

Secondary Suite means a self-contained, accessory dwelling unit located within a principle single-detached dwelling or in an accessory building on the same parcel as the single-detached dwelling. A secondary suite has its own separate cooking, sleeping and bathing facilities. It has direct access to the outside without passing through any part of the principal unit. A secondary suite does not include a duplex.

As per the Zoning Bylaw, secondary suites are only allowed within an R2, R4, RM1 and RM2 zone and must comply with the following zoning regulations as illustrated in section 4.1:

- .1 No more than one secondary suite is permitted per principal single-detached dwelling. The secondary suite is permitted within the single-detached dwelling or within an accessory building on the same parcel as a single-detached dwelling.
- .2 A secondary suite is not permitted within a duplex, on a parcel containing a duplex, or within an accessory building on the same parcel as a duplex.
- .3 A secondary suite is not permitted in conjunction with the keeping of boarders or the operation of a bed and breakfast.
- .4 The maximum floor area of a secondary suite must not exceed the lesser of 90 m² (969 ft²), or 40% of the gross floor area of the principal building.
- .5 The secondary suite must meet *BC Building Code* requirements for secondary suites.
- .6 The owner of the secondary suite is required to hold a valid business license with the City of Fort St. John.
- .7 One parking space must be provided on the parcel for the secondary suite.
- .8 A secondary dwelling unit shall be located in buildings and on a parcel which forms a single real estate entity. No strata titling is permitted.
- .9 The principal single-detached dwelling on the parcel containing the secondary suite must be occupied by the owner of the principal single-detached dwelling.

As per the current BC Building Code

- .1 The minimum height of rooms or spaces in a secondary suite over the required minimum area shall be not less than 2.0 m (6'7").
- .2 Exit stairs within or serving a building which contains a secondary suite shall have a minimum width, measured between wall faces or guards, of not less than 860 mm (34").

As per the current BC Building Code continued...

- .3 Handrails and guards shall conform to the requirements of the *BC Building Code* as if serving only one dwelling unit.
- .4 The width of every public corridor and exit corridor that serves a building which contains a secondary suite shall be not less than 860 mm (34").
- .5 Dwelling units in a building which contains a secondary suite shall be separated from each other by:
 - a. a 45 minute fire separation,
 - b. a fire separation having a fire-resistance rating of not less than 30 min. where the dwelling units are equipped with interconnected photo-electric smoke alarms
 - c. a fire separation having no required fire resistance rating where the building is sprinklered.
- .6 Every exit other than an exit doorway shall be separated from adjacent floor areas by a fire separation:
 - a. having a fire resistance rating of 45 minutes, or
 - b. having a fire-resistance rating of not less than 30 minutes where the dwelling units are equipped with interconnected photo-electric smoke alarms.
 - c. a fire resistance rating is not required for a fire separation which separates an exit from adjacent floor areas where the building is sprinklered.
- .7 Where an unenclosed exterior exit stair or ramp provides the only means of egress from a dwelling unit in a building that contains a secondary suite and the stair is exposed to the hazards of fire from unprotected openings in the exterior wall of another fire compartment, the openings shall be protected by wired glass or glass block as per *BC Building Code*.
- .8 Each dwelling unit shall be provided with a second and separate means of egress or an opening window conforming to the *BC Building Code*.
- .9 All piping (combustible water, waste, drain or vent piping) may penetrate fire separations if it is fire stopped and meets maximum diameter sizing.
- .10 Heating and ventilation systems between suites must be separate or be designed by a mechanical engineer.

The above regulations outline the general requirements for the construction of Secondary Suites. For further detail on the BC Building Code requirements for Secondary Suites, refer to the current BC Building Code section 9.36.