



Engineer, Architect, Designer Pre-approved ADU Instructions

To submit an ADU plan for pre-approval all the steps below must be completed. Multiple plans may be submitted. All plans shall be no more than 1200 square feet. Plans submitted after October 18, 2024, will not be guaranteed to be on the website at launch on January 1, 2025. Plans will be accepted continuously. However, the processing and approval time may vary.

Note: Each Standard Plan must be updated each time Kern County adopts new building codes, building policies, or zoning regulations and may require a new permit number.

Step 1: Application/ Online Account Setup

Kern County, being the third largest in the state, will divide the area into three distinct regions based on climate zones due to its vast size and diverse design criteria. As a result, applicants will need to submit separate applications for each designated climate zone.

Please fill out a [Building Permit Application](#) online. All plans and documentation must be submitted digitally. Please reference our [guide](#) on how to set up an online account if you do not already have one. Please ensure that the contact information on file is correct, as it will be published on our website for customers to contact you for authorization to use the pre-approved plan set.

Please utilize the information below when applying for a permit:

- Project Description: Pre-approved Standard ADU Plan (include square footage and climate zone)
- Application Type: Kern Standard Plan
- APN: 999-999-99 (Legal Description should say: FOR ADU STANDARD PLANS)

Fees: Fees will be assessed in accordance with [fee schedule](#)

Step 2: Submit Plans Online

All plans must be submitted digitally as a single document. Please ensure that plans are flattened, layers are removed, and the orientation is correct prior to upload. Plans shall include **all** of the the information below:

- 1) Cover Sheet that states Climate Zone, Wind Speed/ Exposure, & Seismic Design Criteria
- 2) Required notes blocks for applicable 2022 codes. PDFs of the required notes can be obtained via the attached document. **SRA Requirements must be included in all plan sets.**
- 3) Architectural plans shall include elevations, cross-sections, utility plans, and architectural details.
- 4) Structural plan set that includes a foundation plan, shear wall plan, roof framing plan, floor framing plan (if applicable), and structural detail pages as referenced in structural plan pages. **Parcels in flood zones will not be eligible to use pre-approved ADU plans.**
- 5) A CF1R that is climate zone specific (13, 14, or 16) and utilizes all directions for orientation and PV orientation. This should also include [Mandatory Measures](#).
- 6) PV plans (in accordance with CF1R requirements)
- 7) [CALGreen Mandatory Measures](#)
- 8) A spot in the title block for jurisdiction's approval stamp
- 9) A copy of the [CWM Forms](#) (to be filled out in the field)

Step 3: Submit Calculations Online

Kern County is the third largest county in the state. As such, the design criteria can vary significantly. In efforts to streamline the design and review process, we have analyzed various design criteria and provided minimum design specifications by climate zone (see table below).

All associated calculations should be submitted online as a calc. Calculations done by a Registered Design Professional shall be signed and stamped. **All plans require structural calculations, including prescriptive plans.** The following calculations packets should be submitted.

- 1) Structural Calculations in accordance with the provided design criteria for the various climate zones
- 2) Truss Calculations (if applicable) from a [Kern County Approved Truss Manufacturer](#) that include the stamp of the truss manufacturers' engineer, truss layout (stamped and reviewed by a RDP if not prescriptive). Truss Calculations cannot be deferred.
- 3) PV racking and attachment calculations may be required if the array is ground mount, on a metal roof, or not conforming to the [Residential Rooftop Solar Submittal Requirements](#).

| Design Criteria by Climate Zone |
|--|
| Climate Zone 13: Ultimate Design Wind Speed & Exposure: 95 mph, C Ground Snow Load: 0 psf Seismic: $S_s = 1.0$ $S_1 = 0.5$ SDC (Prescriptive) = D ₂ |
| Climate Zone 14: Ultimate Design Wind Speed & Exposure: 110 mph, C Ground Snow Load: 0 psf Seismic: $S_s = 1.5$ $S_1 = 0.5$ SDC (Prescriptive) = D ₂ |
| Climate Zone 16: Ultimate Design Wind Speed & Exposure: 95 mph, C Ground Snow Load: 40 psf Seismic: $S_s = 1.5$ $S_1 = 0.5$ SDC (Prescriptive) = D ₂ |

Step 4: Review

Once a complete set of plans is submitted and routed to plan check, the review process will be essentially identical to any other plan. One important difference is that Standard Plans cannot be redlined. So, all corrections must be printed on the uploaded plan set.

Step 5: Approval

Approved plans will be published on the website with the Engineer, Architect, or Designer's contact information. If at any time the responsible party wishes to remove the plans from our website, they must provide a signed letter to the Building Inspection Department.

Once a potential customer has contacted you to use your plan, please refer to After Approval Instructions for Engineers, Architects, & Designers.

Note: Kern County Building Inspection Department reserves the right to remove plans from website.

Additional Resources:

- [Residential Checklist](#)
- [Permit Status](#)
- [SRA Requirements](#)
- [Best Management Practices](#)
- [Kern County GIS](#)