

Second Suites Frequently Asked Questions • Last updated: October 29, 2015

Barrie Home Inspector

Note: a Zoning Certificate required prior to or at building permit submission (please refer to question 12).

- a. Apply in person on the 8th Floor of City Hall located at 70 Collier St
- b. Download application via barrie.ca/BuildingPermits

11. What are the building code requirements?

The Building Code provides two different scenarios depending on when your home was constructed. Part 9 of the Building Code applies to new construction, including new dwelling units containing a Second Residential Unit. Part 9 also applies to an addition to your home that is intended to accommodate all or a portion of a proposed Second Residential Unit. If your home is greater than five years old, acceptable alternative design standards are provided within Part 11 of the Building Code. The following tables outline some of the requirements of the Building Code as they relate to Second Residential Units. Alternative Part 11 standards are noted where applicable. All relevant sections of the Building Code apply and in the case of a discrepancy between the tables below and the original text of the Building Code, the Building Code shall apply.

Minimum Room Area	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
Living Room	13.5 m ² (145 sq. ft.)	13.5 m ² (145 sq. ft.)
Living Room combined with a kitchen and a dining area (intended for not more than two persons)	11.0 m ² (118 sq. ft.)	11.0 m ² (118 sq. ft.)
Dining Room	7.0 m ² (75 sq. ft.)	7.0 m ² (75 sq. ft.)
Dining Room if combined with other spaces	3.25 m ² (35 sq. ft.)	3.25 m ² (35 sq. ft.)
Kitchen Area	4.2 m ² (45 sq. ft.)	4.2 m ² (45 sq. ft.)
Master Bedroom	9.8 m ² (105 sq. ft.)	9.8 m ² (105 sq. ft.)
Bedroom	7.0 m ² (75 sq. ft.)	7.0 m ² (75 sq. ft.)
Bathroom	Sufficient space to accommodate a toilet, sink, and bathtub or shower stall.	Sufficient space to accommodate a toilet, sink, and bathtub or shower stall
Minimum Room Heights	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
Living Room	2.3 m (7'-7") over at least 75% of the required floor area with a clear height of 2.1 m (6'-11') at any point	Minimum 1950 mm (6'-4 3/4") over the required floor area. This is the minimum height required in a means of egress.
Living Room combined with a kitchen and a dining area		
Dining Room		
Dining Room if combined with other spaces		
Kitchen Area		
Master Bedroom		
Bedroom	Clear height of 2.1 m (6'-11") at any point	
Minimum Window (Light) Area	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
Living Room	10% of area served	5% of area served
Dining Room	10% of area served	5% of area served
Kitchen Area	No window required	No window required
Master Bedroom	5% of area served	2.5% of area served
Bedroom	5% of area served	2.5% of area served
Smoke Alarm	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
Each sleeping room	Interconnected (i.e. between units) smoke alarms are required with visual component	Independent battery-operated alarms are required with visual component
Common area of suite	Interconnected (i.e. between units) smoke alarms are required with visual component	Independent battery-operated alarms are required with visual component
Plumbing Facilities	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
	Provide Washroom with toilet, basin and/or tub/shower stall	Provide Washroom with toilet, basin and/or tub/shower stall

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	Provide kitchen sink Provide laundry hook in suite or in common area of property	Provide kitchen sink Provide laundry hook in suite or in common area of property
Heating Systems	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
	Principal and Second Residential Unit require separate heating systems	Existing system may service both units; a smoke detector must be installed in the supply or return air duct which would turn off the fuel supply and electrical power to the heating system when triggered
Ventilation	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
	Provide mechanical or natural ventilation	Provide mechanical or natural ventilation
Fire separations	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
	45 minute fire separation (e.g. 5/8" type 'X' drywall)	30 minute fire separation (e.g. 5/8" type "x" drywall) OR 15 minute fire separation (e.g. 1/2" type "c" drywall) OR Smoke seal (sprinkler building)
	All supporting structures (columns, beams, arches) to be same rating as what they support.	
Dimensions of Means of Egress	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
Width (in suite) Hallway	900mm (2'-11 7/8")	800mm (2'-7 7/8")
Width (shared areas)	1100mm (3'-7 5/16")	800mm (2'-7 7/8")
Height of above hallway means of egress	2100mm (6'-10 5/8")	Minimum 1950 mm (6'-4 3/4")
Width of Stairs in suite	860mm (2'-9 7/8")	700mm (2'-3 9/16")
Height over stairs/landings	1950mm (6'-4 3/4") serving single unit 2050mm (6'-8 11/16") (shared stair)	1800mm 5'-10 7/8"
Width of shared stairs	900mm (2'-11 7/8")	700mm 2'-3 9/16"
Landings as wide as stair and length not less than	860mm (2'-9 7/8")	860mm (2'-9 7/8")
Guards	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
	To meet current requirements	Existing acceptable unless Chief Building Official considers them unsafe
	It is beneficial to all to have handrails and guards meet current standards	
Egress Window	Houses Less than five years old	House greater than 5 years old
Unless the floor level has DIRRECT ACCESS TO EXERIOR (e.g. if bedrooms are in basement with no direct access to grade) all floor levels shall have one window that meets the following requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Openable area of NOT less than 0.35m² (3.8 sq. ft.) • No dimension less than 380mm (15") • Remain open without additional support • NO specialized knowledge required to open (e.g. keys, tools) • If opens into window well 550mm (1'-9 5/8") clearance 	

