



# CONVERSION OF SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING TO TWO FAMILY DWELLING

## 1. PERMIT AND BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS

Completed and signed Building Permit application form to include:

Building permit application with relevant inserts (contract agreement form, environmental screening form, etc)

Submit four (4) copies of plans showing proposed layout and materials. Plans shall be drawn to scale. Minimum paper size of the drawing shall be 11 in. x 17in. and shall include the following information:

### A. Architectural floor plan indicating the following:

- Location of lower level or basement exterior walls.
- Location of all existing and proposed walls of lower level or basement.
- Name of each existing and proposed room.
- Location and sizes of windows and doors.
- Location of existing or proposed plumbing fixtures, furnace and water heater.
- Location of stairway, and fireplaces, etc.
- Location of smoke detector.

### B. Architectural cross section plan indicating the following:

- Proposed finished ceiling height.

## PERMIT AND BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS cont.

- Wall, floor and ceiling finish materials.
  - Existing and proposed insulation and vapor barrier.
- C. Four (4) sets of complete architectural and structural drawings. Four (4) sets of complete drawings showing mechanical, plumbing, electrical, fire protection systems (existing and proposed). If new fixtures and appliances are added plumbing plans shall include riser diagrams (sanitary, domestic water (hot & cold) and gas, if applicable). Electrical plans shall include the electrical riser diagram showing 2 meters and service panels with ratings and feeder sizes.**
- Plans will show the layout of both residential units. The new unit and the old unit where impacted.
  - Single mechanical room is allowed. However, every unit should be able to access the mechanical room from a common area and shall be served by an independent forced air heating, ventilation and air conditioning system.
  - There shall not be any physical interior connections between units.
    - Item 12 on the building permit application shall read:  
**“CONVERT SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING TO 2 FAMILY DWELLING.”**
    - Item 13 on the building permit application shall read:  
**“SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING”.**
    - Item 16 on the application shall read:  
**“2 FAMILY DWELLING”.**
    - All work shall comply with the adopted Construction Codes in effect at the time of application. Some of the current items are highlighted below:

## 2. GENERAL BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS

- Minimum ceiling height of habitable space shall be 7 feet
- Minimum one (1) habitable room area shall be 120 sq. ft. and minimum width of the room shall be 7 ft.
- Minimum area for a bedroom shall be 70 sq. ft. (if provided)

- Each unit must have a full bathroom and kitchen
- Each water closet stool shall be located in a clear space not less than 15 inches on each side for a total of 30 inches in width and have a clear space in front of the water closet of not less than 21 inches.
- Each bathroom shall be provided with ventilation and a mechanical exhaust fan that vents to the exterior and is insulated 3 feet in from the exterior wall.
- An anti-scald valve is required in bathroom shower / tub-shower.
- Each unit shall have adequate light and ventilation (per code).
- Heating systems shall maintain a minimum 68 degrees in all habitable areas.
- Furnace rooms must be provided with inside/outside combustion air.
- Joints or fittings in gas piping may not be concealed within the wall or ceiling construction.
- Each unit shall be provided with smoke alarm devices.
- Each unit shall be provided with minimum one egress (exit) to the outside.
- The dwelling units shall be separated by a minimum of one (1) hour fire separation both horizontally and vertically.
- Bottom plates of proposed walls shall be of approved treated wood.
- Properly sized beams and headers must be used in structural bearing conditions. Specify intended size of such beams and headers on plans.
- Stairs with 4 or more risers shall be provided with a continuous handrail located 34 to 38 inches above the nosing. Open side(s) of stairways more than 30 inches above the floor shall be provided with a guardrail having intermediate rails spaced less than 4 inches apart. The guardrails must be placed not less than 34 inches above the nosing of the treads.
- Enclosed usable space under stairs must be protected on the underside and sidewalls with 5/8 inch type "X" gypsum board. The one (1) hour fire separation between dwelling units shall be maintained per UL or ICC standards.
- Smoke detectors shall be installed in each unit as per section R313 of the International Residential Code (IRC) 2006 edition.

## GENERAL BUILDING CODE REQUIREMENTS cont.

- Each bedroom shall be provided with an escape or rescue window having:
  - A minimum net clear opening of 5.7 sq. ft. (or 5 sq. ft. if unit is at grade level).
  - A minimum net clear opening height dimension of 24 inches.
  - A minimum net clear opening width dimension of 20 inches.
  - A finished sill height of not more than 44 inches above the floor.
- Foam plastic (rigid) insulation shall be protected in the interior by not less than ½-inch thick gypsum board.
- Exposed fiberglass insulation must be covered on the interior by not less than 4-mil thick flame retardant vapor barrier.
- All mechanical and electrical equipment shall be listed and approved.

