



#11 Bed & Breakfasts

What kind of permits and approvals do I need?

Several agencies are involved in the approval of a Bed and Breakfast establishment. For the typical Bed and Breakfast in your home, the process begins with land use approval and ends with a Certificate of Occupancy and Fire Code Permit. Kitsap County policy is to accept one through four guest rooms in an owner-occupied single-family residence as primarily residential in nature. Other permits and approvals may be necessary for large projects or projects more commercial in nature than a single-family home.

- **Land Use.** Land use approval is required to establish a Bed and Breakfast establishment, regardless of the number of bedrooms. Most Bed and Breakfasts with less than five guest rooms are approved through an Administrative Site Plan Review, provided, there are no other special circumstances such as meeting rooms, weddings, etc. A Bed and Breakfast with 5 or more guest rooms and/or special circumstances require a Conditional Use Permit. In either case, a Pre-application Conference is the first step in the land use approval process and will provide you with the information you need for a successful application. The Pre-Application Meeting Request form may be downloaded at kitsapgov.com/dcd/forms. Approval for a Bed and Breakfast is typically not transferable; a new owner will have to reapply for approval.
- **Building permit.** A building permit is required to construct a new residence or convert an existing residence to a Bed and Breakfast. The Bed and Breakfast will be classified as one of the following:
 - **Bed and Breakfast House:** An owner-occupied single-family dwelling used to provide overnight guest lodging with up to four guest rooms where a morning meal may be provided. The Bed and Breakfast House may be constructed as a single-family residence under the auspices of the International Residential Code.
 - **Bed and Breakfast Boarding House.** A building arranged or used for lodging for compensation with 5 to 10 guest rooms, may include a morning meal, and is an owner-occupied single-family dwelling. A Bed and Breakfast Boarding House has a more intense use that is commercial in nature and is



considered a Group R3 dwelling unit constructed in accordance with the International Building Code.

- **Boarding House.** A building arranged or used for lodging for compensation, with or without meals, with any number of guest rooms and not occupied as a single-family unit; or, an owner-occupied building with more than 10 guest rooms. A Boarding House is commercial in nature and is

considered a Group R1 Boarding House in accordance with the International Building Code.

- **Certificate of Occupancy.** After all inspections and approvals, a Certificate of Occupancy is issued before the business may open. The Certificate of Occupancy is for the Bed and Breakfast in the residence as depicted in the building permit plans and only the specified guest rooms are approved. Any change in the Bed and Breakfast such as a change in the guest rooms, the number of guest rooms, ownership, etc., will require a new building permit and Certificate of Occupancy. The Certificate of Occupancy is not transferable.
- **Fire Code Permit.** A Fire Code Permit is required to operate a Bed and Breakfast and is renewable annually.
- **Sign Permit.** A separate sign permit is required for any new business signage. Signage is limited to a maximum of four square feet and may not be illuminated. Signage design and location is regulated by Kitsap County Code, Section 17.445, and shall be reviewed and approved prior to installation.
- **Food, Pool, Spa.** For the sale and preparation of food or for the use of a spa or pool, contact the Kitsap County Health District for appropriate permits and approvals.
- **State License.** For state licensing requirements, see RCW 70.62 Transient Accommodations. Bed and Breakfasts are typically licensed as a transient accommodation when containing three or more lodging units.
- **Fire Alarm.** A full fire alarm system with smoke detectors in the corridors, at least one manual pull station, and monitored by a UL-Listed Central Station is required for a Boarding House. A Fire Code Permit for installation of a Fire Alarm System is required before installation and a full acceptance test will be witnessed by the Kitsap County Fire Marshal's Office.

- **Fire Sprinklers.** A fire sprinkler system is required for a Bed and Breakfast Boarding House and a Boarding House. A Fire Code Permit for installation of an automatic fire extinguishing system is required before installation of any components and the Kitsap County Fire Marshal's Office will inspect and approve the sprinkler system.

