

Tiny House Laws & Regulations: State by State Details

By [Scott Langdon](#) - September 8, 2019



Increasingly, people across the country and beyond are embracing minimalism by transitioning into a tiny house, and you may be excited to do the same. Tiny house living is associated with financial savings, reduced stress, an improved quality of life and green living. With this in mind, it is not surprising that tiny homes are popping up in areas across the country. As is the case with other types of homes, building codes and zoning regulations impact tiny house construction and placement. While some of these codes and [regulations are established at the state level](#), others are determined by the county or city.

Regardless of whether you intend to build a tiny house on your own lot or move into a charming tiny house community, the relevant laws in various areas of the country may dramatically impact your plans. Before finalizing any plans to relocate into a tiny house, it is critical to review regulations by state and by local jurisdiction so that you can fully enjoy all aspects of your new home from day one. These rules are generally covered by building codes and zoning regulations.

Building Codes for Tiny Houses

Traditional residential homes are subject to building code requirements, and many areas of the country also have tiny home building codes.

- A tiny house should usually have:
- At least one full bathroom with a ceiling height of at least 6 feet, 4 inches
- Ceiling height in common areas of at least 6 feet, 8 inches
- A ladder or stairs, if the tiny house has a loft
- At least one window that can be used as an emergency exit
- Compliance with International Residential Code ([IRC](#)) building code requirements or the International Building Code (IBC) requirements.

Keep in mind that these are not universal requirements, so additional location-specific research is necessary.

Zoning Regulations

In most areas, the use of land is governed by zoning regulations. For example, some parcels of land are specifically zoned for hospital or medical center use, and others are zoned for residential homes, retail centers or other purposes. Before you can build a tiny house on a parcel of land or park it somewhere, you need to review zoning ordinances and ensure that your structure is compliant. Zoning can be changed in some cases by contacting the local authoritative department with your request, but this process can be cumbersome in some areas. Keep in mind, however, that some zoning regulations are determined at the federal level.

Variations in Tiny Houses

There are two primary types of tiny houses, and the rules and regulations for these vary dramatically. The first type of shelter is a tiny house that placed on wheels. Because of the wheeled platform, this is usually classified as a recreational vehicle and requires registration with the state's motor vehicles department. While this type of tiny house is an RV by law in most areas, some campgrounds do not permit this type of structure on the premises. Furthermore, some states and local jurisdictions only permit full-time residency in a tiny house on wheels if it is parked in an RV park designed for permanent residency.

The other type of tiny house is one that is built on a foundation. It may be site-built, or it may be transported to your lot and permanently attached to the foundation. These structures may also be referred to as a granny flat, a granny cottage or an accessory dwelling unit (ADU). In some areas, regulations state that an ADU can only be built on a lot that has an [existing home](#) on it.

State Codes and Regulations for Tiny Homes

With significant variation in building codes, zoning regulations and other factors from state to state, one of the most important initial steps that you can take when preparing to transition into a tiny home is to find a suitable place to live. This begins by exploring state laws and codes, but keep in mind that some regulations are defined at the county level. While a review of state-specific laws is a great starting point, you should follow up by contacting local agencies for more specific

information. In addition, before delving into regulations, it may be helpful to decide if you want to live in an area permanently or keep your tiny home on wheels.

Alabama	Alaska	Arizona	Arkansas	California
Colorado	Connecticut	Delaware	Florida	Georgia
Hawaii	Idaho	Illinois	Indiana	Iowa
Kansas	Kentucky	Louisiana	Maine	Maryland
Massachusetts	Michigan	Minnesota	Mississippi	Missouri
Montana	Nebraska	Nevada	New Hampshire	New Jersey
New Mexico	New York	North Carolina	North Dakota	Ohio
Oklahoma	Oregon	Pennsylvania	Rhode Island	South Carolina
South Dakota	Tennessee	Texas	Utah	Vermont
Virginia	Washington	West Virginia	Wisconsin	Wyoming

Alabama

Tiny houses are not widely accepted in Alabama. The building codes and zoning requirements vary dramatically from county to county, and some cities also have their own unique and limiting requirements. This can make living in a tiny home in Alabama difficult to do at this time. However, select areas have adopted laws that are friendly to tiny houses. For, example, ADUs are permitted only in specific areas of [Jefferson County](#), and they cannot be larger than 200 square feet.

Alaska

Alaska is slightly more accommodating to those who wish to live in a tiny house, but there is still considerable variation among the individual counties and towns. Approximately 40 percent of the state's population lives in the Anchorage metropolitan area, so you may be interested in living in this area as well. In Anchorage, a tiny house that is placed on a wheeled platform is considered to be a recreational vehicle, and it can only be placed on land that has R-5 zoning. Tiny houses that are built on fixed foundations must be in compliance with residential building codes, and [owners will need](#) to obtain a conditional use permit. If the tiny house is placed within city limits, a water and sewage connection is required. Keep in mind that the specific requirements in Anchorage's suburbs and in unincorporated areas vary substantially, but Anchorage and its surrounding communities do not officially have building codes that are specific to tiny houses at this time.

