



MIDLAND PENETANGUISHENE BUILDING SERVICES



General Building Code requirements for adding a Secondary Unit to a Single Family Dwelling

The follow items are the bulk of items to be checked when converting a single dwelling into a duplex and/or a secondary unit. Every application is different and there may be other items to consider. Based on 2012 version of the Ontario Building Code, Division B

Where compliance cannot be attained through OBC Part 9, OBC Part 11 can be utilized if the dwelling has been in existence for 5 years or more. See Italicized text below for Part 11 requirements.

Fire Protection

- A minimum of a 45 minute fire separation is required between units. 9.10.9.14. *30 min acceptable. Part 11 - C152*
- Structural elements supporting fire rated assemblies need to have a 45 minute fire resistance rating. 9.10.8.3. *30 min acceptable. Part 11 – C147*
- A wall and floor assembly separating furnace or other common spaces requires a 45 min. fire resistance rating. 9.10.9.14. & 9.10.9.15. *30 min acceptable. Part 11 - C152*
- A shared exit enclosure needs to have a 45 minute fire separation from the rest of the building. 9.9.4.2. *30 min acceptable. Part 11 - C121*
- All penetrations including piping, tubing, ducts, chimneys, wiring, conduit, electrical boxes and other similar service equipment through fire separations need to be tightly fitted or fire stopped. 9.10.9.6.(1)
- Combustible piping is not allowed to penetrate a fire separation unless it is sealed at the penetration by a firestop system with an F rating equal to the require fire resistance rating of the assembly. 9.10.9.7. *Existing acceptable in existing fire separations. Part 11 - C148*
- Openings in wall or ceiling membrane that form part of a fire separation are permitted for electrical wires and tightly fitted outlet boxes 9.10.5.1.(2).
- Ceiling with a fire resistance rating can have an opening leading to ducts, maximum size of opening 20 in². 9.10.5.1.(4). *Existing openings allowed. Part 11 – C144*
- Every unit requires smoke alarms. Installed in each bedroom and between bedroom and remainder of suite. All smoke alarms to be interconnected. 9.10.19. *Smoke alarm may be battery operated. Part 11 – C175*
- If suite has attached garage or fuel burning appliance a carbon monoxide detector is required outside bedrooms. 9.33.4.2. *Carbon monoxide detector may be battery operated or plug into outlet. Part 11 – C197*
- The maximum flame spread rating of wall finishes is 150. Drywall meets this requirement but paneling does not. 9.10.17.1.

Sound Transmission Rating

- ❑ Wall and floor assemblies separating the two dwelling units are to have at least a 50 Sound Transmission Class Rating. 9.11.2.1.

Rooms Sizes

- ❑ Ceiling heights to comply with Table 9.5.3.1.

Living or Dining Room or Kitchen	2.3 m (7'-6") over at least 75% of floor area with 2.1 m (6'-10") min. at any one point
Bedroom	2.3 m (7'-6") over at least 50% of floor area with 2.1 m (6'-10") over all required floor area. Any part less than 1.4m (4'-7") not included when calculation the required floor area
Bathroom or Laundry (above grade)	2.1 m (6'-10") any area where someone is standing
Hall, Vestibule or any other room	2.1 m (6'-10")

Minimum room height 1.95 m (6'-5") over required floor area and any area used for means of egress or 2.03 m (6'-8") over 50% of required floor area, any part of floor area less than 1.4m (4'-7") is not included in floor area. Part 11 – C102

- ❑ A hallway or stair that is used by more than one unit must have a minimum width of 900mm (2'-11") and height of 2050mm (6'-9") 9.8.2.2.(1)(a)(ii). *Existing stairs are permitted to be 700mm (2'-4") wide and have a minimum ceiling height of 1800mm (5'-11"). Part 11 – C109*
- ❑ Hallways within the units to be 860mm (2'-10") wide minimum. Hallways may be reduced to 710mm (2'-4") if hallway only serves bedrooms and bathroom or if there is a second exit at end of hall. 9.5.10.1.
- ❑ Rooms are to meet the following minimum areas
 - Living Rooms 13.5 m² (145 ft²)
 - Dining Rooms 7.0 m² (75 ft²)
 - Kitchens 4.2 m² (45 ft²)
 - Master Bedroom 8.8 m² (95 ft²) with built in closets
 - Other Bedrooms 6.0 m² (65 ft²) with built in closetsThese areas can vary when spaces are combined

Windows

- ❑ The Living Room window must be equal in size to 10% of living area. Bedroom windows must be equal in size to 5% of the bedroom floor area. Table 9.7.2.3.
Windows size may be reduced by 50%, if window is not used as means of egress or they do not conflict with ventilation requirements. See Part 11 – C107

Mechanical, Electrical and Plumbing

- ❑ Unless a Dwelling unit is 5 years or older one heating system cannot serve multiple units with interconnected duct work. 6.2.3.9. *If an existing system serves multiple units a smoke detector must be installed in the return or supply air duct system that would turn off fuel or electric supply when activated. Part 11 – C91. Conversion from electric baseboard to gas heating may result in multiple heating units.*
- ❑ Every Kitchen and Bathroom requires exhaust fan discharging to the exterior. 9.32.3.5. (2) *Natural ventilation is acceptable, conforming to 9.32.2. Part 11 C194*
- ❑ A hallway or stairwell that is used by more than one unit must have emergency lighting. 9.9.12.3.
- ❑ Lighting is required for all stairs. 9.34.2.3.
- ❑ An exterior light is required at every exterior entrance. 9.34.2.1.
- ❑ Every unit must have a kitchen sink, bathroom sink, toilet and bathtub or shower. 9.31.4.1.
- ❑ Laundry facilities or space for laundry is to be in the unit or available elsewhere in the building to all tenants. 9.31.4.2.

Required Exits

- ❑ Each unit requires safe exiting. The options are a single exit for each unit (9.9.7.2.) or a unit requires a second and separate exit when one exit opens into shared space 9.9.9.3. *See Part 11 – C136 for list of alternatives*
- ❑ If the apartment is not a walk out, meaning if you need to travel a flight of steps to get outside, then one window must have an open area of 0.35 m² (3.8 ft²) and a minimum open dimension of 380 mm (15”) to provide a 2nd exit. 9.9.10.1. *Existing acceptable where there is direct access to the exterior. Part 11 – C137*