached ADU and one (1) detached ADU.
- For lots that are at least one (1) acre in size, a third ADU may be permitted in a detached configuration provided the third ADU is a Restricted-Affordable ADU (defined).



Where are ADUs allowed?

An ADU is allowed on single-family lots where there is already an existing main single-family residence. *(Single-family lots can be located in single-family and multifamily residential zoning districts, but not within commercial zoning districts.)*



Are there areas where ADUs are not allowed?

Yes, properties that are located within Traffic Pattern Airspace (TPA) as defined by Arizona State Statutes are not allowed to have an ADU. *(City staff can assist property owners to identify if a property is located within a TPA.)*



Are Natural Open Space Areas (NAOS) still required with an ADU?

Yes, NAOS areas must be provided in northern portions of the city and an ADU may not be constructed within NAOS.

Process to operate an ADU



Applicants must first submit a pre-application online.



After the pre-app process, the property owner must submit a formal application for administrative review and approval.



If the property owner receives administrative approval, then they may submit plans for the construction of the ADU.

ADU Requirements

Setbacks

- An attached ADU must meet the setback requirements of the main single-family residence on the property.
- A detached ADU must also generally meet the setback requirements for the lot and cannot be located in the required front yard of the lot.
- A detached ADU that is located in the rear yard (defined term) of the property may be eligible for reduced setbacks.
- A detached ADU must also have at least a ten (10) foot separation from the existing main single-family residence. (see Sec. 7.904.)

Size Limits

- The first ADU located on a lot is limited to a maximum size of 1,000 sf or 75% of the existing main single-family residence on the lot, whichever is less.
- Any other ADU on the lot is limited to a maximum size of 500 square feet.

Additional Requirements

- Private outdoor living space must be provided for each ADU
- An ADU must have separate access and a separate address from the existing main single-family residence
- An ADU must have separately metered electrical utility connections (subject to utility company requirements).

Frequently Asked Questions

Can an ADU be used as a vacation or short-term rental? Yes, an ADU can be used as a vacation or short-term rental, but only if the property owner physically resides at the property.

Can an existing Guest House be converted into an ADU? Yes, provided the property owner can demonstrate that a guest house meets the qualifications and requirements of the ADU regulations and receives approval to operate as an ADU.

Are old ADUs grandfathered by new regulations? No, any property that had/has an ADU is doing so illegally and must meet the qualifications and requirements of the new regulations and receive approval prior to legally operating as an ADU.

Can an ADU be sold separately from the main single-family residence on the same property? No, an ADU may not be sold separately from the main single-family residence on the same property and the property that an ADU is located upon may not be subdivided, including through a condominium plat, in a manner that would create a separate lot, parcel, or ownership boundaries exclusively for the existing main single-family residence or an ADU.