Arizona

As is the case with other states, Arizona does not have statewide tiny home building and zoning requirements, so city and county laws and regulations prevail. Generally, however, Arizona is tiny home-friendly compared to many other states. For example, in [Pima County](#), a tiny house can legally be constructed on any lot that is zoned for single-family detached houses as long as it is on a permanent foundation. Pima County is located on the southern border with Mexico. It is the second most populated county in the state, and a large portion of the county is comprised of Tucson and its

suburbs. In Pima County, a tiny house on wheels can be classified as a factory-built home if it is placed on a permanent foundation and its suspension and axles have been removed.

Pima County has established specific building codes for tiny houses. Ladders or stairs are required to access loft areas, and tiny houses with lofts must meet fall protection requirements. Special electrical circuit requirements are in place for these structures. The building codes do not specify a minimum ceiling height, a minimum number of windows or doors and accessibility requirements. Currently, Pima County is one of the most tiny house-friendly areas of the state, and Coconino County is following Pima County's lead. Coconino County is located along the state's northern border, and it is home to Flagstaff and Grand Canyon National Park. Many other counties have not yet shown significant initiative to create regulations for tiny houses.

Arkansas

While many states are openly accepting tiny house living, Arkansas is not yet included in that group. Many jurisdictions have established minimum square footage requirements that exceed the size of a tiny house. In fact, some cities and counties have added these restrictions in an effort to prevent tiny home living in the area. One example of this is Walnut Ridge, which recently established a minimum size restriction of 600 square foot on residential homes. On the other hand, Rogers allows tiny homes to be constructed on-site, but they are only permitted on a permanent foundation in select areas. Rogers has also rezoned a small area specifically for tiny home construction. Nonetheless, building requirements in these areas have slowed down construction of tiny homes in the designated areas.

California

California is well-known for its expensive [real estate](#), so those who wish to find an affordable housing option may be thrilled to learn that California is fairly welcoming to tiny houses. In most jurisdictions, tiny houses are considered to be accessory dwelling units, and ADUs are permitted with varying restrictions. After recent destructive fires in Sonoma County, tiny houses have been temporarily permitted without the need for building permits and without regard to zoning if the occupant has been displaced by fire.

In Fresno and San Francisco, [tiny homes on wheels](#) are permitted as a secondary dwelling with an existing residential home on the lot. These are only permitted in residential neighborhoods. However, be aware that recreational vehicles cannot be used as permanent homes in this state under [California Title 25](#). Nonetheless, California has one of the country's largest populations of nomads. Nomads are people who live in RVs, [travel trailers](#) or even their car and who lack a permanent address. Because regulations for tiny homes vary by county, it is advisable to contact the specific jurisdiction that you are interested in living for current information.

Colorado

Colorado does not have statewide regulations or laws pertaining to tiny houses, but many counties have taken the initiative to accommodate citizens who wish to live in this type of home. For example, [Park County](#) has established codes for site-built tiny houses. Tiny houses in this county must have a separate closet and a private bathroom that includes a lavatory, a water closet and

either a shower or a bathtub. The home should be at least 220 square feet for one or two occupants, and another 100 square feet per person is required for additional occupants. A tiny house in Park County also needs to meet all standard residential building codes for life safety features, mechanical equipment, ventilation and lighting. In addition, the work area on the kitchen counter should be at least 30 inches long. If you choose to live in a manufactured or modular tiny house, it must be at least 600 square feet and comply with local Land Use Regulations.

Another example of location-specific regulations for tiny homes is in Walsenburg. In Walsenburg, tiny homes must meet many building code requirements for a residential dwelling. However, the city has waived or altered requirements for exit door width, stairways and minimum square footage.

Connecticut

Connecticut is one of the most restrictive states for site-built tiny houses as well as for tiny houses on wheels that are classified as recreational vehicles. This state is in need of affordable housing, and tiny homes are the perfect solution. However, its zoning regulations are not conducive to tiny houses. Because there are no open discussions or proposals in Connecticut to reform zoning and laws, this state needs an advocate to evoke change.

Delaware

Delaware has not yet approved specific regulations for tiny houses, but some advocates are working hard to change this. The state considers tiny houses on wheels to be recreational vehicles, and these **RVs should be titled appropriately** within 30 days of the date of purchase. Tiny houses in Delaware that are greater than 400 square feet are classified as mobile homes and are treated as such under current laws and regulations. Tiny houses that are less than 400 square feet are classified as trailers.

Florida

Most cities and counties in Florida have openly embraced tiny homes, but some areas are not yet on board with the trend. In this state, you will find several tiny house hotels and rental communities so that you are able to experience this type of lifestyle before committing to it.

