

S2HC Group Living Explanation

The proposed regulations:

- Provide parity between household and group living by allowing group living arrangements by right in the same places that household living is allowed by right.
- Remove code complexity and barriers to the production or retention of group living arrangements.
- Simplify definitions to clarify difference between housing and shelter, group living and household living.
- Eliminate the definition of “household” but continue to regulate residential use as either household living or group living.

What is group living and how is it different from houses or apartments that are rented?

- Most resident uses are classified as household living.
- Group living includes single room occupancy buildings, dorms, retirement care facilities or co-housing complexes where a larger group of residents share kitchens or bathrooms.
- The proposal allows group living by right in residential zones in parity with household living, without a conditional use.
- This increases the range of housing types that can be built. Group living buildings can be more affordable than traditional houses or apartments because kitchens are often the most expensive rooms to build.

What is the difference between group living and single room occupancy living?

The proposed code no longer employs the term “single room occupancy” – or SRO – because it is just a subset or form of group living. Group living is also allowed in buildings that function as apartment buildings, but residents have their own bedrooms and may share bathrooms or kitchens.

Why is there a cap of 3,500 square feet of floor area that applies only to group living?

The cap is a backstop to ensure group living facilities will be similar in size to allowed household living structures on large lots. This cap will not apply to existing buildings, and its application is limited to new group living facilities on oversized, single dwelling, residential lots. It will not apply to normal sized lots or to group living in multi-dwelling residential, mixed use or employment zones. Aside from this cap, all size, height, coverage and bulk regulations for group and household living are exactly the same. This cap is not applied to household living uses because the scale of household living is limited in other ways by density regulations and the number of bedrooms.