



Accessory Structures

Estate Residential and Low Density Residential Zones

ACCESSORY STRUCTURES

A variety of accessory structures are permitted on lots developed with single-family homes. Accessory structures can be attached or detached, but must be incidental and subordinate to the main residence. Examples of accessory structures include guest houses, patio covers, sheds, detached garages, and accessory living quarters (second unit housing).

The information contained within this handout is a summary of regulations related to accessory structures. Please refer to the Laguna Hills Municipal Code (LHMC), which is available on the City's website, for additional standards that may apply to your project. The regulations for accessory living quarters and other accessory structures can be found in **LHMC 9-68** and **LHMC 9-70** respectively. Additionally, some regulations relating to accessory structures can be found in **LHMC 9-40** (Design Regulations). Prior to beginning a design for your project, it is recommended that you contact the City's Planning Department to discuss your project.

Planning Department

(949) 707-2672
www.lagunahillsca.gov

Planning Counter Hours

Monday - Thursday: 1:00 PM - 5:30 PM
Friday: 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM

SHEDS and STORAGE STRUCTURES

- Shall not exceed 15 feet in height.
- Permitted only in the rear yard (anywhere behind the principle dwelling).
- Must be set back at least 3 feet from side and rear property lines.

FIRE PITS and BBQs

- Can be located anywhere on a lot except within the front yard setback.
- Must be set back at least 3 feet from side and rear property lines.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

Unless the Code allows otherwise, accessory structures (attached or detached) must comply with the development standards of the zone in which they are located (see table below). In addition, detached accessory structures are not permitted within the front 50 feet of the lot or the front one-half of any building site, whichever is less. Some accessory structures are permitted to encroach into required setbacks. Development standards specific to different types of accessory structures are listed under that structure in this handout. If the accessory structure you are planning is not listed, contact a planner and let us help you determine the requirements for that structure.

| Development Standards | ER | LDR |
|---|----------|----------|
| Lot Coverage—Maximum | 35% | 35% |
| F.A.R—Maximum | N/A | 0.55 |
| Height—Maximum | 35 feet | 35 feet |
| Setbacks | | |
| Front | 20 feet | 20 feet |
| Interior Side | 8 feet | 5 feet |
| Street Side | 10 feet | 10 feet |
| Rear | 25 feet | 20 feet |
| Building Separation—Minimum | 2.5 feet | 2.5 feet |
| *Additional development standards can be found in the LHMC chapters 9-12 and 9-14 | | |

ACCESSORY LIVING QUARTERS

Accessory living quarters (ALQs) is an accessory structure (attached or detached) that contains a separate dwelling unit (usually these quarters are characterized by kitchen facilities). All development standards for the zone apply to ALQs. The following standards apply to ALQs:

- ALQs cannot be sold independently of the primary residence, but may be rented.
- ALQs may only be built upon a lot with at least, but not more than, one single-family dwelling unit.
- In general, ALQs shall not exceed 1,200 square feet of floor area.
- One parking space is required (unless the property meets the standards for exemption) in addition to the parking required for the main dwelling.
- The property owner must reside in either the main dwelling or the accessory living quarters.
- The property owner shall record a use restriction with the Orange County Recorder's Office setting forth the limitations associated with the accessory living quarters (see LHMC 9-68).

PATIO COVERS, AWNINGS and GAZEBOS

- Different owners and designers call these items by many different names. Other structures may fall into the patio cover category such as a loggia, open cabana, lanai, etc.
- Patio covers, awnings, and gazebos are permitted to encroach into rear and side setbacks in accordance with the table below.
- If encroaching into setback areas, these structures shall not exceed 15 feet in height and shall not be enclosed by walls or other materials (glass, screens, etc).
- No more than 25% or the required rear setback area shall be covered with patio covers, awnings, gazebos, or similar structures.

| | Max projection into side setback | Max projection into rear setback | Min distance from side PL | Min distance from rear PL |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| Patio covers, gazebos, and similar structures | 2 feet 6 inches | 15 feet | 3 feet | 10 feet |
| Awnings (no vertical support structures) | 2 feet 6 inches | 3 feet | 3 feet | Rear setback minus 3 feet |

GUEST HOUSES

- A guest house is any structure intended to house the guests of the owner or occupant of the primary dwelling.
- Guest houses may not encroach into setback areas.
- Guest houses may be up to 400 square feet in size, and may contain a bedroom, bathroom, and sitting area, but not a kitchen.
- Guest houses must be constructed in design, materials, and finishes similar to the main structure.

DETACHED GARAGES and CARPORTS

- May encroach into side and rear setback areas; Minimum distance between property line and structure wall/support is 3 feet (12 inch eave permitted).
- Shall not exceed 15 feet in height.
- Detached garages and carports facing an alley shall be set back from the property line such that the setback in conjunction with the width of the alley creates an aisle way of not less than 24 feet.

POOLS, SPAS, and POOL EQUIPMENT

- Shall not be located within the front setback.
- Pools and spas shall be no less than 3 feet from side and rear property lines (measured from water edge).
- Pools and spas shall be no less than 5 feet from the residential structure (measured from water edge).
- Pool equipment must be at least 5 feet from side and rear property lines and at least 25 feet from any opening (door or window) in residential structures on abutting lots.
- For water slides and other play equipment associated with a pool, see requirements for game courts and play equipment.

GAME COURTS and PLAY EQUIPMENT

- May encroach into rear setbacks, but shall not be located within front or side setbacks.
- Must be at least three feet from the rear property line.
- Fences, other than property line fences, used to surround the game court shall not exceed 15 feet in height.