12. What are the steps involved with getting approval?

Step 1: Obtain a Zoning Compliance Certificate

A Zoning Compliance Certificate confirms the second suite is a permitted use and the use complies with zoning standards. The certificate can be obtained from Planning Services:

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Planning Services Department
 City Hall, 1st Floor
 70 Collier Street Barrie, ON L4M 4T5
 Phone: (705) 739-4208 • Fax: (705) 739-4270 • planning@barrie.ca
 Hours: 8:30am–4:30pm, Monday–Friday

Step 2: Obtain a Building Permit or Change of Use Permit

A Building Permit or Change of Use Permit can be obtained from Building Services and confirms compliance with:

- Fire prevention via electrical safety inspection
- Fire detection and alarm system for early warning
- Fire escape for exiting
- Fire containment with rated fire separation between units

Download application via barrie.ca/BuildingPermits or contact:

Building Services Department
 70 Collier Street, P.O. Box 400, Barrie, ON L4M 4T5
 Phone: (705) 739-4212 • Fax: (705) 739-4240 • building@barrie.ca
 Hours: 8:30am–4:30pm, Monday–Friday

If the second suite was created prior to 1996:

- Section 9.8 of the Ontario Fire Code sets construction standards.
- Barrie Fire & Emergency Service will conduct an inspection and confirm as-built compliance.
- Any deficiencies involving construction will require a Building Permit.

If the second suite was created after 1996 and the area is already finished space:

- A qualified person must evaluate the existing construction for compliance with Part 10 of the Building Code.
- The compliance report noting all necessary upgrades must be submitted with an application for a Change of Use Permit.
- When a permit is issued, upgrades, if required, must be completed and inspected.

If the second suite does not yet exist and the space is unfinished:

- A qualified person must design the required construction for compliance with Part 9 of the Building Code.
- The construction plans must be submitted with an application for a Building Permit.
- When the permit is issued, construction can commence.
- Inspections are required at specified stages of construction.

Step 3: Obtain a Registration Certificate from By-law Services

Registration Certificates can be obtained from By-law Services upon completion of steps 1 & 2:

By-law Services
 45 Cedar Pointe Drive
 Phone: (705) 739-4241 • Fax: (705) 739-4279
 Hours: 8:30am–4:30pm, Monday–Friday

13. What will this cost?

The fees are primarily determined by the age of the second suite and dependent on what inspections will be necessary: currently the registration fee is \$205.00 (additional inspection fees may be applicable). The cost of submitting an application to the Planning Services Department for a Zoning Certificate is \$133.00, additional fees may be applicable. The Fire Code inspection fee, as set out by the City of Barrie Fee By-Law which covers your initial inspection and one re-inspection should there be

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deficiencies that need to be brought into compliance. If additional re-inspections are required to bring the property into compliance the general fire inspection fee will apply. Fees are billed to the applicant and payment is required upon receipt of an invoice. Units created within the recent two year period under a building permit do not need a Fire Code inspection. A Change of Use Permit with construction will cost \$8.45/m² with a minimum fee of \$145.00. A Change of Use Permit without construction will cost \$2.05/m² with a minimum fee of \$145.00. Fee covers the cost of Building Inspections. The Property Standards inspection fee of \$278.00 as set out in the City of Barrie Fee By-Law covers the cost of your initial inspection and follow-up inspection(s) to a maximum of two (2) working hours. Units created within the recent two year period under a building permit do not need a Property Standards inspection. Development charges may also be applicable, for confirmation please contact the Finance Department located on the first floor of City Hall.