

MASON COUNTY BUILDING DEPARTMENT

Basic Habitability Requirements for a Dwelling

Building Code Summary: Dwellings must meet all the current State of Michigan building codes and related codes for electrical, plumbing, and mechanical systems that apply to the construction methods and materials being used for a particular single-family dwelling. Please refer to the 2015 State of Michigan Residential Codes and other applicable codes to determine the specific code requirements or alternative methods of code compliance in regards to your specific project.

Some of the basic health and safety code requirements for a typical dwelling include:

- 1) The building must have an approved potable water supply system (water well or municipal water) and a waste water disposal system (septic system or municipal sewer).
- 2) The building must have an approved electrical supply system (public utilities or an approved alternative private system).
- 3) The building must have an approved readily available on demand supply of fuel for the main building heating system.
- 4) The exterior doors, windows, roofing, siding, soffit, fascia, and related trim must be completed with approved long term weather resistant materials.
- 5) The building's electrical system must be completed as required by the current codes and approved by the Mason County Building Department.
- 6) The building's plumbing system must be completed as required by the current codes and approved by the Mason County Building Department.
Note: The plumbing system must provide a supply of water heated to a temperature of 110 degrees Fahrenheit to the kitchen, bathroom, and laundry area.
- 7) The building's heating system must be completed as required by the current codes and approved by the Mason County Building Department.
Note: The heating system must be a readily available on demand system that maintains an average temperature of 68 degrees Fahrenheit in all habitable areas while using the heating system.
- 8) Dwellings must provide the proper amount of habitable living spaces based on the occupant load of the dwelling. Occupant loads are calculated using the size and number of bedrooms/sleeping areas. Habitable spaces must have a minimum ceiling height of 7'. Most dwellings require a combination Smoke Detector/CO2 Detector mounted in the main living area. The dwelling must be insulated as required by the current energy codes. The interior of the dwelling must have approved coverings on the ceiling and walls. Dwellings must have a dedicated main entrance egress door that includes the required exterior landing, stairs, and railings.
- 9) The dwelling area must have a bathroom that is separated from the other areas of the dwelling with walls and a lockable door and a non-absorbent floor. The bathroom must contain a toilet, sink, bathtub and/or shower unit, and a ventilation system or operable exterior window. All bathroom fixtures must be functional and installed based on the manufacturer and code requirements including, but not limited to, open floor areas around each fixture.
- 10) The dwelling must have a dedicated kitchen area of approximately 70 sq. ft. that contains a sink and faucet, cooking stove, refrigerator, food storage shelving, and sanitary countertops. These items must be the type that are commonly used in a standard kitchen. The kitchen area must also have a non-absorbent floor and an exterior operable window of a minimum glass size of 8% of the room area.
- 11) The dwelling must have a dedicated sleeping area or room of at least 70 sq. ft. with an egress window or door located in the sleeping area. The window or door must have a glass area of at least 8% of the floor area. The sleeping area/room must have an approved smoke detector that is interconnected with the other smoke detectors.
- 12) The dwelling must have a dedicated living area of at least 70 sq. ft. and must have an exterior window that is a minimum of 8% of the total floor area.
- 13) Dwellings with attached garages: Attached garages must be fire separated from the dwelling with drywall on the walls and possible the ceiling. Attached garages must have basic interior lighting, outlets, and exterior lighting for exterior service doors.

Please refer to the 2015 State of Michigan Residential Codes and other applicable codes to determine the specific code requirements or alternative methods of code compliance in regards to your specific project.