

ADU AND JADU FAQs

ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUs) AND JUNIOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (JADUs)

Definitions:

ADUs (Accessory Dwelling Units)

Also called secondary units or granny flats, ADUs are attached or detached residential dwelling units which are secondary in nature to a One-Family, Two-Family, or Multiple-Family Dwelling units on a parcel of property. ADUs provide complete, independent living facilities for one or more persons, including permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation.

JADUs (Junior Accessory Units)

JADUs are residential dwelling units that are not more than 500 square feet in size and are contained entirely within an existing single-family structure. JADUs includes a minimum efficiency kitchen and can have separate sanitation facilities from or shared sanitation facilities with the existing residence.

BUILDING & SAFETY DIVISION REQUIREMENTS

Building Components

Based on the 2025 California Residential Code (CRC), California Electrical Code (CEC), California Plumbing Code (CPC), California Mechanical Code (CMC), and 2025 City of Pleasanton Municipal code (PMC).

1. Is Building plan checking required for ADU/JADU?

- Yes, the building department will review all ADU/JADU plans. Please see [Residential Requirements handout](#) for general requirements when submitting for ADU/JADU plan check.

2. Is a 1-hour fire rated separation required between an attached ADU/JADU and the main dwelling? ADU

- Yes, for an attached ADU, a one-hour fire assembly is required (see CRC R302.3).
- Yes, for a detached ADU, a one-hour Fire assembly is required if the ADU is closer than 10ft from the existing dwelling (see CRC section R302.1(1)).

JADU

- No, JADUs are not considered new or separate single-family dwellings (see CA Gov Code sec 66333(d)).

3. Is a one-hour fire rated assembly required for exterior walls next to property lines?

ADU/JADU

- Maybe, any new or converted structure less than 5 ft. (non-sprinklered) or less than 3 ft. (sprinklered) from the property line requires one-hour rated fire assembly (see CRC 302.1).

4. Are automatic fire sprinklers required?

ADU/JADU

- Maybe, if the primary dwelling unit is protected by an automatic fire sprinkler system, any detached, attached, or converted ADU/JADU shall also be required to be equipped with automatic fire sprinklers (see PMC section 20.24.160). Automatic fire sprinkler system are not required in the ADU/JADU if the primary residence is non-sprinklered.

5. My house is located within a Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) zone. Can I construct an attached or detached ADU or JADU?

ADU/JADU

- Yes, construction is permitted; however, additional requirements apply. California has recently adopted the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI) provisions in Title 24, Part 7. Please refer to the WUI code requirements for applicable design and construction standards when building within a designated WUI zone.

6. Is a separate exterior entry/egress door required for an ADU or JADU independent of the main dwelling's exterior doors?

ADU/JADU

- Yes, an ADU/JADU is required to have a separate exterior entry/egress door. The door shall be side-hinged and provide a minimum 32-inch clear opening width (34-inch door minimum), measured between the face of the door and the stop with the door open at 90 degrees. The ADU/JADU entry door shall not be located on the same building elevation as the primary entrance of the main dwelling (see CRC 318.2).

7. Is a connecting interior door required between an ADU/JADU and the main dwelling?

ADU

- No, an interior connecting door to the main dwelling unit is not allowed (see CRC definition for "Dwelling Unit").

JADU

- If a JADU does not include a separate bathroom within the JADU space, it must provide a connecting interior door between the JADU and the main dwelling unit (see CA Gov Code sec § 66333(e)(2)).
- If a JADU includes a bathroom, an interior communicating door between the JADU and the main dwelling is not required (see CA Gov Code sec § 66333(e)(2)).

8. Is a kitchen required to be provided for ADU/JADU? If so, are there any limitations in size or electric/gas connections?

ADU

- Yes, a kitchen is required per definition of accessory dwelling unit (see CRC R202 definitions for "Dwelling Unit").
- Per Pleasanton Municipal Code section § 20.26.240, all new construction buildings and qualifying alteration projects shall not use combustion equipment. New residential buildings shall be all electric (see PMC § 20.26.240 Section 4.106.5 added—All-electric buildings).
- Attached or converted ADUs are not considered new construction therefore gas connections are allowed.

JADU

- An efficiency kitchen shall be provided for JADUs. Efficiency kitchens shall include a cooking facility with appliances, a food preparation counter, and storage cabinets that are of reasonable size in relation to the size of the junior accessory dwelling unit (see CA Gov Code sec § 66333 (F)).
- JADUs shall be built within the main resident envelope. If the main dwelling has a gas connection, the JADU can utilize gas or electrical connections for appliances/equipment (see CA Gov Code sec § 66333).

