



City of Annapolis
Department of Planning and Zoning
 145 Gorman Street Fl 3
 Annapolis, MD 21401-2529



Permitting@annapolis.gov • 410-260-2200 • Fax 410-263-9158 • TDD use MD Relay or 711 • www.annapolis.gov

Backyard Chickens Permit Application Per City Code [Section 8.04](#)

Steps in the process

1. Complete and sign the Backyard Chicken Registry and Approval Form below.
 - a. In order to be considered for approval, thoroughly read the conditions and check next to each.
 - b. Don't forget to print and sign your name with the date at the bottom of the application.
 - c. Register your chickens using the "Maryland Poultry Registration Form". Include a copy with your permit application.
2. Complete Backyard Chicken Registry Neighbor Approval.
 - a. See "How to Find Abutting Properties" page (I).
 - b. Note that this is a neighbor approval form. You will need the owner's signed consent that will allow you to have chickens.
3. Include a site plan. This must be done before you build your chicken coop.
 - a. Properties located within the Historic District require HPC approval. Please call the Historic Preservation Section at 410-260-2200 for information.
4. Submit all completed permit applications and paperwork along with the site plan and payment of \$100.00 for the registration and inspection fee. Checks are made payable to the *City of Annapolis*.
 - a. Review Annapolis City Code [Section 21.50](#) – Bulk Regulations Table for minimum setbacks in your residential zone.
 - b. The minimum setback allowable is 5 feet, but may be more. Please call Planning & Zoning at 410-260-2200 for assistance.
 - c. Do not start construction without site plan approval or you may have to move your coop.
5. Review requirements for chicken coop and enclosed run and build accordingly. You must have an approved coop and run prior to having any chickens.
 - a. See "Chicken Coop and Enclosure Requirements" (II)
 - b. Coops will have the same requirements as a shed. If you plan for a chicken coop that is larger than 120 square feet, the City requires for it to be constructed on foundations to code and bear on undisturbed earth. For more information, please contact the office above.
6. Call for an inspection.
 - a. You must have passed your inspection before you are permitted to have chickens on your property.
 - b. Find the form attached or at http://www.mda.state.md.us/animal_health/poultryreg/index.php
7. Do more research on chickens! Peruse the internet, take a class on raising chickens, and attend forums. A list of useful websites can be found on the "Useful Sources" page (V).



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Backyard Chicken Registry and Approval Form

Property Owner Information

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Phone _____

Applicant Information

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____ Phone _____

24-hour Emergency Information

This is the number that will be called if we receive a complaint about the chickens on your property.

Contact name _____ Phone _____

By my signature below, I acknowledge that I am aware of the following conditions:

1. That I must receive approval from all abutting owners using the Backyard Chicken Registry Neighbor Approval Form of my intent to keep chickens prior to keeping any chickens.
2. That I must submit this form to P&Z, along with a \$100.00 registration and inspection fee, prior to keeping any chickens.
3. That I must first receive approval from an inspector from the P&Z for all requirements set forth in the City Code and the Backyard Chicken Registry and Approval Form, prior to keeping any chickens.
4. That chickens may require veterinary care if they are known or suspected to be sick or injured.
5. I am aware of [Anne Arundel County Article 12 Title 4 - Animal Control](#) and have reviewed the requirements therein.
6. That I am responsible for keeping any and all chickens within the confines of my property at all times.
7. That chickens shall be provided with daily food and water, free of visible contamination, which is of sufficient quantity and nutritive value. Food shall be stored in containers such that rodents are unable to access the contents.
8. That I am responsible for any property maintenance violations related to keeping chickens.
9. That I am required to manage, remove, dispose of or otherwise handle chicken manure in such a way that it does not cause pollution or environmental harm of any kind.
10. That I am required to provide any and all chickens on my property a sturdy coop and an attached secure enclosure following these guidelines:
 - a. The coop and secure enclosure shall be completely enclosed on all sides. A protective covering shall cover the top of the secure enclosure.

