



# Second Units

A guide for homeowners in Brampton



**BRAMPTON**  
Flower City

Second units are permitted in detached, semi-detached and townhouse dwellings in Brampton, subject to zoning requirements and restrictions. In order to be legal, second units must be registered with the City of Brampton.

A second unit is a self-contained residential unit located within a house. It may be in any part of the house, including the basement.

### You may also see second units referred to as:

- Basement apartments
- Two-unit housing
- Granny flats
- In-law suites
- Accessory apartments
- Secondary units/suites

Second units provide an affordable housing option for many people in Brampton. This guide has been created to help Brampton homeowners through the process of building and registering a safe, legal and livable second unit. This provides an overview of the process; for more detailed information, visit [www.brampton.ca/secondunits](http://www.brampton.ca/secondunits)

## Why does my second unit need to be registered?

These policies are intended to make second units safe, legal and livable. Completing the one-time registration process ensures a second unit meets all requirements under the Ontario Building Code or Fire Code, Electrical Safety Authority and local Zoning By-law.

A registration system also helps the City identify the location of second units. This information is shared with Brampton Fire; in case of emergency, they will know there is a second unit in your house before they even arrive. This can save precious seconds in a life-or-death situation.



*If there are any differences between this guide and the formal regulations and by-laws, the formal regulations will apply*

# Registration process

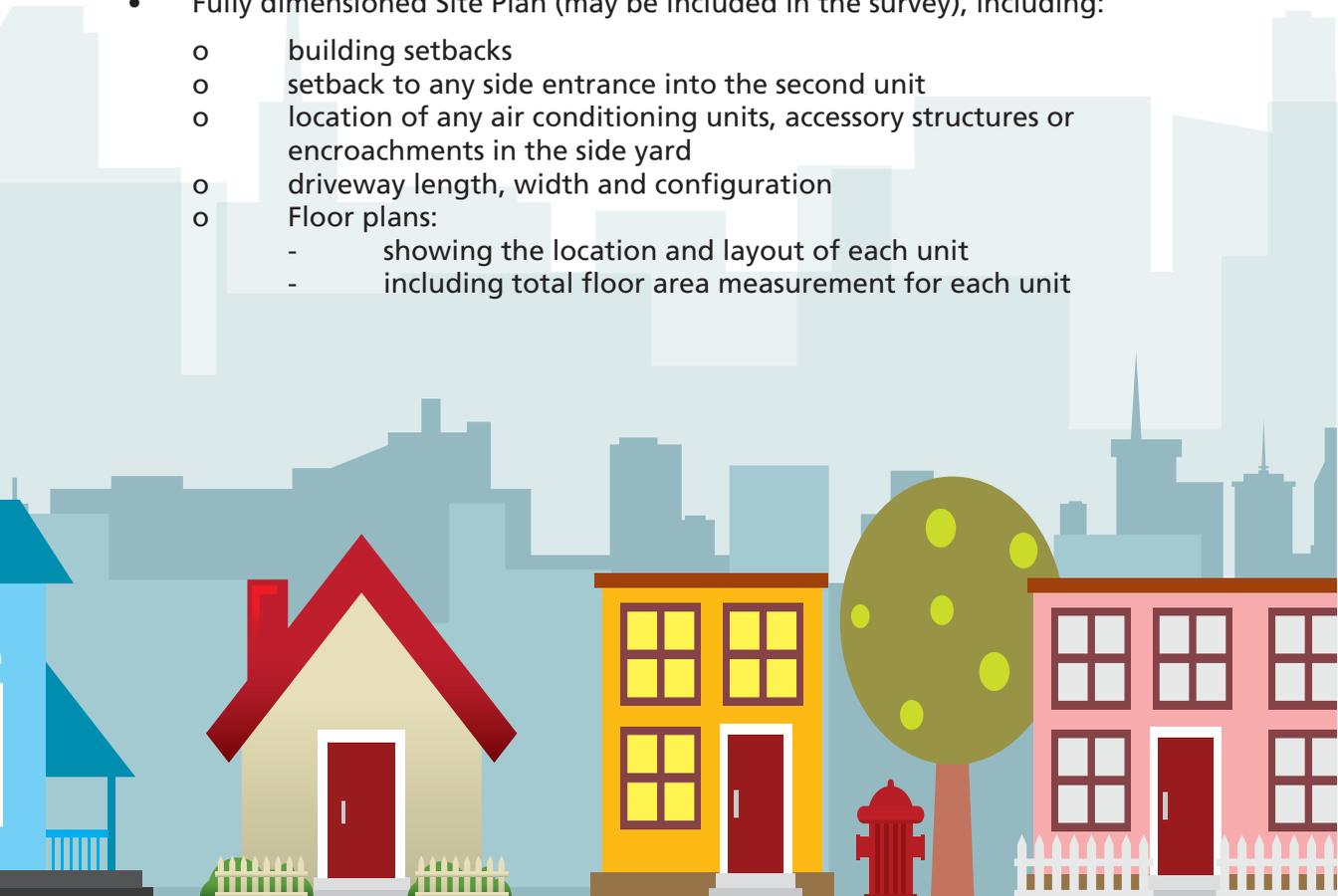
Registering a second unit is a one-time process to make the dwelling safe for the residents of both units. To be legal, a second unit must be registered with the City of Brampton and meet the following general requirements:

- Zoning By-law compliance
- Building Code and/or Fire Code compliance
- Electrical Safety Authority compliance
- Verification of homeowner's insurance
- Payment of all required fees

## Step 1: Apply for registration of a two-unit dwelling

Requirements include:

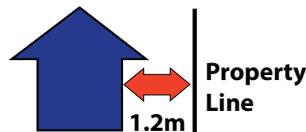
- Completed Application for Registration – Two-Unit Dwelling
- Payment of non-refundable application deposit (\$200)
- Legal survey of the property
- Fully dimensioned Site Plan (may be included in the survey), including:
  - o building setbacks
  - o setback to any side entrance into the second unit
  - o location of any air conditioning units, accessory structures or encroachments in the side yard
  - o driveway length, width and configuration
  - o Floor plans:
    - showing the location and layout of each unit
    - including total floor area measurement for each unit



## Step 2: Zoning By-law Compliance

The provisions for two-unit dwellings outlined in the Zoning By-law require a second unit to comply with the following requirements and restrictions:

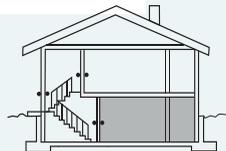
1. Only one second unit is allowed in a two-unit dwelling.
2. At least one additional parking space must be provided for the second unit, in addition to the required parking for the main unit. For most homes, a total of three parking spaces will be required. All parking spaces must be located entirely within the property boundaries. You may include spaces in the garage and/or tandem parking spaces, but may not include the street or boulevard. Required parking spaces must measure at least 2.7 metres wide by 5.4 metres long.
3. The entrance to the second unit can be in the side or rear yard, as long as there is a 1.2-metre clear path of travel to the entrance. Access to the second unit can also be provided from inside the garage or through a common foyer inside the house.



4. A second unit can be up to 45 per cent of the gross floor area (GFA) of the principal unit. If the house is a bungalow, the second unit can be up to 75 per cent of the GFA.

### For example:

- a. Bungalow with basement – if the GFA of the main floor is 1,000 square feet, the second unit can be up to 750 square feet.
- b. Two-storey house with basement – if the GFA of the main floor plus second floor is 2,000 square feet, the second unit can be up to 900 square feet.



5. Second units are not permitted on lands zoned Open Space, Floodplain or within the area identified as the Downtown Floodplain Regulation Area.

Second units that have been previously declared Legal Non-Conforming by the City do not need to comply with the new zoning provisions for two-unit dwellings. Certification of Legal Non-Conforming status must be submitted when you apply for registration.

## Step 3: Building Code Compliance

Creating a second unit requires compliance with the Ontario Building Code; if the unit has been previously declared Legal Non-Conforming, it must comply with the Fire Code (see below). Meeting the minimum standards for health and safety ensures appropriate:

- exiting
- early warning systems
- smoke and fire containment

When creating a second unit, you must submit an application for a building permit for the change of use. For information about the Ontario Building Code and construction requirements for second units, visit [www.brampton.ca/building](http://www.brampton.ca/building).

Inspections must be done by Building Division staff after each stage of construction, as required by the Building Code. Once all inspections are completed, an Occupancy Permit will be issued. You will need this Occupancy Permit to finalize registration.

### **Fire Code Compliance for Legal Non-Conforming Units**

If the second unit has been declared Legal Non-Conforming, the owner of the property will be directed to contact Fire and Emergency Services to arrange for a Fire Code inspection (\$450 fee).

Fire staff will inspect the dwelling to ensure it complies with the Fire Code and identify any required upgrades.

If upgrades are required, a building permit must be obtained. Once any required upgrades are completed, a final inspection will be done by Fire staff.



