



2026 GRANNY FLAT LAW CHANGES

NEW LAW EXPLAINED IN
SIMPLE TERMS

A first look at what we've
prepared - set for layout and
access control

BUILT THE NZ WAY | PEOPLE-FIRST

What Has Changed

& Why That Matters

In 2026, New Zealand introduced a major update to small dwelling rules. In simple terms:

A small house under 70 square metres might not need approval to go up in some places. Whether you can skip the paperwork depends on where it is going. Rules differ by location, yet size stays the key factor here. Not every tiny home qualifies automatically though. Local checks still shape what happens on the ground.

One moment it was steady. Now everything tilts sideways.

Years went by before building a little home on your property stayed tied up in red tape. Now things shift - homeowners might fit in room for relatives without the old hassle. Easier access opens doors, though not everyone sees it that way. Extra space could mean rental earnings, if rules allow. Decisions once slow now move faster, depending where you live.



Why it matters:

- Faster timelines
- Lower upfront costs
- Less paperwork
- More flexibility for families
- More housing options on existing properties

Thousands of homeowners might now build a little house on their property more easily, if they follow specific rules. Not every situation allows it, yet many could see a chance where there wasn't one before.

This guide lays out the details clearly. Plain words show how things affect you. What matters comes through without confusion. Meaning stands clear by the end.



Who This Applies To

A fresh set of guidelines affects numerous homeowners throughout New Zealand, though eligibility isn't guaranteed for each dwelling. Despite widespread impact, automatic inclusion doesn't happen for all structures.

You could qualify when:

- A home on that lot fits the rules. Zoning says what can go where. This spot allows houses, nothing more
- Space on the site? Plenty of it
- The structure is 70m² or less
- Fits right into what buildings need to follow
- After a stumble comes structure. Rules shape how help gets delivered. Each step obeys the set terms. Support flows within fixed bounds

It does not remove

- Planning rules
- Setbacks from boundaries
- Infrastructure requirements
- Utility connections
- Council notifications in some cases

Even though permission to construct might not be necessary, following neighborhood standards and on-site conditions remains essential. Still, actual location demands plus regulations apply regardless of approval status. Just because formal consent is skipped does not mean rules vanish.

Site specifics matter just as much when no permit is needed. Often, unseen constraints shape what can happen on the ground. Even without paperwork, physical limits guide decisions quietly.

Here's when solid advice makes a difference.



What You Can Build

A space that size stretches beyond what many imagine. Still, it holds more potential than first appears. Though compact, its reach grows once used well. Every corner adds up when thought through carefully. Without extra room to waste, each part matters just the same.

In most cases, this space holds about:

- 1-2 bedrooms
- Bathroom
- Kitchenette
- Living space
- Laundry nook
- Deck or outdoor area

This particular measurement fits best when used for:

- Aging parents
- Adult children
- Guest accommodation
- Rental income
- Home office + living space



Freedom Cabins features

Out back, where trees thin out, you'll find structures meant for today's tighter codes. Each one shaped by what's allowed now - no guesswork, just space that works

- Compact studio cabins
- One-bedroom layouts
- Two-bedroom small dwellings
- Accessible designs for aging family
- Custom options within 70m²

Fitted carefully to make the most of room, yet still follow legal rules.





What's Still *Required*

This rule simplifies life - yet that does not open every door

Focusing on these points remains key

Council requirements

Some councils may still require:

- Project notification
- Planning checks
- Site confirmation

Services

You'll still need:

- Wastewater solution
- Power connection
- Water supply
- Site access

Setbacks

Your cabin must still sit:

- Some ways off the edges
- Away from waterways
- Clear of easements

Site readiness

Few things must happen first - getting the ground ready, setting up solid bases, then clearing paths for arrival.

The key takeaway:

A lack of building approval isn't the same as skipping planning steps.

Speed comes from cutting steps, nothing more.

Real World *Scenarios*

1. Aging parent moving closer

Still close, Mark and Lisa hoped their mum would live on her own. She stayed near them yet made her own choices.

A small cabin behind the house offers space of her own, yet keeps her near loved ones. It measures sixty square meters, just enough room to live simply. Near but apart - that's how it feels most days. Family stays within reach, without crowding her thoughts. Sixty meters squared, a quiet world tucked outside the back door.

Because no one signed anything, they pushed forward much quicker than anyone thought possible. That gap in approval paperwork opened a door earlier than planned.

2. Adult child needing space

A place to stay became the goal, while he set money aside for a house. His next step unfolded quietly, shaped by timing more than plans.

A little house went up right there, so the family did not need to look around for a rental.

A room ready for visitors - or maybe later income if rented out. What was fixed before now shifts with need.



3. Rental income opportunity

A small house now sits behind their property, built by a pair who wanted more space. Seventy square metres fit just right at the back of their land.

Fewer headaches come from tenants who stay longer, because upkeep costs drop over time. A single structure often holds more worth than scattered lots when the market shifts. Space stays whole instead of being split apart.

Eligibility Quick *Check*

You may be a good candidate if:

- Property is residential
- Enough yard space
- Access for delivery
- Wastewater possible
- Power available
- Ground suitable

Feeling uncertain? Totally fine. It happens.

Many folks aren't sure about it on their own.

How To Get Started

A chat comes naturally now. That moment follows without effort.

Freedom Cabains helps people

- Check eligibility
- Understand site requirements
- Estimate costs
- Explore design options
- Plan timelines



What Our

Customers Say



100% recommend Freedom Cabins for your cabin rental needs. Drew, Jodie and the crew were always efficient and great communicators.

Always met our needs without hesitation.

— *Talie Burt*



The cabin is very nice spacious and nice carpet. The guy who delivered my cabin was very nice and helpful to decide where to put the cabin. But over all lovely team to work with took me less than 24 hours to do the paperwork and get my cabin delivered.

Best service

— *Raewyn Solomon*

Schedule a no-cost *Meeting*

Starting with your home, we go over what matters most to you. Depending on your situation, the updated guidelines might come into play. A quick look at where you stand helps clarify next steps.

Freedom Cabins

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Take it slow. Here's what you can do, spelled out plainly. Choices exist. That's all.

FINAL WORD

Big shifts in tiny homes haven't happened like this in a long time.

Few folks who own homes see it this way:

- More flexibility
- Faster builds
- New living options
- New income opportunities

Besides pondering a granny flat lately? Right now opens a chance to see what could actually work. Possibilities tend to grow when timing lines up like this.

Figuring it out? That's something we're here for.

Freedom Cabins

Helping Kiwis create space for what matters most.