- b. All openings including protective covering and doors shall be secured in such a manner as to prevent predator access.
 - c. The coop shall provide at least 2 square feet per chicken and the secure enclosure shall provide at least 10 square feet per chicken.
 - d. The coop and secure enclosure must be kept clean, free of all odors, and materials that can attract rodents or harbor manure borne pathogens.
11. That if I make any dimensional changes to my chicken coop and/or chicken run, I must reapply with the Backyard Chicken Registry and Approval Form including fees and neighbor approval.
 12. That I shall conform to any registration requirements of the Maryland Department of Agriculture including the Poultry Registration. The form can be found at http://www.mda.state.md.us/pdf/poultry_registration.pdf
 13. That I am subject to random unannounced inspection upon the issuance of this permit.
 14. That a completed Backyard Chicken Registry Neighbor Approval Form signed by all of my abutting neighbors is required to be submitted with this application.
 15. That permit approval from the City does not override a Home Owners Association approval.
 16. That any uncorrected violation to conditions contained herein may result in the revocation of my permit.

I certify under penalty of law that I have personally examined and am familiar with the information submitted in this document and attachment, and that based on my inquiry of those individuals immediately responsible for obtaining the information herein, I believe the submitted information is true, accurate, and complete.

Print Name _____

Signature _____ Date _____

FOR CITY USE ONLY

Maximum number of chickens allowed _____ Permit Fee Paid _____

P&Z final approval _____ Date _____

Permit number _____



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Backyard Chicken Registry Neighbor Approval Form

City Code [Section 8.04](#) requires that any property owner proposing to keep chickens shall receive approval from any property owner abutting the property of the proposed chicken enclosure of his/her intentions and obtain their signatures attesting they are aware of the proposition.

Applicant name _____

Site address _____

Attach signed copy of the Backyard Chicken Registry and Approval Form

Attached are the site plan specifications to keep chickens at the site address listed above. I/We, being the abutting property owner(s), have no objections to the above named property owner keeping chickens in accordance with Annapolis City Code.

Abutting Property Owner Name and Signature	Address	Date

If you are not the property owner, you must have signed approval from the property owner.

Property owner name _____

Current address _____

City _____ ST _____ Zip _____

Phone _____

Signature _____ Date _____

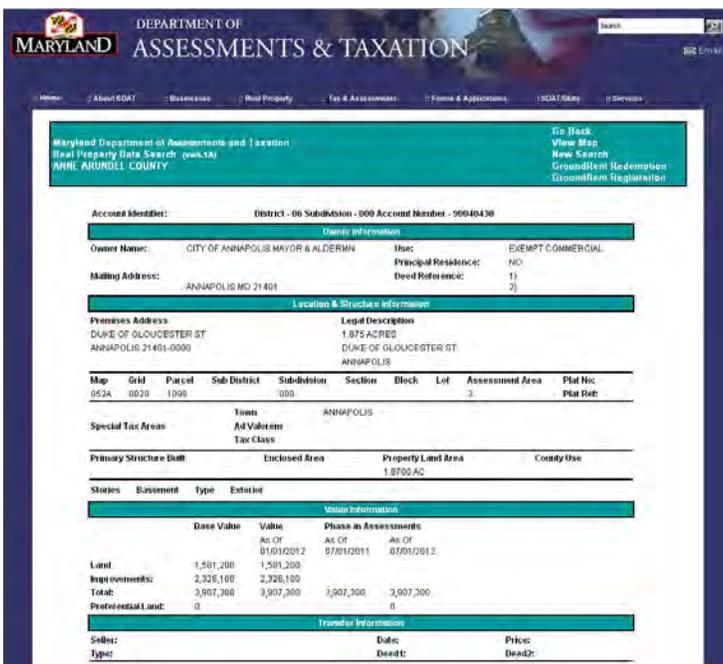
APPENDIX A

I. How to Find Abutting Properties

1. To find abutting properties and property owners, visit Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development iMap webpage <http://www.dhcd.maryland.gov/Website/DHCDMapper.aspx>.



2. Enter your address and zip code in the “Find Address” search box at the top of the map. After zooming in, you can see which properties and addresses abut yours.
3. To find the property owners, you can use the “Results” tab on the left side, scroll down to “Annapolis City” and click on the “More” button. The link for the property’s SDAT (Department of Assessment & Taxation) information is available. Alternatively, you can connect directly via this link: [MD State Department of Assessments and Taxation](http://www.dhcd.maryland.gov/Website/DHCDMapper.aspx).



