



Standard Practice

Building Services Division: Ontario Building Code

Subject Title:	Secondary Suite Interpretation
Standard Practice No:	SP.OBC.23.28
Date Issued:	May 30, 2023
Date Revised:	June 2, 2023
BCA Reference:	1.1(6)(a)

A. Purpose

The purpose of this standard practice is to provide guidance to Building staff when receiving building permit applications, reviewing plans, and inspecting buildings to determine the intended use of the space and if the space is considered a secondary suite.

B. Background and Definitions

“Accessory Apartment”: has the same meaning as *Secondary Suite*

“Bedroom”: a room or area used, designed, equipped, or intended for sleeping; which contains a closet and a window.

“Cooking Appliance”: means equipment for food preparation, such as a hot plate, microwave, toaster, toaster oven, oven, or stove.

“Dwelling Unit”: means a suite operated as a *housekeeping unit*, used, or intended to be used by one or more persons and usually containing cooking, eating, living, sleeping and *sanitary facilities*.

“Food Preparation”: the activity of acquiring raw ingredients and making them ready for consumption through the process of cooking, heating, or refrigeration and is located in an area that contains a *cooking appliance*, refrigerator, and sink.

“House”: means a detached house, semi-detached house or row house containing not more than two *dwelling units*.

“Housekeeping Unit”: a room or group of rooms forming a single habitable space intended to be used for living, sleeping, cooking, and eating.

“Sanitary Facilities”: designated areas that includes a kitchen sink, toilet, lavatory and tub and/or shower.

“Secondary Suite”: a self-contained living accommodation for an additional person or persons living together as a separate single *housekeeping unit*, in which both *food preparation* and *sanitary facilities* are provided for the exclusive use of the occupants of the suite, located in a house or accessory building.

“Sleeping Room”: has the same meaning as *bedroom*.

C. Standard Practice

This standard practice recognizes that *secondary suites* are permitted within new and existing *houses* and accessory buildings. A maximum of three *secondary suites* are permitted on a lot zoned R1 or R2 in the Town of The Blue Mountains Zoning By-law 2018-65. *Secondary Suites* shall comply with the provisions in Section 4.1 of the Zoning By-law.

Residential buildings defined as a *secondary suite* under this standard shall be designed and constructed in accordance with the regulations in the Ontario Building Code.

The following criteria shall be used to determine if a proposed design meets the definition of a *secondary suite*.

1. A space containing or designed to accommodate a *cooking appliance* is considered a *food preparation* area. The installation or rough-in installation of an electrical or gas connection for a stove or oven is considered a *cooking appliance*.
2. The installation or rough-in installation of a single compartment or two compartment sink, bar sink or food preparation sink is considered a kitchen sink for the purpose of defining a *sanitary facility*.
3. A space that contains a toilet, sink and tub and/or shower shall be considered a bathroom for the purpose of defining a *sanitary facility*.
4. A home office, library, den, or similar room that contains a closet and a window shall be considered an area used for sleeping for the purpose of defining a *housekeeping unit*.
5. Means of egress from a *secondary suite* may be provided by a direct exclusive access to the exterior, shared protected exit or egress through another dwelling unit.

The Chief Building Official, or designate may grant exceptions if an area, by its design, cannot function as a *secondary suite*.

D. Reference Information

The Ontario Building Code

The Town of The Blue Mountains Zoning By-law 2018-65

E. Review Cycle

This standard practice will be reviewed annually by the Chief Building Official and updated if required

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