



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **ADU – Accessory Dwelling Units**

### **JADU – Junior Accessory Dwelling Units**

#### What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU)?

An attached or detached residential dwelling unit which provides complete independent living facilities for one or more person and is located on a lot with a proposed or existing primary residence. It shall include permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking, and sanitation on the same parcel as the Primary Residence is situated.

#### What is a Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU)?

A unit that is no more than 500 square feet in size and contained entirely within an existing one-family dwelling. A junior accessory dwelling unit (JADU) may include separate sanitation facilities (bathrooms) or may share sanitation facilities with the existing structure.

#### Where are ADUs and JADUs allowed?

An attached or detached accessory dwelling unit or junior accessory dwelling unit is permitted in the following zones: R-1-B, R-1, E-1, A-1, O-R, R-M and M-U zones, and all areas within specific plans that allow one-family dwellings by right.

#### How many ADUs or JADUs can I have on my property?

If your property is zoned or developed for single-family dwellings, you are able to have one attached or detached ADU up to 1,200 square feet and convert up to 500 square feet of the existing primary residence to a JADU.

If your property is zoned or developed for multi-family dwellings, you are able to have two detached ADUs. Also, one or more ADUs may be constructed within portions of existing multiple-family dwelling structures that are not used as livable space, up to 25% of the number of existing multiple-family dwelling units within the building. JADUs are not allowed on multi-family properties.

## How many stories can I have for my ADU?

Only one story is allowed for ADUs (maximum 16 feet height). You may build an ADU on the second story of your primary unit or a detached structure with a separate entrance. However, whether built on-grade or atop another structure, the ADU shall only be one story.

## Where can I build my ADU on my property?

The ADU must be at least 4 feet away from the side and rear property lines, and at least 5 feet away from any structure, including the existing main residence, patio covers, sheds, pools, etc. All new ADUs must comply with underlying zone front setback requirements.

## How many bedrooms can I have in my ADU?

You are able to have a maximum of two bedrooms in an ADU up to 850 square feet, and a maximum of three bedrooms in an ADU up to 1,200 square feet.

## Does the ADU need to be architecturally compatible with the existing house?

Accessory dwelling units, attached or detached, and junior accessory dwelling units are encouraged to incorporate the same architectural features, building materials, and color as the primary residence.

## Can I convert a detached accessory structure to an ADU?

Yes. Converted ADUs are not subject to size and setback requirements.

## Can I convert a detached accessory structure to a JADU?

No. A JADU must be within the existing main residence.

## Can I build the primary residence, ADU, and JADU at the same time?

Yes, State law allows the construction of a new ADU and/or JADU at the same time a brand-new home is being constructed.

## Do I have to provide parking for the ADU/JADU?

One additional covered or uncovered parking space is required for a new ADU, except if the ADU is located within one-half mile walking distance of public transit. If a garage or carport is being converted to an ADU, the replacement of parking spaces is not required. If a JADU is created within an attached garage, the replacement of parking spaces is not required.

## Does the owner have to live on the property with a JADU?

The owner shall occupy either the main residence or the JADU. An owner occupancy deed restriction is required to be signed and recorded by the owner(s) prior to the Building permit issuance. ADUs are not subject to owner occupancy requirements.

## Can I rent out my ADU or JADU as a Short-Term Rental?

No. Short-term rentals, which are less than 30 consecutive days, are prohibited for ADUs and JADUs.

## How can I start my process applying for an ADU permit?

Talk to a planner from City of Vista to verify zoning of your property by contacting (760) 639-6100. When zoning is verified that you can build an ADU on your property, speak to a representative in the Land Development Division to determine if a grading plan is needed, and speak with the Building Division regarding submittal requirements by visiting the Development Services Counter in the Civic Center or phone (760) 639-6108.

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*FOR MORE DETAILED INFORMATION AND REQUIREMENTS REGARDING ADUs AND JADUs, PLEASE REVIEW CITY OF VISTA DEVELOPMENT CODE CHAPTER 18.31 WHICH CAN BE FOUND AT THE CITY'S WEBSITE AT: [DEVE CODE 18.31 ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS - LASERFICHE WEBLINK \(CITYOFVISTA.COM\)](#)*

*THE CITY OF VISTA'S BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION CAN BE FOUND AT  
[638242355208200000 \(CITYOFVISTA.COM\)](tel:638242355208200000)*

*THE CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT – ADU  
HANDBOOK CAN BE FOUND AT [HCD ACCESSORY DWELLING UNIT HANDBOOK \(CA.GOV\)](#)*