If your tiny house in Florida is on wheels, it must be properly registered as a recreational vehicle with the Department of Motor Vehicles. Site-built tiny house regulations vary by location. For example, **St. Petersburg** requires all accessory dwelling units to have a total square footage between 375 and 750 square feet, and these units are only permitted in approved zones. In Orange County, accessory dwelling units must have an area of at least 400 square feet. If you want to live in a tiny house on wheels in Sarasota County, your home must be placed on a foundation if you plan to stay in the same RV park for 45 days or more.

Georgia

Like Florida, Georgia has shown acceptance to tiny homes across many of its jurisdictions, but there are not yet statewide regulations and requirements. One reason why some communities are

embracing tiny homes is because they are an affordable housing solution. In most areas, the difference between [tiny houses on wheels](#) and tiny houses on foundations has not been addressed yet. Most Georgia jurisdictions individually require tiny homes to comply with the 2012 International Residential Code. In addition, you cannot legally rent out an accessory dwelling unit in most areas throughout Georgia. Notably, Decatur has eliminated a minimum square footage requirement for accessory dwelling units. This was approved in 2014 under its Unified Development Ordinance.

In [Atlanta](#), a tiny house with full-time occupancy or a tiny house that has a kitchen stove is classified as an accessory dwelling unit. These are only permitted in areas that are zoned as R-5. On the other hand, if the tiny home has part-time occupancy or does not have a stove, it can be classified as a guest house. Guest houses are permitted in all zones from R-1 through R-5.

Hawaii

Tiny house requirements and regulations in Hawaii cover the entire state at this time. Throughout the state, you are permitted to buy land specifically for the use of living in a tiny home. An alternative is to locate a property owner who will permit the tiny home to be built on their land. However, regardless of who owns the land, tiny homes are not permitted in areas that are governed by restrictive covenants.

Tiny homes on wheels in Hawaii have unique requirements. They are classified as residential dwelling units, so they must comply with all relevant zoning restrictions. At the same time, they are considered to be travel trailers and must be properly registered through the state's [Department of Motor Vehicles](#).

To accommodate the need for affordable housing for the state's agriculture workers, the Hawaii Tiny House Initiative has effectively brought about change. Because of a burgeoning tourism industry, the cost of homes and land has skyrocketed, which has made it difficult for some residents to find affordable housing. Through the Hawaii Tiny House Initiative, some county codes have been changed to allow special farm dwellings that are at least 220 square feet. These homes must have a bathroom as well as a separate kitchen and living area. Many Hawaiians are looking at tiny homes as a solution for affordable housing for other residents as well.

Idaho

While local jurisdictions in Idaho may have specific codes and regulations pertaining to tiny houses, Idaho has established statewide definitions for different types of tiny homes. These definitions serve as the basis for regulations going forward. [In Idaho](#), a site-built tiny house is constructed on the land where it will remain. These homes are not designed to be relocated.

A modular tiny house is a type of manufactured home that has been mostly or entirely prefabricated in another location before being transported to its intended location. These homes must comply with all aspects of HUD construction and safety standards created for manufactured housing. Site-built and manufactured tiny houses in Idaho should have an area of at least 150 square feet.

Another type of tiny house defined in Idaho is a recreational vehicle. The maximum width of these homes is 8.5 feet. These are tiny houses that are suitable for emergency housing or recreational housing. They are similar to a camper trailer, a travel trailer or a motor home.

Illinois

Tiny houses are not openly accepted in many areas of Illinois, and they are forbidden in others. For example, tiny houses are not permitted in Chicago, and this is common in many larger cities throughout the country as well. In areas of Illinois where tiny houses are not specifically prohibited, they are permissible on private properties as well as in mobile home parks and campgrounds. County-specific rules dictate if you can place a tiny house on your own land. If your tiny house in Illinois is on wheels, it will be classified as a recreational trailer under current [Department of Motor Vehicles guidelines](#), and it will need to be registered according to its classification.

Indiana

In Indiana, the state specifically places authority of building codes for tiny houses in the hands of counties. The state's residential building codes do not apply to tiny homes that are built by the homeowner for their own personal use. This specific aspect of the building code is referred to as the Log Cabin Rule. The [Log Cabin Rule](#) applies to tiny homes that are constructed on the land, but they are not applicable to tiny houses on wheels.

In some areas of Indiana, tiny home neighborhoods have been created. In addition, some residential neighborhoods have permitted tiny houses to be built alongside traditional residential homes. Specific zoning laws and building codes for tiny houses exist in Carmel, Indianapolis, Evansville, Fort Wayne, South Bend, Bloomington and others. Because of the variations in codes and laws throughout Indiana, it is important to research specific rules that pertain to the area where you are interested in living.

Iowa

In many communities and counties across Iowa, minimum square footage requirements for residential dwellings are hindering the ability of many tiny home enthusiasts to build or to place a tiny home in an area that they desire. For example, [in Iowa Falls](#), the local government adjusted the city's minimum size requirement for residential properties to 500 square feet. This only accommodates larger tiny homes. However, this change actually lowered the minimum size requirement from 600 square feet, so it is viewed as progress in the tiny house movement.

