

Director's Rule 9-2017

Applicant: City of Seattle Department of Construction and Inspections	Page 1 of 3	Supersedes: 7-2016
	Publication: 5/04/2017	Effective: 6/30/2017
Subject: Small Efficiency Dwelling Units	Code and Section Reference: Seattle Building Code	
	Type of Rule: Code Interpretation	
	Ordinance Authority: SMC 3.06.040	
Index: Seattle Building Code	Approved (signature on file) Nathan Torgelson, Director, Seattle DCI	Date 6/28/2017

BACKGROUND:

This Rule sets forth minimum room size and other technical requirements for small efficiency dwelling units.

Seattle Building Code (SBC) Section 1208 outlines minimum interior space dimensions for room widths (1208.1), ceiling heights (1208.2), and room area, (1208.3) for dwelling units, and (1208.4) for efficiency dwelling units. Section 1208.4 also requires units be provided a separate closet and bathroom, kitchen area with a kitchen sink, cooking appliance, and refrigeration facilities.

This Rule allows for efficiency units smaller than required by Section 1208.4, when other specified amenities are provided.

This Rule does not modify the required standards for Type A or Type B dwelling units.

RULE:

Dwelling units shall comply with the SBC Section 1208 for interior dimensions, except when modified by this Rule. Small efficiency dwelling units (SEDU) are single, independent, residential units consisting of one habitable room (excluding kitchen, bath, closets, storage areas, and built-ins).

Dwelling units having a living room floor area 220 square feet or greater, or a total gross unit size exceeding 320 square feet measured to the interior face of unit bounding walls, are not considered small efficiency dwelling units and at a minimum, shall meet the efficiency dwelling unit requirements found in SBC Section 1208.4.

FLOOR AREA:

Habitable Space: A SEDU shall have a living room of at least 120 square feet of net floor area of habitable space meeting dimensions outlined in SBC 1208.1 and 1208.2.

Occupiable Space: A SEDU shall have an additional 30 square feet of net floor area of occupiable space, which is not required to meet the habitable space dimensions of SBC 1208.1, contiguous to the 120-net square foot living room floor area.

The required 150 square feet of net floor area of contiguous habitable/occupiable space shall be on one floor level.

Space occupied by structural features, bathrooms, closets, cabinets, appliances, built-ins, or any encroachments not specified in SBC 1208.1 and 1208.2, shall not be included when calculating the required net floor area.

FOOD PREPARATION AREA:

A food preparation area shall be provided with the following components with each having a clear working space of not less than 30 inches:

- cooking appliance;
- refrigerator;
- sink with hot and cold water;
- food and utensil storage space; and
- contiguous countertop work area of not less than 4 square feet

For the purposes of this Rule only, a microwave oven is permitted to serve as the cooking appliance and shall not encroach on the required countertop work area. The food preparation area shall be provided with two 20 amperes small appliance branch circuits. Each circuit shall serve at least one duplex receptacle. Built-in cooking appliances shall be on an additional circuit.

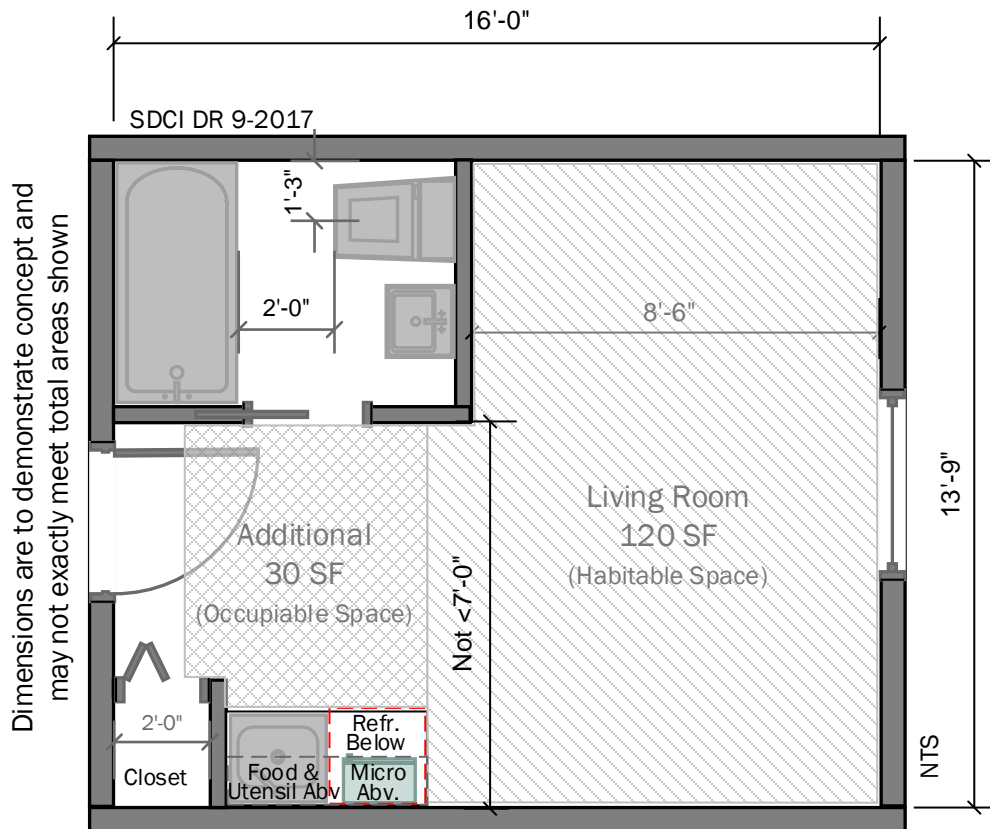
CLOSETS AND STORAGE:

A built-in closet shall be provided within each unit. The portion of a closet used to store built-in beds or other equipment shall not be counted in the SEDU's required square footage, and it also shall not be counted as a required closet. Additionally, there shall be 55 cubic feet of storage space provided for each unit located anywhere within the building, and several may be grouped together in a common storage area.

NATURAL LIGHT:

Habitable/occupiable space shall be provided with natural light per SBC Section 1205.2.

Small Efficiency Dwelling Unit Design Example:



***This example does not meet requirements for Type A or Type B Dwelling Units**

For this example:

The gross unit size of 16'-0" X 13'-9" = 220 SF (<320 SF satisfies SEDU)

Living Room net floor area = 120 SF (<220 SF satisfies SEDU)

Occupiable space ≥ 30 SF (=150 SF habitable/occupiable space satisfies SEDU)

Closet not part of built-in equipment or storage areas satisfies SEDU

Minimum 4 SF countertop work area satisfies SEDU

Microwave (cooking appliance) satisfies SEDU

Upper & lower cabinet for food & utensil storage satisfies SEDU

Window provides minimum 8% natural light, satisfies SEC Section 1205.2.

Note: 55 cubic feet of additional storage space shall be provided for each unit and located in the building.