



HILLTOWN TOWNSHIP

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Does Hilltown Township allow In-Law Suites or Dwellings

Per the Hilltown Township Zoning Ordinance, in-law suites, apartments and/or dwelling are permitted in all zoning districts in the township (except the AQRC district**) as an accessory use to a legally existing Single-Family Dwelling.

The in-law dwelling may be attached to the main house or contained in a separated accessory building. The in-law dwelling may have its own kitchen, laundry room, etc., or it may share facilities with the main dwelling.

The major considerations are:

- The floor area of the in-law dwelling may only total 50% of the living area of the principal (main) dwelling. So, if you have 2000 sq. ft of living area in the main dwelling, you may ***add*** a single in-law dwelling containing up to 1000 sq. ft.
- If you have an on-lot septic system, you are required to get approval of the Bucks County Health Department (215-529-7000). If you are connected to public sewage system, you are required to secure approval from your public sewage provider.
- An accessory Family Residence may not be located in a basement.

“What if, - what if, - what if...”; it doesn’t matter, when the project is completed, no matter how an applicant goes about it, - in the end, the in-law dwelling may only total 50% of the living area of the principal (main) dwelling.

A Zoning Permit is required, and a Building Permit is required (just as if you were doing any other type of addition). Building Plans, residential setbacks, impervious surface, stormwater management, etc., all apply just as though the project were any other residential addition/conversion project.

The Accessory Dwelling may only be occupied by a legitimate family member. The Accessory Dwelling ***may not*** be utilized as a ‘for-profit apartment’

The full text of the zoning ordinance Section 160-23.I(2)(b) follows:

Accessory Family Residence. [revised 6/25/2007 by Ordinance 2007-007] One residence accessory to a single-family detached dwelling shall be permitted. The intent of these provisions is to allow for related family members and any required healthcare workers to reside on the premises, but to prohibit the creation of for-profit apartments in districts where multifamily housing is not otherwise permitted.

- [1] The use shall occupy an area the size of which is no more than 50% of the area of the principal residence.
- [2] Occupancy of such use shall include only the following relatives of the family occupying the principal residence: children (issue and stepchildren), parents (natural parents, stepparents and in-law parents), brothers, sisters or their children, grandparents, uncles, aunts or children of uncles or aunts.
- [3] The use shall be part of the principal residence or may be contained in an accessory structure. The accessory family residence shall not be located in basements.
- [4] Only one (1) accessory family residence shall be permitted per single-family detached dwelling.
- [5] The owner of the principal residence shall provide to the Township evidence of approval by the Bucks County Board of Health for the additional use.
- [6] One (1) off-street parking space shall be provided for the additional use.

** The AQRC district is a very specific zone that encompasses an Age Qualified Residential Community; it is extremely unlikely that this situation would even arise; however, in the AQRC district, accessory in-law dwellings are allowed as a Conditional Use.