In other areas of Iowa, the tiny home movement is being met with extreme resistance. For example, one proposed tiny house development near Des Moines was not permitted. For those who want to live in a tiny house in the Des Moines area, it may be necessary to look at land in rural or outlying areas around the city that have less stringent zoning regulations.

Kansas

Generally, Kansas has embraced tiny homes that are built on foundations, but the state is less accepting of tiny homes on wheels. Specific regulations are defined at the county level, but some

laws and regulations are prevalent throughout most or all of the state. For tiny houses built on a foundation, the minimum square footage permitted is 170 square feet. This should be comprised of one room that is at least 150 square feet. A second room, which cannot be the kitchen or bathroom, should be at least 50 square feet. All tiny houses built on a foundation must be constructed on a lot with an area of at least 3,000 square feet. The smallest [zoning district](#) where tiny houses are permitted is RS3.

If the tiny house is classified as an ADU, it cannot be built in an RS3 or RS5 zoning district. These types of tiny homes can only be constructed in single dwelling residential zoning areas that include RS40, RS, RS10 and RS7. Regardless of the zoning district, composting toilets are not allowed. However, solar power is permitted, and propane gas use is permitted under IFC regulations. A tiny house may also use small wind generation systems with a maximum height of 35 feet and according to setback restrictions.

If you prefer to live in a tiny house on wheels in Kansas, you cannot park the home in a backyard or anywhere on private land. The tiny house can only be placed in a designated campground.

Kentucky

Many tiny home enthusiasts in Kentucky consider living in Louisville because it is the largest city in the state. Tiny homes are permitted throughout the metropolitan area, but specific rules and restrictions are in place. For example, site-built or permanent tiny homes are permitted if they are built on a foundation, and these building requests are processed in the same manner as other residential construction requests. Modular homes in Louisville are considered to be homes with components that are made off-site and that are assembled on a fixed foundation. Special tiny house construction kits are used to produce structures classified as modular homes. While these may be acceptable in Louisville, a special review process is necessary before a permit may be granted. The applicant may need to provide additional documentation to obtain the permit.

If your tiny house is on wheels, it must comply with Louisville's [zoning restrictions](#). Be aware that all tiny homes that are completely manufactured and assembled off-site and are moved to a permanent location are deemed pre-manufactured homes throughout the state. All pre-manufactured homes in Louisville must receive special approval at the state level.

Generally, acceptance of tiny houses is more common in larger communities in Kentucky. In many smaller communities and in rural areas, acceptance and approval falls into a gray area.

Louisiana

Louisiana's building regulations are not conducive to many tiny home designs. This is because the state mandates compliance with the [2012 International Residential Code](#). Under this code, ceilings must be elevated to 7 feet or taller, and this covers lofts and all other areas of the structure. The loft area must have stairs rather than a ladder, and it also must have a window that can be used as an emergency exit. In addition, one of the rooms must have an area of at least 120 square feet. The staircase as well as all doors and hallways must be 3 feet wide or wider. While tiny homes are not prohibited, it is challenging to design a tiny house layout that accommodates all of these building

codes. The updated 2015 International Residential Code has guidelines that are more suitable for tiny houses, but these have not yet gone into effect.

Maine

Maine is one of the few states that have approved tiny house construction requirements. The requirements begin with a definition of a tiny house as any home that is smaller than 400 square feet. Sleeping lofts with access via ladders are permitted. Skylights in loft areas are permitted as an emergency exit area. Tiny homes with a permanent foundation must conform to the requirements established under the [Maine Uniform Building and Energy Code](#) in most instances. While these construction guidelines pertain to all tiny homes in the state, cities are able to deny construction requests. In some areas, boat houses are being converted into an accessory dwelling unit under construction guidelines for tiny homes.

If your tiny house is on wheels in North Yarmouth, is not on a permanent foundation and is not in the same location for more than 120 days of the year, you are considered to be camping. If the home remains in the same location for more than 120 days during the same year, it must comply with the established building codes for tiny homes. Exceptions are made if the tiny home was already on the land before the effective date of the ordinance or if the land's area is more than 30,000 square feet.

Maryland

This state has not officially defined what tiny houses are or created statewide requirements and restrictions. Generally, laws at the city level classify tiny houses on wheels as recreational vehicles. Because of this, they can only be placed in a designated RV park in most areas. The specific restrictions, such as those related to dimensions and occupancy, are usually established by the RV parks. In many areas, tiny houses on foundations are acceptable, but [zoning restrictions](#) in urban and suburban areas may not be conducive. Because of this, many tiny homes in Maryland are found in rural areas that have fewer restrictions.

Massachusetts

In Massachusetts, living in a tiny home that meets the qualifications for [an accessory dwelling unit](#) is much easier to do than living in a tiny home on wheels. Most towns in this state permit accessory dwelling units, but their building requirements for these units vary. In Nantucket, up to three homes may be on the same residential lot provided the third unit is less than 550 square feet.