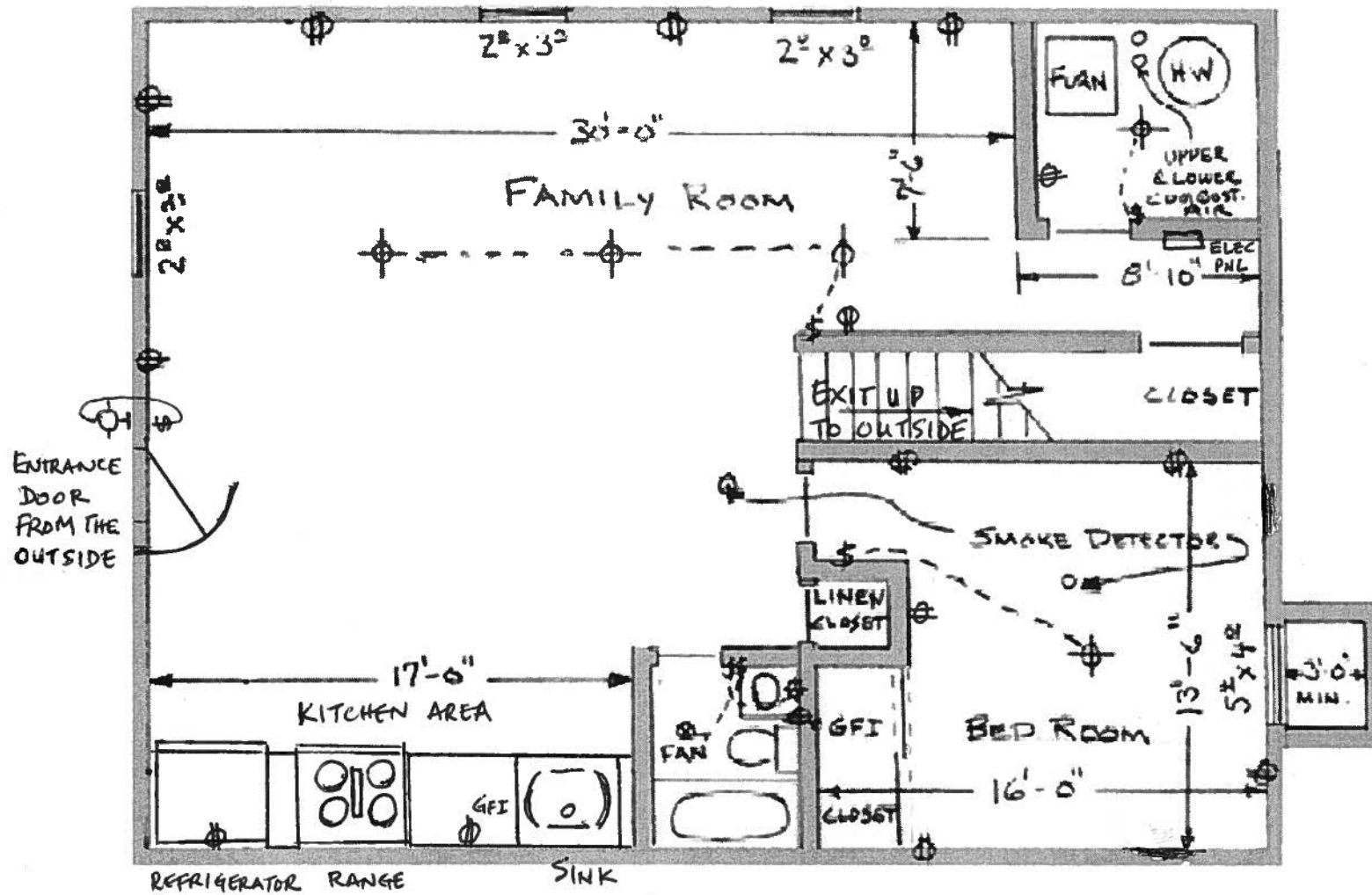
### NOTE:

