

## Extracts from: National Building Code-2019 Alberta Edition (NBC(AE)) Division B Secondary Suite construction requirements

*Secondary suite* means a second self-contained *dwelling unit* that is located within a primary *dwelling unit*, where both *dwelling units* are registered under the same land title.

*Dwelling unit* means a *suite* operated as a housekeeping unit...usually containing cooking, eating, living, sleeping and sanitary facilities.

*Service room* typically includes boiler rooms, furnace rooms, rooms to accommodate air-conditioning or heating appliances, electrical equipment, etc. for building services. Fuel-fired laundry appliances require a similar room.

**For much more information, see the [Secondary Suite Design Guide](#). The following is a brief summary.**

**Ensure the following construction requirements are communicated on plan.**

- If the only egress door is from a bedroom/combined bedroom and is exposed to a window from the other suite or common area, see 9.9.4. for protection of openings near egress doors.
- If the only egress door from a dwelling unit above another is exposed to a window/hazard from the other dwelling unit or the common area, see 9.9.9.3. for shared egress facilities.
- Sufficient power is provided for the principal dwelling and the secondary suite (Load calculation submitted).
- Access to exit from each dwelling unit is not through the other dwelling unit or a service room.
- A separate heating/ventilation system (eg., separate forced air furnace, or radiant heat with HRV) must serve each dwelling unit, and shall not be interconnected / ducted with the remainder of the house.
- Exhaust laundry-drying machine, kitchen and bathroom per 9.32.3.7.
- Sound absorbing material (eg., batt insulation) is to be installed in walls and floor-ceiling assemblies between the suite and the principal dwelling, and suite and non-suite space where noise may be generated (eg., shared laundry). Min 6" batts in the ceiling but take care to not block return air runs; fill wall cavities. Install resilient channel (sound-bar) on at least one side of walls and on the underside of the floor-ceiling assembly.
- Underside of floor-ceiling assemblies and both sides of wall/partition framing are to be protected by a continuous smoke-tight barrier of minimum 12.7mm (½") thick standard gypsum board to separate
  - each dwelling unit from the other dwelling unit;
  - each dwelling unit from ancillary spaces not within the dwelling unit (storage rooms, washrooms, toilet rooms, laundry rooms and service rooms) and common spaces;
  - each room, including any within the dwelling unit, containing fuel-fired space-heating appliances, fuel-fired space-cooling appliances, fuel-fired service water heaters and fuel-fired laundry appliances (i.e., gas dryer), from the remainder of the building;
  - any common space including public (multi-tenant) corridor or exit from the building.
- Doors in smoke-tight barriers are to be of solid-core wood, min 45 mm thick, with self-closer.
- Every entry door into either dwelling unit is to be provided with deadbolt lock [9.7.5.2.(1), (4),(10)]. This includes any Direct Access Door communicating between the dwelling units, which will have a separate deadbolt from each side, per 9.7.5.2.(1)(a), not using a common key so that mutual agreement is required for the door between the two dwellings to be unsecured.
- Smoke alarms: to be hardwired and interconnected between all of the following:
  - dwelling units (in each bedroom AND in hallway / between the bedrooms and floor area);
  - ancillary spaces (storage, washrooms, laundry room, service rooms) not within dwelling unit; and
  - common spaces including interior shared means of egress.
- Where the house has an attached garage or any fuel-burning appliances (gas furnace, etc), CO alarms to be interconnected between all of the following:
  - dwelling units (in each bedroom OR in hallway/ within 5m of bedroom doors);
  - service rooms with gas-fired appliances not contained within dwelling unit; and
  - any room with a solid-fuel-burning appliance (e.g., wood-burning fireplace or stove).