

CONVERSION REQUIREMENTS

An ADU conversion may be comprised solely of the conversion of area within an existing structure, or a hybrid of using existing area and adding an addition. An existing structure may be rebuilt in place to the same building envelope.

If a homeowner does a hybrid conversion ADU, comprised of both existing and new floor area, then the standard ADU regulations for new attached units or detached units (e.g. setbacks) shall apply to the new floor area. Up to 150 square feet may be added to an existing structure for ingress and egress only without rendering the project a “hybrid conversion.” Please refer to “Conversion ADU” on the included summary table and PAMC Chapter [18.09](#).

OTHER REGULATIONS

- One ADU and one JADU may be located on a lot that has, or proposes, a single-family dwelling unit.
- For properties with a JADU, the property owner shall occupy the JADU or primary residence.
- No impact fees on ADUs less than 750sf, impact fees for larger ADUs to be proportional to main house size.
- Deed Restriction recorded with the County will be required prior to permit issuance for a JADU.
- Street address assignment is required for the new dwelling unit.
- ADU/JADUs may not rent for periods less than 30 days.
- ADU/JADUs may not be sold separately from the primary residence.
- Fire sprinklers are only required for ADUs when required for the primary residence; compliance with Cal. Fire Code is still required.
- ADU/JADUs are not considered a new residential use when calculating utility connection fees; no new or separate utility connections are required
- For ADUs, major appliances shall mean a minimum two burner installed range, and an oven or convection microwave, as well as a minimum 16 cubic foot freezer and refrigerator combination unit. Kitchens shall also include counter space for food preparation equal to a minimum 24-inch depth and 36-inch length, and a sink that facilitates hot and cold water. For JADUs a minimum 10 cubic foot freezer/refrigeration combination unit is required rather than a 16 cubic foot unit.
- Attached ADUs shall not have an internal connection between the primary unit and second unit. JADUs are allowed to have an internal connection.
- Protected trees that are removed to accommodate an ADU shall be replaced per the Tree Technical Manual requirements. Consult with Urban Forestry about specific requirements.
- New ADU/JADUs on properties that are listed on the city’s historic inventory, the California Register, or National Register of Historic Places, shall comply with Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for treatment of historic properties. For more information, visit https://www.cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/pln/historic_preservation/default.asp

Please review the ADU/JADU regulations in Chapter [18.09](#) of the Code for complete details.



Summary Guide to ADUs and Junior ADUs



This document is a summary of regulations for accessory dwelling units and junior accessory dwelling units and is not a substitute for the specific regulations in Palo Alto Municipal Code Chapter [18.09](#).

For more information, please call 650-617-3117 or email planneronduty@cityofpaloalto.org.

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| | Table 1: Development Standards for Units Described in Government Code Section 65852.2(e) | | | | | Table 2: All other Units | | |
|--|--|---|--|---|--|--|---|------------------------|
| | Single-Family | | | Multi-Family | | Attached ADU | Detached ADU | JADU |
| | Conversion of Space Within an Existing Single-Family Home or Accessory Structure | Construction of Attached ADU Within the Space of a Proposed Single-Family Home | New Construction of Detached ADU | Conversion of Non-Habitable Space Within Existing Multi-family Dwelling Structure | Conversion or Construction of Detached ADU | New or Converted Space | | New or Converted Space |
| Number of Units Allowed(1) | 1 (ADU or JADU) | | 1 | 25% of the existing units (at least one) | 2 | 1 | | 1 |
| Minimum size (2) | 150 sf | | | | | 150 sf | | |
| Maximum size (2) | N/A (3) | | 800 sf | N/A | | 900 sf or 1,000 sf for two or more bedrooms; no more than 50% of the size of the single-family home | 900 sf or 1,000 sf for two or more bedrooms | 500 sf |
| Setbacks | N/A, if condition is sufficient for fire and safety | Underlying zone standard for Single Family Home (ADU must be within space of Single-Family Home) | 4 feet from side and rear lot lines; underlying zoning for front setback | N/A | 4 feet from side and rear lot lines; underlying zoning for front setback | 4 feet from side and rear lot lines; underlying zone standard for front setback | | |
| Daylight Plane Initial Height Angle | N/A | | N/A | | 8 feet at lot line | | | |
| Maximum Height (4) Res. Estate (RE) Open Space (OS) All other eligible zones | N/A | | 16 | N/A | 16 | 30 feet | | |
| Parking | None (5) | | | | | None (5) | | |
| Square Footage Exemption | Up to 800 sf for an ADU and up to 500 sf for a JADU (6) | | | | | Up to 800 sf (6) | | Up to 500 sf (6) |
| Reference | 65852.2(e)(1)(A) | 65852.2(e)(1)(A) | 65852.2(e)(1)(B) | 65852.2(e)(1)(C) | 65852.2(e)(1)(D) | PAMC 18.09.040, Ordinance 5507 | | |

(1) An attached or detached ADU may be built in conjunction with a JADU on a lot with an existing or proposed single family home.

(2) Lofts where the height from the floor level to the underside of the rafter or finished roof surface is 5' or greater shall count towards the unit's floor area.

(3) Up to 150 sf may be added for ingress and egress.

(4) Units built in a flood zone are not entitled to any height extensions granted to the primary dwelling.

(5) Existing attached garages converted to a JADU may provide replacement parking as uncovered spaces in any configuration on the lot including within the front or street side yard setback for the property

(6) Lots with both an ADU and a JADU may exempt a maximum combined 800 square feet of the ADU and JADU from FAR, Lot Coverage, and Maximum House Size calculations.