



Accessory Dwelling Units Checklist

The intent of this Checklist is to provide a general guideline for the accessory dwelling units. This checklist may not cover all code issues.

Referenced Codes:

- San Francisco Building Code (SFBC)
- San Francisco Existing Building Code (SFEBBC)
- San Francisco Planning Code
- San Francisco Fire Code (SFFC)
- San Francisco Public Works Code (SFPWC)
- San Francisco Mechanical Code (SFMC)
- San Francisco Plumbing Code
- San Francisco Electrical Code (SFEC)
- San Francisco Energy Code
- California Historical Building Code (CHBC)

* Code section referenced is SFBC unless noted otherwise.

	Code Requirements	Code Section	Remark
1.	Applicable codes shall be SF Building Code (SFBC), San Francisco Existing Building Code (SFEBBC), SF Mechanical Code (SFMC), SF Electrical Code (SFEC), SF Plumbing Code, SF Energy Code (SFEC), and SF Planning Code, SF Fire Code (SFFC), San Francisco Public Works Code (SFPWC) and California Historical Building Code (CHBC).		
2.	Number of Trees Required. The Director of DPW shall require one Street Tree for each 20 feet of Street frontage of the property containing the development project, with any remaining fraction of 10 feet or more of frontage requiring an additional Tree. Any existing Street Trees located within the public right-of-way along such property that have been	SFPWC Article 16 Section 806 (d)	

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	protected during construction and that the Director of DPW does not recommended for Removal, shall count toward meeting the requirement. (Please contact Bureau of Urban Forestry at (415) 695-2097)										
3.	<p>Egress from spaces. Rooms, areas or spaces, including mezzanines, within a story or basement shall be provided with the number of exits or access to exits in accordance with this section.</p> <p>Egress based on occupant load and common path of egress travel distance. Two exits or exit access doorways from any space shall be provided where the design occupant load or the common path of egress travel distance exceeds the values listed in Table 1006.2.1.</p> <p>Exceptions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In Group R-2 and R-3 occupancies, one means of egress is permitted within and from individual dwelling units with a maximum occupant load of 20 where the dwelling unit is equipped throughout with an automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1 or 903.3.1.2 and the common path of egress travel does not exceed 125 feet (38 100 mm). 	SFBC Section 1006.2									
4.	<p>Egress from stories or occupied roofs.</p> <p>Egress based on occupant load. Each story and occupied roof shall have the minimum number of exits, or access to exits, as specified in Table 1006.3.1. A single exit or access to a single exit shall be permitted in accordance with Section 1006.3.2. The required number of exits, or exit access stairways or ramps providing access to exits, from any story or occupied roof shall be maintained until arrival at the exit discharge or a public way.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">TABLE 1006.3.1 MINIMUM NUMBER OF EXITS OR ACCESS TO EXITS PER STORY</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="196 1612 1031 1879"> <thead> <tr> <th data-bbox="196 1612 513 1703">OCCUPANT LOAD PER STORY</th> <th data-bbox="513 1612 1031 1703">MINIMUM NUMBER OF EXITS OR ACCESS TO EXITS FROM STORY</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td data-bbox="196 1703 513 1766">1-500</td> <td data-bbox="513 1703 1031 1766">2</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="196 1766 513 1822">501-1,000</td> <td data-bbox="513 1766 1031 1822">3</td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="196 1822 513 1879">More than 1,000</td> <td data-bbox="513 1822 1031 1879">4</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	OCCUPANT LOAD PER STORY	MINIMUM NUMBER OF EXITS OR ACCESS TO EXITS FROM STORY	1-500	2	501-1,000	3	More than 1,000	4	SFBC Section 1006.3.1 1006.3.2 Information Sheet EG-03	
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	Code Requirements	Code Section	Remark
	(For non-sprinklered R-3 three stories or less, see Information Sheet EG-03)		
5.	Sprinkler System Requirements (See Information Sheet No. FS-05)	Information Sheet FS-05	
6.	Local equivalencies for single exit ground floor ADU for projects resulting in Group R2 occupancy. (See Information Sheet No. EG-05)	Information Sheet EG-05	
7.	Gas and electric meters shall be relocated outside the exit passageway or protected in a 1-hour fire rated enclosure. The enclosure cabinet shall meet the requirements of Section E in PG&E's Gas Design Standard (GDS) J-15. PG&E is responsible for the design and final approval of the location for metering facilities. The enclosure cabinet shall not be placed in the minimum width or required capacity of a means of egress component (exit passageway).	PG&E's GDS J-15	
8.	Provide floor plans for the entire building to demonstrate exiting and other issues. The Floor Plans must show all existing rooms adjacent to the dwelling unit to be added. Label the use of each room.		
9.	<p>Provide Site (Plot) Plan: Show the location of existing buildings, other structures on the site, property lines and locations of adjacent streets or alleys.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Show dimensions between dwelling unit walls and property lines. • Show the direction of true North. 		
10.	Minimum ceiling heights. Occupiable spaces, <i>habitable spaces</i> and <i>corridors</i> shall have a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet 6 inches.	SFBC Section 1208.2	
11.	Bathrooms, toilet rooms, kitchens, storage rooms and laundry rooms shall be permitted to have a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet.	SFBC Section 1208.2	