What kinds of fees can I expect?

Most Bed and Breakfast businesses are less than four guest rooms and in an existing single-family residence. The following list of permits and fees may not include all of the fees and permits for new construction of a Bed and Breakfast. To determine what fees will apply to your project; contact the Department of Community Development for the most current information. Fees may include any of the following:

- **Land Use Approval.** Land Use fees and pre-application meeting fees are as established in KCC 21.06.100. In addition, there may be permitting fees from the Kitsap County Health District as well as Concurrency permit fees from Public Works.
- **Building Permit and Certificate of Occupancy.** Building permit and plan review fees are based on the project's completed valuation. If the permit is to establish the Bed and Breakfast in an existing home with no new construction, the permit costs are considerably less. Building permit fees are established in KCC 14.04.120.
- **Fire Code Permit.** Fire Code Operational Permit fees to operate a Bed and Breakfast are established in KCC 14.04.120. A Deputy Fire Marshal will inspect the home prior to issuing the Fire Code Permit.
- **Impact Fees.** Impact fees are assessed as buildings are constructed or as occupancy changes to offset the additional demand and need on public facilities, including roads. A Bed and Breakfast Boarding House or a Boarding House will have road impact fees at the rate established in KCC 4.110 for each guest room. A Bed and Breakfast House in a new single-family dwelling not yet constructed will have school, park, and road impact fees based on the new single-family residence.

General Code Requirements

When you're ready, call for inspections as listed on your permit. The inspectors will be looking for the following:

- **Evacuation Diagrams.** Post a diagram depicting two evacuation routes on or adjacent to the door from each guest room.
- **Fire Extinguishers.** Install a fire extinguisher with a minimum rating of 2-A:10-B:C on each floor in the path of egress and service annually.
- **Address numbers.** Post address numbers with a minimum of 4 inches in height with a minimum stroke

of 1/2 inch on a contrasting background so that inspectors and emergency workers can easily find the house.

- **Smoke Detectors.** Install hard-wired smoke detectors with battery back-up throughout the building on each floor, in all sleeping rooms, and in areas outside sleeping rooms. Single- or multiple-station smoke alarms are required in each sleeping room and each room in the path of egress to the door leading from the sleeping room for all three types of Bed and Breakfast. Smoke detectors installed in an existing residence converted to Bed and Breakfast House in accordance with the International Residential Code may be solely battery-operated when interconnecting would require the removal of wall or ceiling finishes. Maintain smoke detectors and test every month.
- **Emergency Escape/Rescue Window.** Provide at least one operable window or door approved for emergency escape or rescue in every guest room. The windows shall have a clear opening of at least 5.7 square feet, with a minimum height of 24 inches, minimum width of 20 inches, and a finished sill height not greater than 44 inches above the floor.
- **Handrails and Guardrails.** Handrails are required for stairs and guardrails are required when balconies, porches or raised floors are more than 30" high.
- **Wall and Ceiling Finishes.** Wall and ceiling finishes shall have a flame-spread classification of 200 or less, and a smoke-developed index of 450 or less. Gypsum drywall that has been painted or covered with wallpaper less than 1/28" thick will pass. Combustible wall paneling or other wall finishes may have to be removed.
- **Stairs.** For new construction, the maximum riser height is 7¾", and the minimum tread depth is 10" with a minimum width of 36".

Plan Information for Building Permit

A plans examiner first reviews your plans and identifies potential problems. If the plans are incomplete or incorrect, the plans examiner will request additional or corrected information. To help the project go smoothly, the plans must be complete, drawn to scale, and show as much information as possible. Your project submittal **MUST** include:

- Permit application;
- Site plan;
- Floor plan: show the locations of each guest room to be used, doors and windows, smoke detectors, fire extinguishers, etc.;
- Building elevations that show all sides;
- An approved Building Clearance or Building Site Application from the Kitsap County Health District or a sewer letter.