Tiny homes on wheels in Massachusetts have not been formally defined, but these do not meet the [qualifications for an ADU](#). Generally, a tiny house on wheels can be used for temporary camping purposes in an RV park. However, you may run into challenges if you intend to live in a tiny house on wheels permanently in this state.

Michigan

Throughout Michigan, zoning restrictions and [building requirements have been adjusted to accommodate the unique limitations](#) of tiny homes. Some advocates have actively campaigned for accessory dwelling units in all residential areas throughout the state to be permitted.

Uniquely, [Briley Township](#) has introduced the concept of an Economy Efficiency Dwelling. This is defined as a home that has an area between 240 and 500 square feet. This type of dwelling's exterior dimensions must be between 12 and 20 feet tall and 20 to 30 feet wide. Furthermore, the building must comply with the state's sanitation and building codes and must meet all requirements for a Certificate of Occupancy. An Economy Efficiency Dwelling also needs to be constructed on a permanent foundation and is only permitted in areas zoned for Residential 2, Agriculture and Forest Rec.

Minnesota

Minnesota defines tiny houses in two specific ways for zoning purposes. It defines a tiny house on wheels as an RV. Permanent tiny houses that are site-built are accessory dwelling units. ADUs must be built on a foundation in Minnesota, and they must comply with [the same building codes](#) that cover all other residential structures in the state. While finding the right location to build or park a tiny house in Minnesota can be challenging, many areas are increasingly considering these homes to be a viable solution for affordable housing for seniors and disabled residents.

Mississippi

After Hurricane Katrina, tiny homes were used in communities across the state as a type of emergency shelter, but the use of these structures as permanent residences has not been addressed in many cities. The state has also not officially recognized tiny homes by defining building codes or zoning rules for them. There is an increasing number of tiny home builders serving Mississippi, however, and these builders are raising awareness about tiny home benefits. In areas where tiny homes are accepted, the typical size spans between 100 square feet and 900 square feet. Some of the communities that are more open to the idea of tiny homes are Southaven, Jackson, Vicksburg, Biloxi, Meridian, Hattiesburg, Meridian, Gulfport and Tupelo.

Missouri

In many areas throughout Missouri, a tiny house on wheels is classified as [a travel trailer](#), which places restrictions on where it can be parked. Specifically, a travel trailer in this state is classified as a portable temporary shelter that is mounted on a wheeled platform. Throughout the state, travel trailers cannot be parked in any public place or on a street, and they cannot be used inside city limits. Special permits are not required for tiny houses on wheels as long as the living area is less than 220 square feet and the home is towed by a motorized vehicle. However, these rules do not apply in an emergency disaster situation.

Some cities have specifically permitted site-built tiny homes on foundations, but they have individual zoning restrictions and construction guidelines. These cities include Saint Charles, Branson, St. Louis, Jefferson City, Kansas City, Columbia and Springfield.

Montana

Throughout Montana, local jurisdictions have not acknowledged tiny houses despite the fact that the state critically needs affordable housing solutions. With this in mind, those who wish to build or park a tiny house in Montana may need to thoroughly research laws in the relevant city and county,

and special permission may be needed in some cases. The state permits you to build your own tiny house. It will be classified as [a travel trailer or an RV](#), and it must comply with all relevant regulations and restrictions.

Nebraska

Nebraska has formally created definitions for different types of [tiny homes](#), and it has stated that specific building requirements and zoning restrictions for each of these housing types falls on the shoulders of cities. A manufactured or mobile home is defined as a structure that has been assembled according to regulations established in the HUD Federal Manufactured Home. These are tiny homes that have received a passing score from a HUD inspection and that have received an approval label.

Another type of tiny house defined by Nebraska is a modular home, which is built under the guidelines and codes established in the National Electric Code and the International Residential Code. These tiny houses have received a label approving their status as a Nebraska Modular Housing Unit.

The last type of tiny house that is recognized by Nebraska is a home on wheels that complies with the Park Model Recreational Vehicle Standard, the National Fire Protection Association Code 1192 or the [NFPA Standard](#) on Recreational Vehicles. These vehicles are classified in the same manner as travel trailers and motor-homes.

All of these must have an affixed label from the appropriate state or federal authority that indicates its compliance with relevant codes when it is put up for sale and when it is sold. Keep in mind that Nebraska does not have specific guidelines for site-built tiny houses, so these are subject to local jurisdictional guidelines.

Nevada

Throughout Nevada, [tiny homes are increasingly popular](#), but laws and guidelines have not been issued by the state. Local regulations in larger and smaller cities are generally accommodating, but these rules and restrictions vary dramatically. For example, [in Clark County](#), a unit cannot be classified as an accessory dwelling unit if it has a kitchen or any cooking facilities. If the structure is classified as a shed and is more than 200 square feet in area, a building permit is required. Clark County does not have specific laws or restrictions related to tiny homes, and residential building and zoning regulations are lenient enough that tiny homes can legally be constructed.