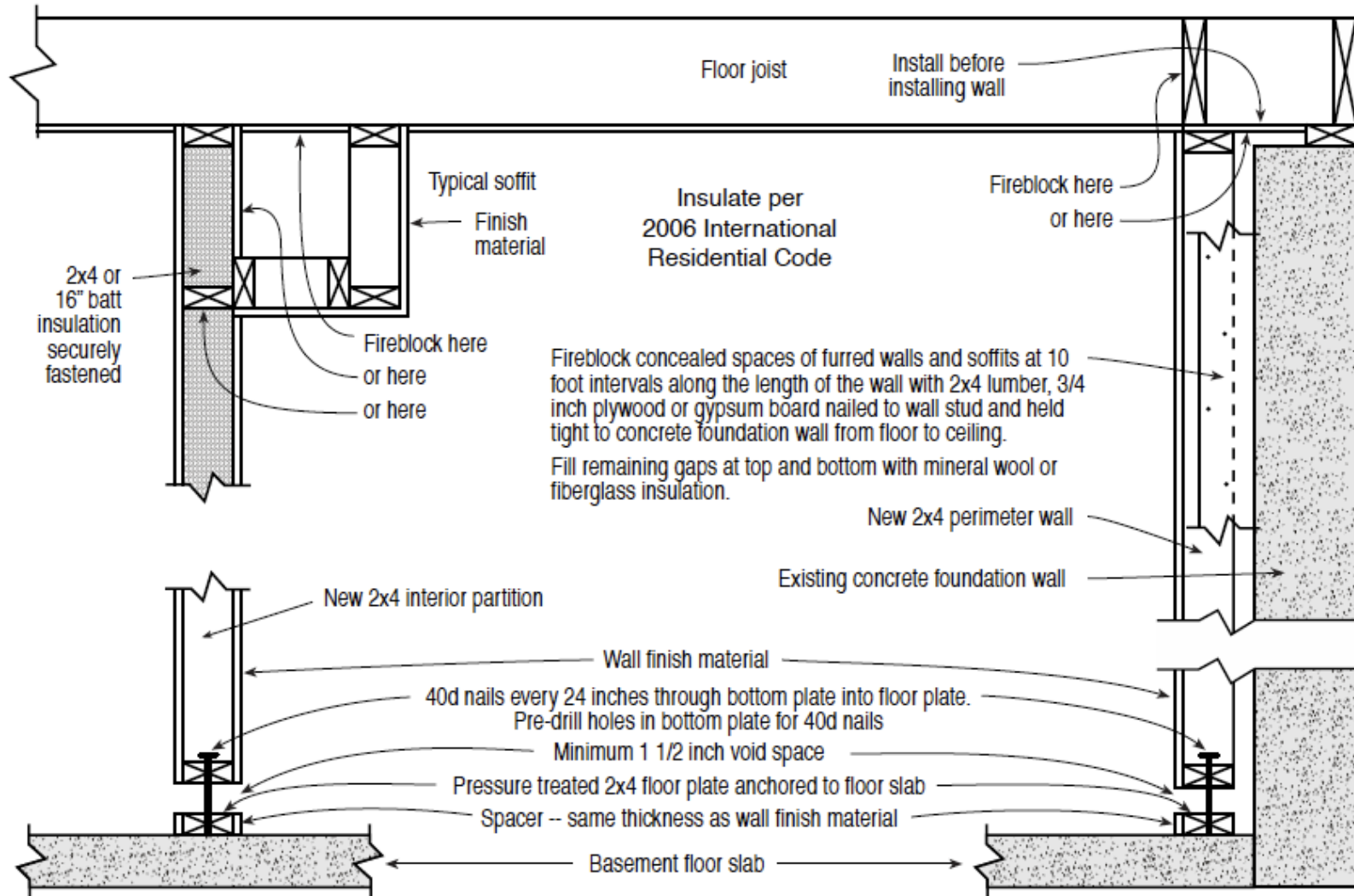
1. The above represent general code requirements relative to the conversion of a single family dwelling to a 2-family dwelling. For more specific code requirements please contact DCRA Permit Operations Technical Review Division at 202-442-4589.
2. If scope of work includes an addition to an existing building, a plat from the DC Surveyor's office showing a footprint of the existing building and the proposed addition with complete dimensions and setback from the property lines (if applicable) shall be provided. Soil erosion plans and notes are required for DDOE Review.
3. Plans shall be sealed and signed by an architect or professional engineer based on the scope of work if there are structural or other engineering changes.