II. Chicken Coop and Enclosure Requirements and Guidelines

Choosing the Right Home for Your Chickens

Requirements

The Backyard Chicken Registry and Approval Form specifies how much space in the coop and the secure run that each chicken is required to have. Each chicken requires at least 2 square feet in the coop and at least 10 square feet in the enclosure. Please refer to the table below:

Maximum number of chickens	Minimum interior coop area (in square feet)	Minimum interior enclosure area (in square feet)	Example dimensions
1	2	10	1.5'x1.5' coop, 1.5'x7' enclosure
2	4	20	2'x2' coop, 2'x10' enclosure
3	6	30	3'x2' coop, 5'x6' enclosure
4	8	40	3'x3' coop, 4'x10' enclosure
5	10	50	2'x5' coop, 7'x7.25' enclosure

A separate building permit is not required for the installation or construction of the coop. You must have submitted all application materials and have been notified by the City that your site plan was approved before you build your coop.

Coops have the same requirements as a shed. Coops that are 120 square feet or less are not required by Annapolis Building Codes to be constructed on foundations. Coops over 120 square feet require a building permit and must be constructed on foundations and bear on undisturbed earth. All stationary coops must be anchored to the ground at each corner.

Coops that are designed to be mobile, regardless of size, are not required to be built on a foundation or anchored to the ground. You must however show on your site plan where your coop will be kept.

Annapolis Zoning Codes apply to all accessory structures and setbacks within each residential zone. Please note that the five-foot setback is the minimum distance from the property line that your coop can be. Please reference Annapolis City Code [Section 21.50](#) – Bulk Regulations Table for minimum setbacks for your residential zone. The City Code can be found on our [website](#) (Government > City Code). Chicken coops will be categorized under “Buildings accessory to single-family dwellings, other than as specified elsewhere in this table”.

If you belong to a home owners association (HOA), check with the rules and regulations as indicated for having chickens and chicken coops. City of Annapolis approval does not override an HOA’s approval.

Guidelines

There are many different chicken coop and enclosure designs available online, and any one can fit your style or need.

The design is up to you and your local rules and regulations. The City of Annapolis will approve coops and enclosures based on the Three S’s: size, sturdiness, and security.

- Size:** Coops require at least 2 square feet per chicken and attached enclosures require at least 10 square feet per chicken.
- Security:** Coops shall be completely enclosed on ALL sides. A protective cover shall cover the top of the attached secure enclosure. The enclosure openings shall be secured in such a manner as to prevent predator access.
- Sturdiness:** Coops and attached enclosures will be able to withstand weather and predator stressors.

The attached enclosure shall have the bottom secured to prevent predator added. The most common material for securing the sides and bottom of the enclosure is galvanized hardware cloth or welded wire mesh with half-inch openings. There are two options:

1. The enclosure shall be buried at least 12 inches into the ground. Before digging, call Miss Utility at 800-257-7777; or
2. The entire bottom of the enclosure is secured.

The City of Annapolis recommends a chicken shelter called a “chicken tractor”. A chicken tractor (also known as an ark) is a coop with an attached enclosure built without a solid floor to encourage foraging for grasses, weeds, bugs. This widens their diet and lowers their feed needs. Chicken tractors have wheels on them so you can easily move the shelter around your property.

Chicken tractors are not required to be built on a foundation or anchored to the ground.



Photos courtesy of thecitychicken.com

III. Are Chickens Right for your Home?

Before you think about getting chickens, it is advised that you do some research of information including State and local laws on keeping chickens, how to care for chickens, the responsibilities regarding raising chickens, and how to create a chicken coop that's right for you. To start, see the “Useful Sources” page (V).

The Annapolis City Code states that each property is allowed, upon permit approval, to have up to five hens, no roosters. Owners must have a coop and run approved by the City of Annapolis before they can have chickens on their property.

A sturdy coop with an attached, secure enclosure meeting City specifications must be provided to your chickens as a condition of ownership. According to the registry and approval form conditions, the coop and attached enclosure shall be completely enclosed on all sides, a bottom side, and a protective covering shall cover the top of the secure enclosure. This will prevent predators from gaining access to your chickens and their eggs.