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12.	Ceiling height. The means of egress shall have a ceiling height of not less than 7 feet 6 inches.	SFBC Section 1003.2	
13.	Foundation slab needs to be lowered if (6) (7) or (8) are not met.		
14.	Minimum room widths. Habitable spaces, other than a kitchen, shall be not less than 7 feet in any plan dimensions. Kitchens shall have a clear passageway of not less than 3 feet between counter fronts and appliances or counter fronts and walls.	SFBC Section 1208.1	
15.	Room area. Every dwelling unit shall have no less than one room that shall have not less than 120 square feet of net floor area. Other habitable rooms shall have a net floor area of not less than 70 square feet. Exception: Kitchens are not required to be of a minimum floor area.	SFBC Section 1208.3	
16.	Efficiency Dwelling Units. Efficiency dwelling units shall comply with the following: (1) The unit shall be occupied by no more than two persons and having a living room of not less than 150 square feet of floor area. An additional 100 square feet of floor area shall be provided for each occupant of such unit in excess of two. (2) The unit shall be provided with a separate closet. (3) The unit shall be provided with a kitchen sink, cooking appliance and refrigeration facilities, each having a clear working space of not less than 30 inches in front. Light and ventilation conforming to this code shall be provided. (4) The unit shall be provided with a separate bathroom containing a water closet, lavatory and bathtub or shower. (5) The total area of the unit shall be no less than 220 square feet, which area shall be measured from the inside perimeter of the exterior walls of the unit and shall include closets, bathrooms, kitchen, living, and sleeping areas. (6) Subsections 1-5 apply only to new construction of a	SFBC Section 1208.4	

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	<p>structure or building. For purposes of the preceding sentence, new construction shall mean the creation of an entirely new structure or building and shall not apply to improvement, renovation, rehabilitation, or any other change to an existing structure or building. Existing buildings or structures are subject only to Subsections 1-4 except that for purposes of Subsection 1 the unit shall have a living room of not less than 220 square feet of floor area for up to two occupants.</p>		
<p>17.</p>	<p>Private garages and carports Separation. Separations shall comply with the following:</p> <p>(1) The private garage shall be separate from the dwelling unit and its attic area by means of gypsum board, not less than 5/8-inch in thickness, applied to the garage side. Garages beneath habitable rooms shall be separated from all habitable rooms above by not less than a 5/8-inch (15.9 mm) Type X gypsum board or equivalent and 1/2-inch (12.7 mm) gypsum board applied to structures supporting the separation from habitable rooms above the garage. Door openings between a private garage and the dwelling unit shall be equipped with either solid wood doors or solid or honeycomb core steel doors not less than 1.3/8inches in thickness or doors in compliance with Section 716.5.3 with a fire protection rating of not less than 20 minutes. Openings from a private garage directly into a room used for sleeping purpose shall not be permitted. Doors shall be self-closing and self-latching.</p> <p>(2) Ducts in a private garage and ducts penetrating the walls or ceiling separating the dwelling unit, including its attic area, from the garage shall be constructed of sheet steel of not less than 0.019 inches, in thickness, and shall have no openings into the garage.</p> <p>(3) A separation is not required between a Group R-3 and U carport, provided the carport is entirely open on two or more sides and there are not enclosed areas above.</p>	<p>SFBC Section 406.3.4.</p>	