### 3. GENERAL NOTES AND EXISTING TWO FAMILY DWELLINGS WITHOUT C of O

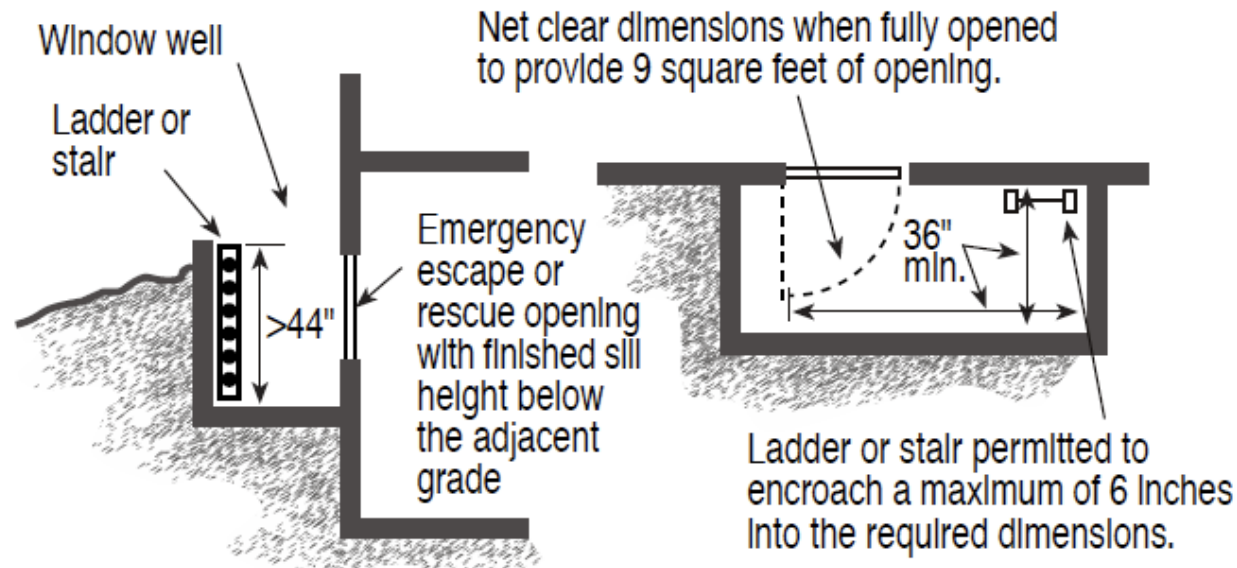
1. The stamped, approved plan shall be kept on job site until final inspection has been approved.
2. The Inspection Record Card/sticker shall remain posted in a prominent location in the construction area until the final inspection has been made.
3. Separate supplemental electrical, plumbing, HVAC permits are required by the respective licensed contractors. Please call 202-442-4589 regarding all permit requirements.

4. All permits shall remain posted in a prominent location visible from the exterior.
5. Call 202-442-9557 between 8:30 am and 4:30 pm to arrange for an inspection. Provide permit number when scheduling an inspection. You can use this number to schedule inspection 24 hours a day using DCRA's IVR Scheduling System.
6. Existing two family dwellings without Certificate of Occupancy (C of O) are required to obtain a C of O. This requires the satisfaction of the permit and building code requirements which includes the following:
  - A completed and signed Building Permit application form and four (4) sets of plans, showing that the existing conditions are in compliance with the building code. Note: If you plan to create your own drawings, please use the attachments as guidance.
  - At the inspection phase, a certified/approved inspection report verifying that the building conforms to the approved plans with the general building code needs. This report shall include confirmation / verification of the fire separation of the units, the presence of the emergency means of escape to the outside from sleeping spaces, smoke detectors in each unit and separate electric service disconnect in each unit.
  - The C of O issuance desk finally verifies that the inspection is approved by an approved third party inspection agency or DCRA. This confirms that the dwelling is therefore suitable to be classified as a two (2) family dwelling.





Emergency Escape And Rescue window wells must provide a minimum area of 9 square feet with a minimum dimension of 36 Inches and shall enable the window to open fully. If the depth of the window well exceeds 44 Inches, a permanently affixed ladder must be provided. The ladder must not interfere with the operation of the window.



Emergency Escape And Rescue Windows must meet the following criteria:

- A minimum total openable area of not less than 5.7 square feet
- A minimum clear openable height of not less than 24 inches
- A minimum clear openable width of not less than 20 inches.
- A finished sill height of not more than 44 inches above the floor and should be openable from the inside with normal operation and without the use of tools, keys or effort.

### Examples of Complying Height & Width Combinations