Electrical Components

1. Do I need to upgrade my electrical service or provide a separate service?

ADU

- Maybe, it depends on the capacity of the existing service and the size of the new ADU. A new detached ADU is considered a separate dwelling unit, and the electrical code requires a minimum 100-amp service disconnect for one-family dwellings per CEC 230.79(C). If the existing service can support both the existing dwelling loads and the proposed ADU loads, and the new ADU does not require a 125 amp panel then a panel upgrade or new service is not required. Load calculations are required to determine whether a service upgrade would be required or not.

ADU/JADU built within the existing dwelling envelope

- No, when the ADU/JADU is created entirely within the existing dwelling envelope, the original electrical service was already sized to serve that space and a new service or upgrade is not required (See Gov. Code, § 66324).

2. Is a photovoltaic system required to be installed for a new ADU?

ADU

- Yes, newly constructed detached ADUs are required to provide solar photovoltaic systems. This requirement is found in 2025 Energy Code Section 150.1(C)(14). The section also includes five exceptions under which photovoltaic is not required. If the ADU qualifies for one of these exceptions, the PV requirement does not apply.

ADU/JADU built within the existing dwelling envelope

- No, Attached or converted ADUs/JADUs are not required to install solar photovoltaic systems, as the Energy Code provisions apply to newly constructed residential buildings rather than conversions or alterations to existing structures.

3. Does an ADU/JADU require an Electric Vehicle (EV) charger?

ADU

- Maybe, if a newly constructed ADU is required to provide additional parking on the site (e.g., new garage or new driveway), installation of an EV charger is required (see California Green Building Code).

ADU/JADU built within the existing dwelling envelope

- No, ADUs/JADUs constructed within the existing building envelope (including garage conversions) do not trigger additional parking requirements. Since no new parking facilities are being provided, EV charger requirements do not apply (see CA Gov. Code §§ 66322 & 66334).

Plumbing Components

1. Is a separate (independent) water heater required for a new ADU/JADU?

ADU

- Yes, whether newly constructed, attached, or converted, an ADU is considered a “residential dwelling unit that provides complete independent living facilities.” As such, ADUs are required to provide an independent water heating system (see CRC definitions for “Dwelling Unit”).

JADU

- No, if the existing water heater has sufficient capacity to serve the additional hot water demand from the JADU, it may be shared. If not, the existing unit shall be upgraded, or a separate water heater may be provided. (see CA Gov Code sec § 66333).

2. Is a separate sewer lateral required for a new ADU, or can it tie into the existing building sewer?

ADU

- No, detached ADUs may connect to the existing sewer system by installing a gravity drainage line from the ADU to the main dwelling’s sewer lateral if the main dwelling’s existing lateral has sufficient capacity.

ADU (attached), ADU/JADU built within the existing dwelling envelope.

- No, however the existing building sewer shall be evaluated to verify capacity for the additional load from new drainage fixture units.

3. Does the water meter need to be upgraded?

ADU/Attached ADU (Created by adding an addition)

- Maybe, water meter sizing shall be evaluated when adding an ADU. Existing meters are typically 5/8" and serve one dwelling unit. Water fixture unit calculations shall be provided to determine if the existing meter size is sufficient or if a larger meter is required. Meter upgrades are subject to City of Pleasanton and Zone 7 fees; see links below for associated costs.

ADU/JADU built within the existing dwelling envelope

- No, ADUs/JADUs constructed within the existing building envelope (including garage conversions) does not require a water meter upgrade. (see CA Govt Code § 66324).

4. Are clothes washer plumbing connections required to be provided in a new ADU/JADU?

ADU

- Yes, whether newly constructed, attached, or converted, an ADUs are required to provide an independent plumbing connection for clothes washing machine. (see CRC definitions for "Dwelling Unit").
- No, JADUs do not require separate laundry facilities because they can be shared with the main dwelling unit.

Mechanical Components

1. Is a separate (independent) heater required for a new ADU/JADU?

ADU

- Yes, whether newly constructed, attached, or converted, an ADU is considered a "residential dwelling unit that provides complete independent living facilities." As such, ADUs are required to provide an independent heating system (see CRC definitions for "Dwelling Unit").

JADU

- JADUs shall be built within the main resident envelope. If a space within the main dwelling unit already is heated by the unit and that space is converted, no additional heating requirements are required.
- If a garage is being converted to a JADU and an interior connecting door is provided, the existing heating system (if adequately sized) may serve the additional square footage. New supply registers shall be provided for all habitable areas within the JADU.
- If a garage is being converted to a JADU and does not communicate with the main dwelling through an interior door, two options are available: (1) an independent heating unit may be installed for the JADU, or (2) supply and return registers may be extended from the existing heating system if the existing system is adequately sized to accommodate the additional square footage.

The above guidelines are requirements for the building department. Please consult the following departments regarding their respective requirements.

Engineering Department: 925-931-5650
Planning Department: 925-931-5600
Landscaping Department: 925-931- 5672