The coops and enclosures are subject to accessory structure setbacks, but in no case less than five feet from the property line. The five-foot setback is the minimum allowable setback, but City zoning codes, including [Section 21.50](#) may have larger setbacks depending on where you live. For information on zoning setback requirements, please contact the Planning and Zoning Department at 410-260-2200.

IV. Choosing the Right Chicken

According to the City Code, only female chickens are allowed within City limits.

All owners of chickens will have to apply with the **Maryland Department of Agriculture’s Maryland Poultry Registration**. More information regarding the registration form can be found at http://www.mda.state.md.us/animal_health/poultryreg/index.php.

Researching chicken breeds will help find a perfect fit for you and your family. Consider:

- Temperament;
- Weather Tolerance;
- Chicken Size;
- Egg Size; and
- Egg production.

Much like rescue dogs and cats, you also have the option to adopt hens. There are several rescues in the area that are looking for homes for their chickens. For more information, see the "Useful Sources" section below.

Look for chickens from reputable establishments where the birds are National Poultry Improvement Plan (NPIP) Certified. This certification verifies that the chickens that you receive are free of certain diseases. For more information on the NPIP Certification, please contact The NPIP Administrator for the State of Maryland Kim Arnold at [410-543-6610](tel:410-543-6610).

V. Useful Sources

Please visit the websites and read documents listed below for more information on keeping backyard chickens:

1. Maryland Poultry Premises Registration by Maryland Department of Agriculture
 - http://www.mda.state.md.us/animal_health/poultryreg/index.php
 - http://www.mda.state.md.us/pdf/poultry_registration.pdf
2. Raising Your Home Chicken Flock by University of Maryland Extension.
 - <http://www.healthybirds.umd.edu>
3. BackyardChickens.com
 - www.backyardchickens.com
4. TheCityChicken.com
 - www.thecitychicken.com
5. MyPetChicken.com
 - www.mypetchicken.com

Adopting Chickens

1. Cheryl's Rescue Ranch in Odenton, MD 240-882-7963
2. Poplar Spring Sanctuary in Poolesville, MD 301-428-8128
3. Petfinder.com
 - http://www.petfinder.com/pet-search?pet_breed=Chicken&animal_type=Bird&location=Annapolis%2C+MD
 - Look for Female chickens only.
4. Adoptapet.com
 - <http://www.adoptapet.com/other-pet-adoption#bird>
 - Look for Female chickens only.



Maryland Poultry REGISTRATION FORM

Registration is **MANDATORY** by authority of:
Agric. Art., Section § 3-804.
Annotated Code of Maryland



(Please print all information)

Poultry Caretaker's Name: _____
First Middle Last

Phone: () - _____ **Cell:** () - _____ **E-mail:** _____

Mailing Address: _____

Physical Address: *(If PO Box is used):* _____

City _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____ - _____ **County:** _____

Number of locations to register: _____ *(Please register each location separately)*

Address of kept birds: *(If different than prior address):* _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____ - _____ **County:** _____

Domestic Poultry: *(Check ALL that apply, include the number of birds maintained during the last 12 months)*

Chickens # _____ Game Birds (chucker's, pheasants, quails) # _____
 Ratites (ostriches, emus) # _____ Turkeys # _____
 Waterfowl (ducks, geese, swans) # _____ Pigeons or Doves: # _____
 A pond is located on the _____ A body of water is located near this property _____

Exotic Birds: *(Registration of Exotic Birds is voluntary)*

_____ # _____ # _____ # _____

(Check ALL that apply)

Purpose of flock: Auction Contracted Hobby/Pet Live bird Slaughter/Market
 Own Consumption Show/Competition Other: _____

What were the sources for the birds Auction Commercial Mail Order
 Neighbor Retail Self-Raised Other: _____

National Poultry Improvement Program certified? No Yes # _____

Completed by: _____ *(signature)* **Date:** _____

Questions: 410-841-5810 (phone), 410-841-5999 (fax), animalhealth.mda@maryland.gov (e-mail)
Return form to: MD Dept. of Agriculture Poultry Registration, 50 Harry S. Truman Pkwy, Annapolis, MD 21401
MDA E-14 (Rev. 2/10)