

# Granny flats for homeowners

JANUARY 2026

The granny flats building consent exemption allows you to build a new, standalone, single-storey dwelling up to 70 square metres without a building consent, provided all exemption conditions are met.

- › You are legally responsible for compliance with the Building Code and exemption conditions under the Building Act 2004.
- › Engage licensed building professionals to design and build your granny flat.
- › Councils do not inspect or approve exempt work but will issue a project information memorandum (PIM) and store records on your property file.

## What homeowners need to know and do at each stage



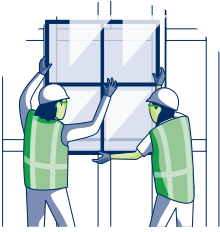
### 1. PLAN A GRANNY FLAT

- › **Check eligibility:** Your granny flat must be new, standalone, up to 70 square metres, single-storey, self-contained and meet all other exemption conditions.
- › **Site checks:** Confirm your site is free from unmitigated natural hazards and complies with local planning rules.
- › **Finance and insurance:** Lenders and insurers may require documentation proving compliance. Discuss their requirements early.
- › **Do your due diligence:** Check for all requirements and obtain approvals – so you can make informed decisions, avoid costly mistakes, and ensure your project is legal and safe.



### 2. DESIGN A GRANNY FLAT

- › **Engage licensed building professionals:** Only Licensed Building Practitioners (LBPs), registered architects, or CPEng engineers can design, and only licensed building professionals can build.
- › **Apply for a PIM:** Submit preliminary design plans to your council and receive a PIM before starting work.
- › **Collect documentation:** Ensure you receive Certificates of Work from designers and keep all plans and specifications.
- › **Plan for compliance:** All work must comply fully with the Building Code.



### 3. BUILD A GRANNY FLAT

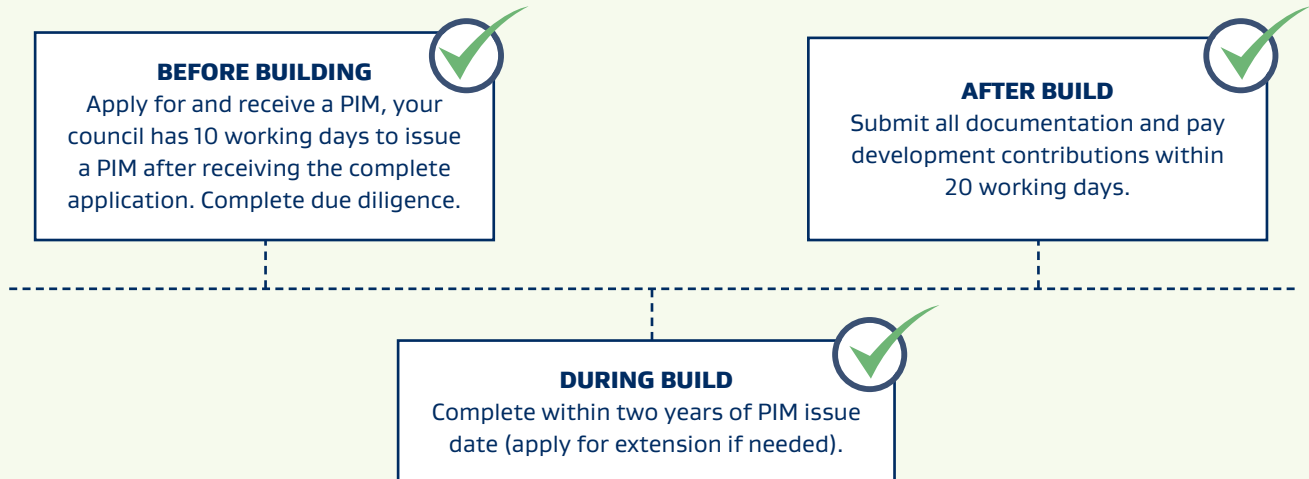
- › **Apply for and receive a PIM:** You must apply for and receive a PIM from the council before building work starts.
- › **Project management:** Consider whether to manage the build yourself or engage a project manager to coordinate trades, schedule quality assurance (QA) checks and collect documentation.
- › **Build to plans:** All building work must follow the plans and specifications and comply with the Building Code.
- › **Quality assurance (QA):** Consider arranging third-party or professional QA checks at key stages (foundations, framing, pre-line, final).
- › **Manage changes:** Any variation may affect exemption eligibility – consult your designer and council if in doubt. Final plans must reflect what was built on site.



### 4. COMPLETE A GRANNY FLAT (WITHIN 2 YEARS OF PIM ISSUE DATE – APPLY FOR AN EXTENSION IF NEEDED).

- › **Collect records:** Obtain final design plans, Certificates of Work, Records of Work from all LBPs and records and certificates from plumbers, drainlayers, electricians, and gasfitters.
- › **Notify council:** Notify the council by submitting all required documentation within 20 working days of completion. Your LBP(s) is required to provide the Record(s) of Work to both you and the council.
- › **Pay development contributions:** If required, pay the council within 20 working days of completion.

## Timelines



## Tips

- › You may be charged an application fee for the PIM and a development contribution by your council.
- › A granny flat is considered complete when the homeowner has received the required compliance documentation from their licensed building professionals.
- › If you do not comply with the law you may be prosecuted and fined.
- › Keep your own documentation for insurance, resale, and future alterations.
- › Documentation will be stored on the property file and included in future Land Information Memoranda (LIMs).
- › Granny flats building and resource consent exemptions work together, and whether you can use them depends on your site's circumstances – some projects qualify for both exemptions, while others may still need a building and/or a resource consent.



For more info, visit [building.govt.nz/grannyflats](https://building.govt.nz/grannyflats) or  
**Contact us – Building Performance**