	Code Requirements	Code Section	Remark
18.	<p>Fire-resistance rating. Horizontal assemblies separating dwelling units in the same building and horizontal assemblies separating sleeping units in the same building shall be a minimum of 1-hour fire-resistance-rated construction.</p>	SFBC Section 711.3	
19.	<p>Noise Insulation Enforcement Procedures. APPLICABILITY. The noise requirements apply only to residential use buildings for which permits were applied after August 22, 1974, i.e. to Form 1 and 2 applications. They do not apply to buildings constructed before 1974 in which new units are created through alterations, additions or change of use.</p>	Administrative Bulletin AB-026	
20.	<p>Section 1030 Emergency Escape and Rescue</p> <p>1030.1 General. In addition to the means of egress required by this chapter, provisions shall be made for emergency escape and rescue openings in Group R occupancies. Basements and sleeping rooms below the fourth story above grade plane shall have at least one exterior emergency escape and rescue opening in accordance with this section. Where basements contain one or more sleeping rooms, emergency escape and rescue openings shall be required in each sleeping room, but shall not be required in adjoining areas of the basement.</p> <p>Such openings shall open directly into a public way or to a yard or court that opens to a public way.</p> <p>Exceptions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In Groups R-1 and R-2 occupancies constructed of Type I, Type IIA, Type IIIA or Type IV construction equipped throughout with an approved automatic sprinkler system in accordance with Section 903.3.1.1. 2. Basements with a ceiling height of less than 80 inches (2032 mm) shall not be required to have emergency escape and rescue openings. 3. Emergency escape and rescue openings are not required from basements or sleeping rooms that have an exit door or exit access door that opens directly into a public way or to a yard, court or exterior exit balcony 	SFBC Section 1030 Information Sheet EG-03	

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	<p>that opens to a public way.</p> <p>4. Basements without habitable spaces and having not more than 200 square feet (18.6 m²) in floor area shall not be required to have emergency escape and rescue openings.</p> <p>1030.2 Minimum size. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall have a minimum net clear opening of 5.7 square feet (0.53 m²).</p> <p>Exception: The minimum net clear opening for grade-floor emergency escape and rescue openings shall be 5 square feet (0.46 m²).</p> <p>1030.2.1 Minimum dimensions. The minimum net clear opening height dimension shall be 24 inches (610 mm). The minimum net clear opening width dimension shall be 20 inches (508 mm). The net clear opening dimensions shall be the result of normal operation of the opening.</p> <p>1030.3 Maximum height from floor. Emergency escape and rescue openings shall have the bottom of the clear opening not greater than 44 inches (1118 mm) measured from the floor.</p> <p>(For R3, also see Information Sheet no. EG-03)</p>		
21.	<p>Landings shall have a width not less than the width of the stairway or the door, whichever is greater. Doors in the fully open position shall not reduce a required dimension by more than 7 inches. When a landing serves an occupant load of 50 or more, doors in any position shall not reduce the landing less than one-half its required width. Landings shall have a length measured in the direction of travel not less than 44 inches.</p>	SFBC Section 1010.1.6	
22.	<p>Habitable rooms (excluding kitchens, home offices and media rooms) within a dwelling unit or congregate residence shall be provided with natural light by means of exterior glazed openings in accordance with Section 1205.2.</p>	SFBC Section 1205.1 Exception	

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23.	<p>Natural light. The minimum net glazed area shall be not less than 8% of the floor area of the room served.</p> <p>Adjoining spaces. For the purpose of natural lighting, any room is permitted to be considered as a portion of an adjoining room where one-half of the area of the common wall is open and unobstructed and provides an opening of not less than one-tenth of the floor area of the interior room or 25 square feet, whichever is greater.</p>	SFBC Section 1205.2 1205.2.1	
24.	Stairways within dwelling units and exterior stairways serving a dwelling unit shall have an illumination level on tread runs of not less than 1 foot-candle.	SFBC Section 1205.4	
25.	Provide natural ventilation (4% of floor area) or a mechanical system for all habitable rooms.	SFBC Section 1203.5.1	
26.	Enclosed attic & enclosed rafter spaces shall have cross ventilation not be less than 1/150 of the area of the ventilated space. A minimum of 1" airspace shall be provided between insulation and the roof sheathing.	SFBC Section 1203.2	
27.	<p>Garage and carports.</p> <p>Ventilations shall be provided as follows: Natural ventilations shall be required, and such space shall be provided with ventilation outlets in the walls or exterior doors. The total net area of such ventilation outlets shall be 200 square inches for a space up to 1,000 square feet in area and shall be increased 30 square inches for each additional 200 square feet of floor area up to maximum floor area of 3,000 square feet.</p>	SFBC Section 406.3.3	
28.	Indicate the location of attic access.		
29.	Sleepers and sill plates on concrete or masonry in direct contact with the earth shall be of naturally durable or preservative-treated wood.	SFBC Section 2304.12.1.4	

