



2015 SBC Code Solution

The following interpretation, policy or code alternate is intended to provide guidance to staff for consistency of review and is subject to change without notice. Application of this interpretation, policy or code alternate to specific projects may vary.

Code Issue:

Director's Rule 9-2017 requires small efficiency dwelling units (SEDU's) be provided with natural light per SBC 1205.2. SBC 1205.2.2 requires exterior openings for natural light to open directly onto a public way, yard or court per SBC 1206. SBC 1206 has provisions for minimum yard and court dimensions based on number of stories.

1. Will SDCI permit reduction on the court length requirement for below grade stories?
2. Will SDCI permit cascading of the minimum yard width over the height of the building? Can the required yard width step back from a minimum of 3 feet at the lowest two stories to the calculated minimum yard width at the top story?

Code Modification:

1. Where a SEDU window used to provide natural light per SBC 1205.2 is located at the 1st story below grade plane, SDCI will permit the minimum court length per SBC 1206.3 be reduced to the width of the window but no less than 3 feet. See Figure A. This code modification does not relieve compliance with window well requirements per SBC 1030.5 where the window is required to serve as an emergency escape and rescue opening.

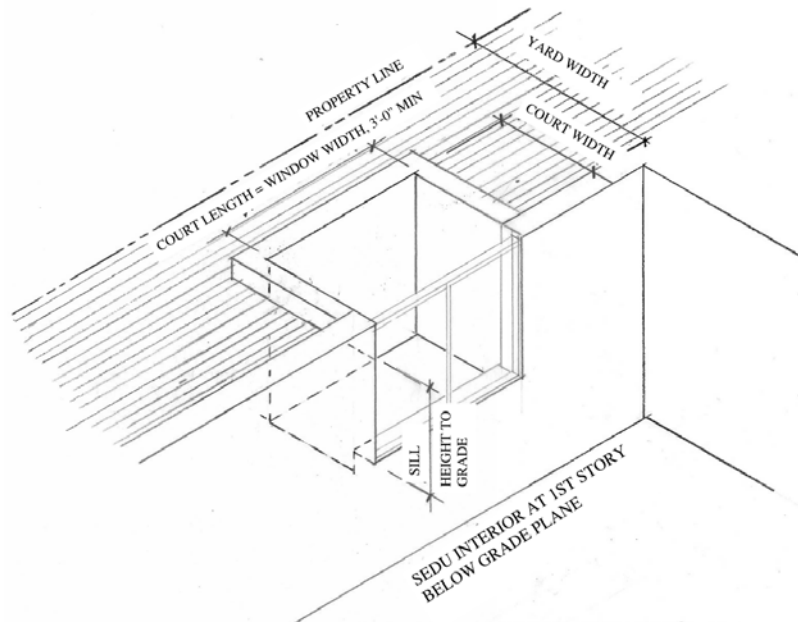


Figure A. Minimum SEDU Window Well Dimensions to satisfy Court dimensions for SEDU Natural Light



2. Calculate minimum yard width for each building elevation containing a SEDU window used to provide natural light per SBC 1205.2. Provide a minimum yard width of 3 feet at the lowest story containing a SEDU window used for natural light and at the story directly above. Above these lowest two stories, SDCI will permit the minimum yard width to cascade over the height of the building. Increase the minimum yard width at each story by 1 foot per story over the height of the building. The minimum yard width is not required to exceed 15 feet. See Figure B.

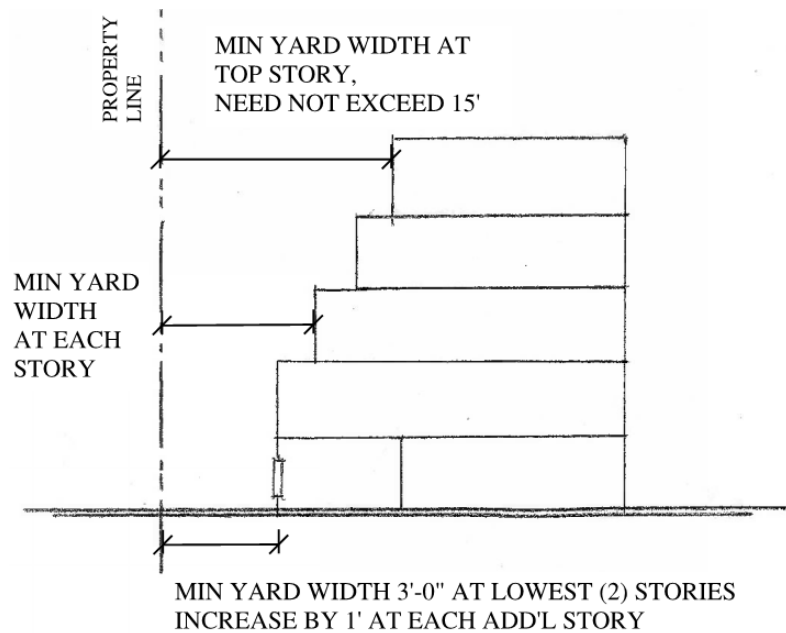


Figure B. Cascading Yard Width over the Height of the Building

For questions about whether this code solution applies to your project:

- If you have submitted a permit application, contact the Building Code plan reviewer assigned to your application
- If you have not submitted an application, send us a question through the SDCI website <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/toolsresources/sendusaquestion/default.htm> or in person at the Applicant Services Center. Visit the Applicant Services Center website for more information about hours and location <http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/aboutus/whoweare/applicantservicescenter/default.htm>