

Can I live in my RV?

Can I live in an RV, camper trailer, or other mobile vehicle on my vacant land? This is a common question for many looking to purchase land throughout the state of Arizona. The answer is complicated and can be best answered with a “maybe”. Although you own your land, there are several possible governing documents that restrict and define how you are able to use your land. If you have specific plans for a piece of land, it is always best to find and read all sources governing your land usage and to contact the local and county zoning office.

The first place you will want to start is Home/Property Owner Associations (HOA/POAs). HOA/POAs typically provide the most specific usage regulations. The second source you will look for are the Codes, Covenants, and Regulations (CCRs). CCRs like HOA/POAs will govern your specific neighborhood and/or subdivision and will have specific usage requirements for your property. The third place you will look is to the city/town zoning ordinances. City/town ordinances will outline the local government’s usage requirements for property located in their jurisdiction. The final place you will look for usage requirements is the county zoning ordinances.

So, can I live in my camper on my vacant land or not? Due to the vast number of HOA/POAs, CCRs, and city/town ordinances, I will focus the rest of this post on the county ordinances.

Additional Resources:

- <https://justdownsize.com/is-it-legal-to-live-in-an-rv-in-arizona/>

DISCLAIMER – Remember it is your responsibility as the buyer to do your due diligence on any property you intend to purchase. If you are researching a particular parcel, contact the HOA/POA, read the CCRs, and call the local and county zoning boards. This post is intended as a quick reference to the various county zoning ordinances only.

Quick Reference Guide for Arizona

Navajo County

Short answer, “It’s complicated.” Navajo County allows the placement of up to one recreational vehicle for a period of 30 days without a permit and up to one year with a temporary recreational vehicle permit.

Navajo County Zoning Ordinance

Article 22, Section 2203 – General Provisions

The placement of a single RV is allowed, subject to compliance with the other provisions of Article 22, in the following districts only: A-General, Rural (RU), Single Family (R1) and Special Development (but only if the site plan provides for RV placement).

Article 22, Section 2205 – Placement With Temporary RV Permit

Subject to the provisions of Section 2203, a single RV may be placed for a period of up to one year upon the issuance of a Temporary RV Permit pursuant to this section. The permit may be renewed for one additional period of up to one year upon the approval of the issuing authority.

Call the county as part of your due diligence! → **Navajo County Zoning and Planning Dept**

Mohave County

Short answer, “Possibly.” The Mohave County Zoning Ordinance allows travel trailers in certain situations.

Mohave County Zoning Ordinance

In Section 27 N.1.b and c:

b. Travel trailers are permitted as temporary residences for one (1) year in conjunction with the construction of a permanent residence or commercial structure (as evidenced by obtaining a Zoning Permit) in any zone. Six (6) month extensions of time may be granted by the Planning and Zoning Commission by showing good cause.

c. Travel trailers are permitted as temporary residences for one (1) year (renewable annually) in A-R (Agricultural- Residential) or R-E (Residential Recreation) zones.

So, if you’re in the correct zoning you may be able to secure a temporary residence permits.

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Mohave County Planning and Zoning**

Cochise County

Short answer, "Temporarily." In section 605.01 B and C of Cochise County's Zoning Regulations, Cochise County allows up to 6 months of temporary occupancy of a recreational vehicle with a permit; additionally, stays of less than 15 consecutive days do not require a permit.

Cochise County Zoning Ordinance

605 Permitted Accessory Uses

Accessory uses are permitted in RU Zoning Districts provided they are customarily incidental to an established permitted principal use. Accessory structures may exceed the size of the principal structure, unless otherwise stated, provided that all other site development standards are met. For residential uses, the following additional accessory uses and buildings shall be permitted:

605.01 Recreational Vehicles (RV's) are allowed as follows:

- A) No permit is required for storage of no more than two RV's on a parcel.
- B) Temporary occupancy of one RV in conjunction with a permitted principal use up to six months in a calendar year with a required Temporary Use Permit; stays of 15-consecutive days or less do not require a permit.
- C) Temporary occupancy of RV's in conjunction with the construction of a residential or nonresidential permitted principal use. Such occupancy shall be limited to the length of the building permit with a required Temporary Use Permit, subject to procedures in Article 17.
- D) Recreational vehicles accessory to a principal permitted use may not be rented out.

