

Viki's Guide to Permitting Tiny Homes and Tiny Home Communities in Jefferson County, WA

Where you can legally put your tiny house in WASHINGTON depends on:

- > What standard it is built to > Who permits and inspects it > Local zoning codes

If it's not built to a standard, then it's not permissible.

WA State Legal Definition of Tiny House: Dwelling that may be built on wheels; is no larger than 400 sf, not including lofts; includes permanent provisions for living, sleeping, eating, cooking and sanitation; and is built to Washington State Building Code including IRC Appendix Q as amended by WA State.

Basically, any tiny house built to IRC (International Residential Code) standards can go anywhere a conventional house will go. Some tiny houses on wheels -- those built to ANSI 119.5 standard for RV's -- are allowed in RV parks. These are called **Tiny House RVs**.



Tiny House on Foundation (THOF)

What Standard: IRC
Who Permits: City or County
Zoning: Most residential zones
Pros: Greater design flexibility; More head room in lofts; More likely to appreciate in value; More places to locate
Cons: More expensive than tiny house RV; Fixed location



Skid-built Tiny House (aka Post-and-Beam)

What Standard: IRC
Who Permits: City or County
Zoning: Most residential zones
Pros: Moveable; Can be wider than THOW; More places to locate
Cons: More expensive than tiny house RV; Sits up off ground



Tiny House on Wheels (THOW)

What Standard: IRC
Who Permits: Department of Licensing and Industries
Zoning: Most residential zones
Pros: Can be built off-site; Mobile; Built to high standard
Cons: Few builders build to IRC; Building on a trailer (chassis) restricts design options, less room

Tiny House RV

What Standard: ANSI
Who Permits: Department of Licensing and Industries
Zoning: Allowed in RV Parks in non-residential zones
Pros: Can be built off site; Builder financing available; Less expensive than IRC models
Cons: Building on a trailer (chassis) restricts design options; fewer places to locate

Zoning Requirements by Tiny Home Community Type, Port Townsend and Jefferson County, WA

Community Types	Allowed Number of Dwelling Units*	Minimum Lot Size	Allowable Density	Code	Allowed Types of Tiny Houses	Permit Required
Backyard Community	City and County: 2 dwellings (primary dwelling plus ADU)	City: 5000 sf County: 5 acres except in Hadlock/Irondale	City: 1 primary dwelling, 1 ADU, 1 detached bedroom/5000 sf County: 13-18 primary dwellings in UDHR zone	City: PTMC Table 17.16.030 County: JCUDC Chapter 18.15.015 and Table 3A-2	THOF permitted by local building officials THOW permitted as modular house by L&I	No permit needed for community
Cottage Housing Development (also known as pocket neighborhoods)	City: 4 to 12 dwellings in R II and 4 to 14 in R III	10000 sf (2 standard lots)	City: 1 cottage unit per 2500 sf	City: PTMC Chapter 17.34 County: No provision in code	THOF permitted by local building officials THOW permitted as modular house by L&I	Administrative Review of community plan
Planned Unit Development and Planned Rural Residential Development	City: 12+ units County: 45 units in clusters of 20 units plus density bonus	City: 40000 sf in RI and RII; 20000 sf in RIII County: 10 Acres in RR 1:5 zone	City: No greater than density in underlying zones County: Density bonus for affordable housing	City: PTMC Chapter 17.32 County: JCUDC Article VI-M and Article 18.15.520	THOF permitted by local building officials THOW permitted as modular house by L&I	Planned Unit Development Agreement by City or County
RV Park	City: Not specified (Stay limited to 180 days) County: 60 spaces	City: Not specified County: 5 acres	City: Not specified County: 60 spaces per 5 acres	City: PTMC 17.24 County: JCUDC 18.20.350	Tiny House RV's (ANSI permitted)	RV Park Permit
Temporary Supported Housing for homeless	City: 30 units (Stay limited to 180 days) County: Not specified	City: Not specified, setbacks required County: Not specified	City: Not specified	City: PTMC County: Unnamed Use	Tiny Shelters	Temporary Encampment Permit
Permanent Supported Housing for homeless	Not currently allowed					Special Zoning Ordinance

Definitions

PTMC: Port Townsend Municipal Code

JCUDC: Jefferson County Unified Development Code

UDHR: Urban

Notes

1. Allowable density = allowed number of dwellings/minimum lot size
2. Affordable density bonus = 50% increase in density linked to dwelling size, e.g. in RII zone, two tiny home ADU's per lot.
3. There are no specified limits to the number of detached bedrooms in the county.
4. A cottage housing development features perimeter parking and central commons (that is, dwelling facing inwards towards common space).