Multiple Dwellings

Do you know about Fairfax County’s limitations on the number of dwelling units allowed on a lot?

- Per Sect. 2-501 of the Zoning Ordinance, there shall not be more than one (1) dwelling unit on any one (1) lot, nor shall a dwelling unit be located on the same lot with any other principal building, except when developed with multiple family dwelling units, such as apartments, as permitted in certain zoning districts by the Zoning Ordinance.

- Article 20 of the Zoning Ordinance defines a dwelling unit as:

  One (1) or more rooms in a residential building or residential portion of a building, which are arranged, designed, used, or intended for use as a complete, independent living facility; and which includes provisions for living, sleeping, eating/cooking, and sanitation.

- Per Sect. 8-918 of the Zoning Ordinance, an Accessory Dwelling Unit can be applied for but shall only be permitted in association with a single family detached dwelling unit if a special permit is approved by the Board of Zoning Appeals. Conditions must be met, including but not limited to, one of the dwelling units must be occupied by a person who is elderly and/or disabled and there shall be no more than one accessory dwelling unit per single family detached dwelling unit. For more information, contact the Zoning Evaluation Division: 703-324-1290.

To report a possible violation:

Fairfax County Department of Code Compliance
12055 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035
Phone: 703-324-1300, TTY 711
Web: www.fairfaxcounty.gov/code

This Fairfax County, VA Publication (published August 2016) summarizes a few regulations. See relevant codes for specific requirements.