New Hampshire

Finding affordable housing in New Hampshire has been challenging for many residents recently, so the state's general acceptance of tiny houses is beneficial to many people. At the state level, a law has been passed that permits residential lots to have [accessory dwelling units](#). The law also [states that these units do not need to be occupied by the property owner](#), but the property owner must live on the same parcel of land. In addition, numerous counties do not have zoning laws that would restrict the construction or use of tiny houses. These counties are Tamworth, Alexandria, Lempster,

Canaan, Chatham, Ellsworth, Woodstock, Wentworth, Haverhill, Grafton, Warren, Rumney and Oxford.

New Jersey

Many residents in New Jersey are interested in the tiny home lifestyle because they provide an affordable housing solution in an area that has very expensive housing costs. However, state laws and zoning restrictions have not yet caught up to public sentiment. Some communities have specifically prevented tiny homes from being built. For example, in Tuckerton, the [Land Use Board](#) refused to provide approval for a tiny home community that would be occupied by military veterans. Other areas have passed laws allowing restricted uses of tiny houses. For example, Haverstraw allows you to build a tiny house on a foundation if it will be used by a property caretaker and only if the parcel of land meets acreage requirements. In Rockland-area communities, a tiny house on wheels that is classified as a recreational vehicle and that is not occupied can be stored on an unincorporated parcel.

New Mexico

New Mexico has gracious guidelines for tiny houses, and these make it fairly easy to live in a tiny home in this area. Specifically, the ceiling height cannot be less than 7 feet. In addition, the main room needs to measure at least 70 square feet, and it must be larger than 7 feet in both length and width. To be classified as a tiny house, the structure must have plumbing attached to the primary water and sewer system in the area, and it must be attached to or sit on a firm foundation. Furthermore, it must comply with the [New Mexico Energy Conservation Code](#), have a dedicated kitchen and bathroom area that both have hot and cold water and have a full bathroom with a shower or a bathtub. Additional requirements for tiny homes in New Mexico are related to the smoke alarms, exhaust fans, windows, exterior doors, wall-mounted lighting, heating source and more.

In Albuquerque, you are permitted to convert a tiny house on wheels into a permanent structure that meets legal guidelines. To do so, the home may need to be permanently anchored to a foundation, meet requirements for a Certificate of Occupancy and comply with [ANSI codes](#) and local residential building standards.

New York

In New York, a tiny house is considered to be a temporary shelter, and these are not permitted. [Tiny houses on wheels are RVs](#) and should be registered with the state, but you cannot feasibly live in this type of shelter on a full-time basis.

North Carolina

A hot debate continues about the acceptability of tiny houses throughout the state. Some residents believe that tiny houses will negatively impact the [value and appeal of their home](#). On the other hand, tiny homes are viewed favorably by some to address issues with overcrowding in high-density areas of the state and housing costs. In [Wilmington](#), tiny houses with one occupant must

have an area of at least 150 square feet. Another 100 square feet of space must be added for each additional occupant in the home.

In addition to this requirement, North Carolina tiny homes are subject to local housing ordinances as well. For example, in Winston-Salem, an accessory dwelling unit is permitted on single-family residential lots, but these units must be occupied by a relative or a caretaker. Numerous other restrictions and requirements impact tiny home living in other areas throughout the state, so careful review of the rules in a desired area is essential.

North Dakota

Tiny houses are increasingly popular in North Dakota, but state laws are not available yet that dictate specific restrictions and rules. At the city and county levels, these requirements vary and require a closer look. [Burleigh County](#), for example, is home to Bismarck and other communities, and it is among the largest counties in the state. In Burleigh County, zoning for residential lots requires homes to be at least 965 square feet, which is too large for a tiny home. However, tiny houses can be placed or built on agricultural lots throughout the county as long as they comply with the Burleigh County Ordinance and the North Dakota Century Code. They can also be placed or built on lots that are more than 40 acres. In Burleigh County, all residential structures must meet local building codes, and they should be connected to public utilities for water, electricity, gas and sewer. All tiny homes on wheels that will remain in one location must be mounted to a permanent foundation. In Burleigh County, accessory dwelling units are not acceptable, but a specialized granny suite that meets specific requirements is viable when specific requirements are met.

Ohio

Ohio is one of many states that has not yet developed a classification system for tiny houses, so it is not surprising to learn that the regulations and laws have also not addressed tiny homes in many areas. In [Cleveland](#), for example, the minimum square footage for a residential home of any kind is 950 square feet. Local ordinances have not been defined to account for the smaller size of tiny homes and their unique construction requirements. Cleveland does allow [accessory dwelling units](#), but these cannot be used as a primary residence. In other areas, tiny homes are often grouped together with other structures that are described as a variance. Because of the general confusion among Ohio residents about whether tiny homes are permitted and where they can be built, tiny home living has not yet gained full traction in this state.