## Step 4: Final registration

### Final registration requires:

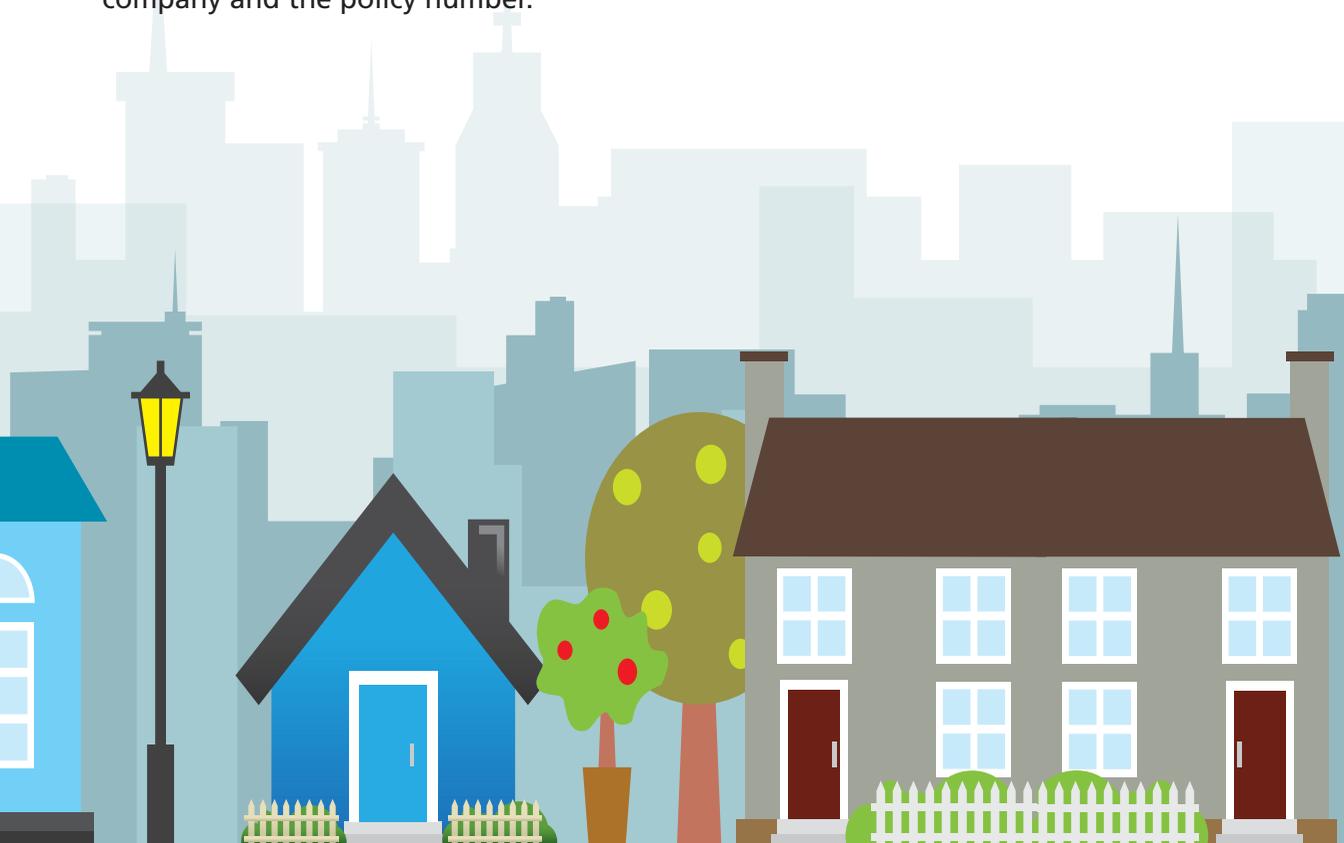
- Occupancy permit and Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) inspection report  
OR
- Confirmation of compliance with the Fire Code (includes ESA inspection)