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Cochise County Planning and Zoning**

Maricopa County

Short answer, "Nope!" The long answer cites Section 1114 of the **Maricopa Zoning Ordinance**:

The location of mobile homes and travel trailers outside of mobile home parks, travel trailer parks and mobile home subdivisions, and the location of aircraft, boats, camping trailers, truck campers and motor homes shall be subject to the following: (1114.1) At no time shall the mobile home, travel trailer, aircraft, boat, camping trailer, truck camper or motor home be occupied or used for living, sleeping or housekeeping purposes...

Unfortunately, that means Maricopa County is out of the running for long-term camping on private land.

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Maricopa County Planning and Zoning**

Coconino County

Short answer, “Temporarily.” Coconino County allows temporary occupancy of a Recreational Vehicle or a Travel Trailer in the G, AR, RR, or MHP Zone for a period not to exceed 100 consecutive days per calendar year, provided that the lot or parcel is not already occupied by a Dwelling or other residential Structure. (Section 3.2.B.o – **Coconino County Zoning Ordinance**)

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Coconino Planning and Zoning Dept**

Apache County

Short answer, “No mention.” **Apache County Zoning Ordinance** doesn’t specifically mention RV living. Be sure to contact Apache County Zoning to verify before you purchase, and make sure the local CCRs and HOA/POAs allow it before you close!

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Apache County Planning and Zoning Dept**

Yavapai County

Short answer, “Temporarily.” **Yavapai County Zoning Ordinance** Section 571:

Temporary occupancy of one (1) travel trailer or RV as defined in Section 301 (Definitions) on a lot without a primary use must meet the following standards:

1. Lot size of two (2) acres or more.
2. Occupancy limited to ten (10) consecutive days.
3. Frequency may not exceed three (3) times per calendar year with a minimum of thirty (30) day intervals between stays.
4. Occupancy limited to property owner. Rental is prohibited.

5. Travel trailer or RV must be serviced by an approved on-site wastewater system or be fully self-contained.
6. Travel trailer or RV may not be connected to any utilities.
7. Unit must meet the same setbacks applicable to a primary residence.
8. Unit may only be stored on the lot during occupancy term. No storage of non-occupied travel trailers or RVs is allowed.

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Yavapai County Planning and Zoning Dept**

La Paz County

Short answer, “Possibly.” According to **La Paz County Zoning Ordinance**: In rural agriculture and suburban ranch zoning districts, two Recreational Vehicles per lot occupied by the property owner/renter, provided the vehicles remain licensed and operative and provided all applicable development standards can be met, including those related to wastewater and wastewater disposal.

Permanently placed Recreational Vehicles are prohibited in all residential zoning.

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **La Paz County Planning and Zoning Dept**

Gila County

Short answer, “Ambiguous.” Gila County does not allow recreational vehicle living in Residential One Zoning districts; however, it does not mention recreational vehicles in rural and suburban ranch zoning. The best option will be contact the zoning board with the specific parcel number of the property you are considering and ask.

Gila County Zoning Ordinance

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Gila County Planning and Zoning Dept**

Greenlee County

Short Answer, “Ambiguous”. According to the Greenlee County Zoning Regulations, Mobile homes and recreational vehicles shall be prohibited as permanent dwellings

within the Single Household Residential, Multiple Household Residential, and Planned Residential Districts.

Greenlee County Zoning Ordinance

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Greenlee County Planning and Zoning Dept**

Yuma County

Short answer, “Ambiguous.” Yuma County does not specifically exclude recreational vehicle residency; however, omission is not permission. Again, the best option will be contact the zoning board with the specific parcel number of the property you are considering and ask.

Yuma County Zoning Ordinance

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Yuma County Planning and Zoning Dept**

Pima County

Short answer, “Limited.” In the Rural Homestead and Rural Residential Zone, Pima County allows the use of a “trailer”. See title 18 of the **Pima County Zoning Ordinances**:

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Pima County Planning and Zoning Dept**

Pinal County

Short answer, “No.” Pinal County will allow recreational vehicles to be used as temporary dwellings during construction.

Pinal County Zoning Ordinance

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Pinal County Planning and Zoning Dept**

Graham County

Short answer, "No." Graham County will allow recreational vehicles to be used as temporary dwellings during construction.

Graham County Zoning Ordinance

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Graham County Planning and Zoning Dept**

Santa Cruz County

Short answer, "Limited." Santa Cruz County will issue a temporary use permit, not to exceed thirty days, in any residential area of Santa Cruz County for temporary residential use. See section 1811 of the Santa Cruz County Zoning and Development Code.

Santa Cruz County Zoning Ordinance

Call the county as part of your due diligence → **Santa Cruz County Planning and Zoning Dept**