



Maricopa County

Planning & Development Department

Department Directive

Department Directive:
DD-2015-12

Supersedes: N/A

Effective: Immediately

Initiator: Ralph Shepard
RMS

Director: Debra Stark - *DS*

PURPOSE: To define procedures concerning Sunrooms.

REFERENCE: Maricopa County International Residential Code
Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance
Maricopa County Drainage Provisions, MCZO Section 1205

POLICY/PROCEDURE:

Whether or not a sunroom is considered a habitable space is strictly based on the code. The way of determining if a sunroom is, or is not habitable is subject to its specific use, and what it is attached to. If that space (sunroom) can't meet those requirements set forth by the definition in the most current Maricopa County International Residential Code and Maricopa County Zoning Ordinance (as listed below) then it will be considered to be habitable. As a general rule, an enclosed patio, Arizona room, sunroom or anything else that is directly opened to the existing adjoining habitable space, shall meet the requirements of a habitable space.

ENGINEERING REQUIREMENT: Finished floors of a building shall be elevated a minimum of one foot above the highest grade point within ten feet of the foundation of the building. A finished floor elevation lower than the minimum may be permitted provided it is determined by technical data and certified by an Arizona Registered Professional Civil Engineer to be the minimum necessary to be safe from inundation by the 100-year peak runoff event. Finished floor elevations may be required to be referenced to a known benchmark. Non-livable buildings are exempt from this section.

1. Relating to this directive only, there are two (2) options to satisfy the engineering requirements for the finish floor elevation if the area doesn't meet the sunroom, non-livable or open metal patio cover definitions
 - a. Raise the finish floor to an elevation safe from inundation during the 100year peak runoff event. (In many cases matching the existing finished floor elevation of the existing house can meet this requirement)
 - b. Provide a letter and/or stamped sealed plans from an Arizona Licensed Civil Engineer stating as follows:

“Finish floors shown on the plan for the room addition(s) submitted for APN ___-___-___ are safe from inundation during the 100 year peak runoff event.”

The following code and ordinance definitions are for your reference;

HABITABLE:

CONDITIONED SPACE: *For energy purposes, space within a building that is provided with heating and/or cooling equipment or systems capable of maintaining, through design or heat loss/gain, 50°F (10°C) during the heating season and 85°F (29°C) during the cooling season, or communicates directly with a conditioned space. For mechanical purposes, an area, room or space being heated or cooled by any equipment or appliance.*

HABITABLE SPACE: *A space in a building for living, sleeping, eating or cooking. Bathrooms, toilet rooms, closets, halls, storage or utility spaces and similar areas are not considered habitable spaces.*

NOT HABITABLE:

NON-LIVABLE BUILDING: *A building on a residential lot used solely for the parking of vehicles, workshop, the storage of equipment or material, the keeping of livestock and other similar uses but not designed, constructed or utilized for human habitation. Open metal patio covers shall also be considered non-livable.*

OPEN METAL PATIO COVER: *An attached one story metal framed structure, for recreational uses, not exceeding 12 feet in height and not an integral part of the principal residence. The open or glazed area of the longer wall and one additional wall must be equal to at least 65 percent of the area below a minimum height of 6 feet 8 inches measured from the floor.*

SUNROOM: *A one-story structure attached to a dwelling with a glazing area **in excess of 40** percent of the gross area of the structure’s exterior walls and roof.*