Oklahoma

Statewide regulations and definitions related to tiny houses have not been produced in Oklahoma, but that has not prevented some tiny house communities from cropping up. For example, several communities are found in the northwestern region of the state and in the Wheeler District. The state does classify tiny houses on wheels as recreational vehicles, and these must meet all related requirements. Because residential zoning rules and regulations in many Oklahoma cities have not addressed the specific needs of tiny houses, many people who want to live in a tiny home choose a home site in a rural area that is not governed by strict zoning regulations.

Oregon

Like many other states, Oregon does have established housing construction and zoning requirements pertaining to tiny houses. In many other states, the lack of requirements has prevented widespread popularity of tiny houses, but this is not the case for Oregon residents. One reason for this may be because of the popularity of the state's Tiny House Hotel.

Across the state, a tiny house on wheels can be titled through the Department of Motor Vehicles. However, the Recreational Vehicle Industry Association has not yet taken control over permits and inspections for tiny homes on wheels. Therefore, those who live in a tiny house on wheels in Oregon must use a commercial hauler and a special trip permit each time they want to relocate to a new area.

One notable [law affects Portland](#) tiny homeowners. Residential properties in Portland can only accommodate one recreational or one tiny house at a time.

Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania generally welcomes tiny homes, but some communities are more inviting and accommodating than others. For example, Elizabethtown touts itself as being home to the largest community of tiny homes in the country. In Philadelphia, which is the largest city in Pennsylvania, tiny houses do not need to comply with a minimum house size requirement. However, they must be constructed according to the [International Residential Code 2009](#). They also must have at least one room that is 120 square feet or larger and another room that is at least 70 square feet. Except for the kitchen in a tiny home, no room may be less than 7 feet in length, width or height. Other smaller and larger communities have unique tiny home zoning requirements and guidelines.

Rhode Island

Rhode Island does not currently recognize tiny homes through zoning ordinances and construction codes, but it has recently passed a law permitting accessory dwelling units to be constructed if the primary home is owner-occupied and if the [ADU will be used by a family member](#) who is at least 62 years old. In Providence and smaller communities throughout Rhode Island, construction codes and zoning ordinances vary.

South Carolina

As housing costs continue to rise in South Carolina, tiny homes are increasingly popular. However, widespread acceptance of tiny homes in the form of accommodations in zoning and ordinances has not yet been achieved. Nonetheless, the conversation has been started in many areas. In [Greenville County](#), permanent tiny houses that are less than 400 square feet are permitted. On the other hand, [Rock Hill](#) has established the minimum square footage of residential homes at 850 square feet. This is prohibitive of tiny homes.

South Dakota

South Dakota has made huge strides in the acceptance of tiny homes. Many smaller and larger communities throughout the state have passed ordinances that outline guidelines for tiny homes in the area. For example, a temporary tiny home on wheels is permitted in Spearfish at a commercial campground. Permanent tiny homes in Spearfish must comply with local zoning restrictions and building codes. In Beresford, tiny homes on wheels must be mounted on a licensed trailer. When the trailer is parked, the mobile tiny house must be tethered to the ground. Permanent tiny houses [in Beresford](#) must be mounted to a solid foundation. A single-occupant tiny house must have at least 187 square feet of living space, and the house size must increase by 50 square feet for each additional person living in the tiny house. The house's width must be between 8.5 feet and 20 feet.

Tennessee

Tiny homes are openly welcomed in some areas of this state, and they face vehement opposition in other areas. For example, in Etowah, the city adjusted its residential building codes so that the minimum size of a home in a Residential 1 zoning area is 800 square feet. The minimum home size in Residential 2 and Residential 3 zoning areas is 600 square feet.

On the other hand, Dandridge has approved building guidelines for tiny houses on permanent foundations. These homes can range in size between 100 and 300 square feet. In [Warren County](#), officials have adjusted the minimum house size to 138 square feet to accommodate tiny homes. [Knoxville](#) is one of the largest cities in Tennessee that has embraced tiny home living. Under the 2012 IRC guidelines, tiny homes in Knoxville with one occupant should be at least 120 square feet. A home with two occupants should be at least 320 square feet. Occupancy in tiny homes is limited to three people.

Texas

While tiny homes are not popular in all areas of the state yet, Texas generally has established regulations that are favorable to tiny home enthusiasts. These regulations and codes are determined by local jurisdictions. In Breckenridge, tiny houses must be affixed to a permanent foundation and should be at least 320 square feet. In [Spur](#), there is no minimum square footage requirement. This city also welcomes tiny houses on wheels as long as the wheels have been removed and the home is anchored to the ground. Notably, Spur is known as the first American city to be "tiny house-friendly."

Several larger cities in Texas have also embraced tiny homes. For example, [Fort Worth](#) allows accessory dwelling units that are less than 400 square feet. Permits are available through an in-person application at Town Hall. In [Austin](#), there is no minimum size requirement for permanent tiny homes on foundations. Tiny homes on wheels are classified as recreational vehicles and must comply with RV regulations and rules.