	Code Requirements	Code Section	Remark
30.	Wood framing members, including wood sheathing, that rest on exterior foundation walls and are less than 8 inches from exposed earth shall be of naturally durable or preservative-treated wood.	SFBC Section 2304.12.1.2	
31.	Exiting through the garage area shall meet all requirements of Administrative Bulletin AB-020.	AB-020	
32.	Fire-resistance rating requirement for exterior walls based on fire separation distance shall meet requirements of Table 602.	SFBC Section Table 602	
33.	Openings in exterior walls shall comply with Sections 705.8.1 through 705.8.6.	SFBC Section 705.8	
34.	Approval of New Openings in New and Existing Building Property Line Walls shall meet requirements of Administrative Bulletin AB-009.	Administrative Bulletin AB-009	
35.	Bathrooms. Rooms containing bathtubs, showers, spa and similar bathing fixtures shall be mechanically ventilated in accordance with the California Mechanical Code.	SFBC Section 1203.4.2.1	
36.	Energy. New units will be reviewed for compliance with the California Energy Code.	California Energy Code	
37.	Access Compliance. All publicly funded buildings used for congregate residences or for one- or two-family dwelling unit purposes shall conform to the provisions applicable to living accommodations.	SFBC Section 1.9.1.1.3 Chapters 11A & 11B	
38.	Carbon monoxide alarms. When a permit is required for alterations, repairs or additions with a total cost or calculated valuation exceeding \$1,000, existing dwellings or sleeping units with a fossil fuel-burning heater or appliance, fireplace or an attached garage shall have a carbon monoxide alarm installed in accordance with Section 420.6.2. Carbon monoxide alarms shall only be required in the specific dwelling unit or sleeping unit for which the permit was obtained.	SFBC Section 420.6.2.2	

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39.	<p>Smoke alarms. When the valuation of an addition, alteration or repair to a Group R Occupancy exceeds \$1,000 and a permit is required, or when one or more sleeping rooms are added or created in existing Group R Occupancies, smoke alarms shall be installed in accordance with Section 907.</p>	SFEBC Section 401.5	
40.	<p>Preliminary review by Plumbing Inspection Division. Call 558-6570 as required.</p>	San Francisco Plumbing Code	
41.	<p>Preliminary review by Electrical Inspection Division. Call 558-6570 as required.</p>	San Francisco Electrical Code	
42.	<p>School Impaction Fee Administration. The California State Legislature had amended School Facilities Fees legislation and exempts any residential addition of less than 500 square feet.</p>	Information Sheet No. G-11	
43.	<p>17912. Rules and regulations promulgated pursuant to the provisions of this part and building standards published in the State Building Standards Code, relating to the erection or construction of buildings or structures, shall not apply to existing buildings or structures or to buildings or structures as to which construction is commenced or approved prior to the effective date of the rules, regulations, or building standards, except by act of the Legislature, but rules, regulations, and building standards relating to use, maintenance, and change of occupancy shall apply to all hotels, motels, lodging houses, apartment houses, and dwellings, or portions thereof, and buildings and structures accessory thereto, approved for construction or constructed before or after the effective date of such rules, regulations, or building standards.</p>	California Health and Safety Code Section 17912	
44.	<p>Planning Requirements (See Information Sheet No. G-23 Section E)</p>	Information Sheet G-23	

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45.	Rent Control Requirements (See Information Sheet No. G-23 Section F)	Information Sheet G-23	
46.	Other.		