### PLUS

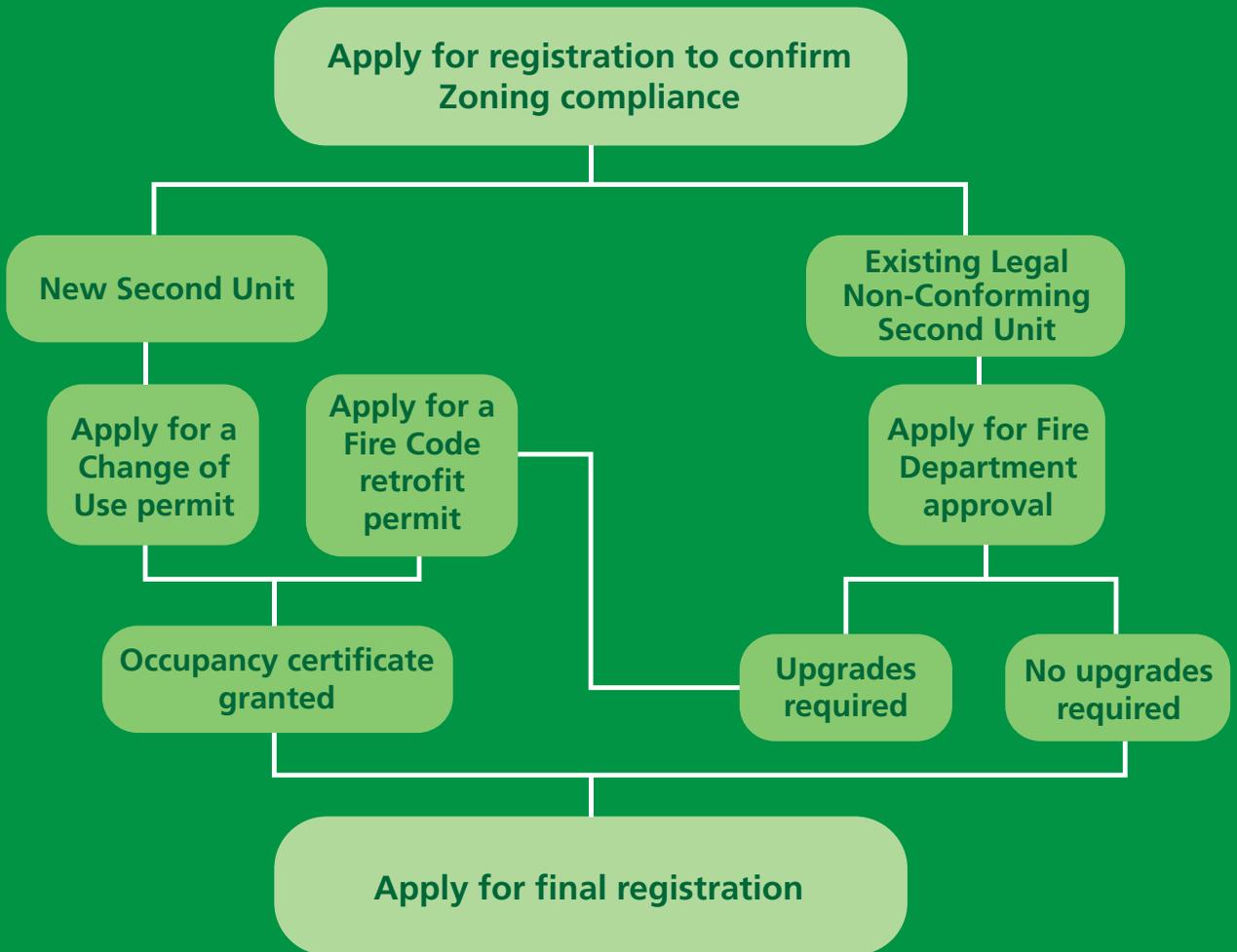
- Verification of homeowner's insurance for a two-unit dwelling
- Payment of final registration fee
  - \$500 – if you, as the owner, are living in the house
  - \$1,000 – if you, as the owner, are not living in the house

### Insurance

As a landlord, it's important that you have proper home insurance coverage. According to the Insurance Bureau of Canada, if something were to happen – such as a fire in your second unit – and your insurance provider is unaware that you have a tenant living there, your policy could be voided. As part of the registration process, you will be required to provide verification of insurance, including the name of your insurance company and the policy number.



# The chart below provides an overview of the registration process.



# Contacts

For more information on Brampton's two-unit dwelling (second unit) registration program:

**Website:** [www.brampton.ca/secondunits](http://www.brampton.ca/secondunits)

**Phone:** 311 (within Brampton) or 905.874.2090 (outside Brampton)

**In person:** City of Brampton Building Division  
8850 McLaughlin Road, Unit 1 (Flower City Community Campus)  
Monday to Friday, 8:30 am – 4:30 pm

**Email:** [twounit.zoning@brampton.ca](mailto:twounit.zoning@brampton.ca)

## Other contacts

Brampton Fire Services  
225 Central Park Drive, Brampton  
[fire.prevention@brampton.ca](mailto:fire.prevention@brampton.ca)  
905.874.2740

Electrical Safety Authority  
[www.esasafe.com](http://www.esasafe.com)  
1.877.ESA.SAFE (372.7233)

Insurance Bureau of Canada  
[www.ibc.ca](http://www.ibc.ca)  
1.800.387.2880

Professional Engineers Ontario  
[www.peo.on.ca](http://www.peo.on.ca)

Ontario Association of Architects  
[www.oaa.on.ca](http://www.oaa.on.ca)

Association of Architectural  
Technologists of Ontario  
[www.aato.ca](http://www.aato.ca)

Ontario 1 Call (Call before you dig)  
[www.on1call.com](http://www.on1call.com)

Land Registry Office  
1 Gateway Boulevard, Brampton  
905.874.4008