Utah

Utah is slowly edging its way into acceptance of tiny homes. Numerous tiny house builders serve local residents, but local codes and ordinances in many areas have not yet caught up with demand for these affordable shelters. For example, in [Eagle Mountain City](#), mobile tiny homes are only permitted in the base and tier 1 zone areas for residential properties. In [Washington County](#), tiny homes up to 300 square feet are permitted in residential zoning areas if they are on a permanent foundation and if they are connected to public utilities. Wheeled tiny homes must comply with restrictions and guidelines for park model recreational vehicles. [Salt Lake City](#) has passed an ordinance that permits accessory dwelling units on residential lots. These must be the greater of 650 square feet or 50 percent of the primary home's square footage.

Vermont

Vermont's residents have struggled with expensive housing costs, but the largest cities in the state have strict limitations that are not conducive to building or parking a tiny home in the city limits. However, some of these areas enable you to build an [accessory dwelling unit](#) on your property. This is the case in Burlington, where there is no minimum square footage requirement for ADUs. Throughout the state, some residents are skirting around regulations by maintaining a low profile in a tiny house on wheels. Notably, the maximum square footage of a tiny house in Williston is set at 1,500 square feet.

Virginia

The demand for tiny houses in Virginia is increasing, but stringent and restrictive regulations and zoning ordinances in some areas are not conducive. For example, [Virginia Beach](#) has not established specific codes or rules related to tiny houses. This means that tiny houses must meet the same residential building codes as other homes. Some of these codes are not conducive tiny homes. On the other hand, tiny homes with at least 200 square feet of living space are permitted in Staunton County.

Washington

Tiny houses in foundations are relatively popular in this state, and this largely attributed to existing regulations for ADUs in many communities. Unfortunately, regulations are not lenient in Washington for those who wish to park a tiny house on wheels. Consider that [King County](#) only allows tiny houses to be built on permanent foundations. Tiny houses on wheels are not permitted. In [Seattle](#), a tiny house must comply with the requirements for an ADU, and the house must be registered for this purpose. This city also does not permit tiny houses on wheels. In [Woodland](#), structures that are classified as ADUs are permitted and must have a living area between 300 and 800 square feet.

West Virginia

The tiny house trend has not fully gained popularity in West Virginia, so these shelters are primarily used for temporary shelter in emergency situations. Traditional house regulations and building codes have not been adjusted in most areas to accommodate tiny homes. Areas that do accept tiny

homes or ADUs may have restrictive requirements. [Jefferson County](#), which is where Charles Town is located, has a maximum size restriction for accessory dwelling units set at 1,700 square feet.

Wisconsin

Wisconsin accommodates tiny houses on permanent foundations reasonably well in many areas. Throughout most of the state, jurisdictions classify them as accessory dwelling units, so they must comply with local ADU ordinances. For example, [Dane County](#) is included in the Madison metropolitan area, and it permits ADUs up to 800 square feet on residential properties. However, Madison specifically states that a tiny house on wheels is a portable rather than permanent shelter if it is less than 150 square feet.

Wyoming

Given the prevalence of tourism in Wyoming, it is not surprising that many of the tiny houses in this state are used as [rental properties](#). Some residents are also choosing to live in their tiny homes on a full-time basis. Specific regulations vary dramatically. In [Cody](#), which is located close to Yellowstone National Park, tiny houses on wheels cannot be used as accessory dwelling units. They are considered to be recreational vehicles and must meet all requirements and restrictions for RVs. In [Casper](#), which sits slightly off-center from the middle of the state, tiny houses on wheels are included in the city's definition of a trailer home. Because of this, they are only permitted on land with R-6 zoning. This is zoning for manufactured mobile homes. Permanent tiny houses on foundations are permitted as long as the combined space for the living room and bedroom are at least 220 square feet. If these rooms are separated, they must each be larger than 120 square feet. These permanent tiny houses in Casper are officially described as efficiency dwelling units.

The Bottom Line

While tiny homes are increasingly popular to varying degrees across the country, some local and state governments have not kept pace with the popularity. In some areas, the local residents are opposed to tiny homes entering the area, but tiny homes are openly embraced in other areas.

If you have decided that tiny home living is right for you, be aware that many areas have more lenient or favorable requirements for permanent tiny homes on foundations than for tiny homes on wheels. Before purchasing an existing tiny home or building your own home, take the time to thoroughly research and understand all applicable zoning ordinances and codes. Be aware that these vary dramatically from one jurisdiction to another. Because of avocation in some areas, regulations for tiny homes in some areas may change rapidly as well.

While it may initially seem stressful and confusing to find the right place to live in your new tiny home, rest assured that the effort will be worthwhile. Many others have already gone through this preliminary research and planning process, and they are happily living in their tiny home today as a result.