

**POLICY:**

In recognition of the positive benefits of tree presence to the community, as well as individual property values, the Board of County Commissioners hereby establishes a procedure to provide tree saplings in conjunction with the issuance or re-issuance of residential tree removal permits. Trees from the Tree Enhancement Program are also made available to qualified affordable housing, Citrus County Non-Profit (501-C-3) organizations, houses of worship, schools, government properties, and clubs for planting on their property.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. On a form provided by the County, an applicant requesting a tree removal permit for residential development may receive a voucher for two trees (or multiple tree saplings in the case of a qualified affordable housing project or non-profit organization as outlined above) from the County's Tree Enhancement program to assist in meeting the County's tree regulations.
2. An application for tree vouchers shall be submitted to the Department of Planning and Development, and the Land\_Development\_Division will evaluate the application. Applicants for vouchers other than those obtaining residential tree removal permits shall submit a request stating the location of plantings and the number of trees requested.
3. Affordable housing applicants shall submit the application to the Division of Housing Services; which will evaluate the application to confirm the applicant qualifies. The review shall take no more than 30 days, and all applicants shall be notified of the decision in writing. An applicant shall be deemed qualified when they can provide documentation demonstrating the household income is 120% or less of the County's median income. Documentation suitable to establish qualification may include copies of recent pay stubs and/or last year's income tax return. An applicant who has received a letter determining they are not qualified may appeal to the Director of the Department of Community Services. Decisions by the Director shall be deemed final.

4. After the County's review and issuance of a formal residential tree removal permit, the Land Development Division will issue two tree vouchers) which may be redeemed at designated locations for tree saplings from the County's Tree Enhancement Program . Non-profit groups, etc. as outlined above will be issued tree vouchers as approved based on their specific request. The tree vouchers shall be valid for one year from date of permit issuance.
5. The applicant will be provided a list of currently available trees, facts regarding their mature height, and preferred soil, sun, and water needs, and instructions for planting. For affordable housing projects and non-profit groups, the applicant shall then complete a selection indicating which trees are preferred and the desired date of receipt. Trees shall be provided based on eligibility. Substitute trees may be provided if the requested species is not available. Should sufficient tree saplings not be available to meet demand, the County may provide a non-transferable, extended voucher that may be redeemed when new stock is available.
6. It shall be the applicant's responsibility to transport, plant, and care for the tree(s). The County retains the right to confirm the tree(s) has been planted on the applicant's property.
7. This program is limited to one request per property or one request per application. This limitation does not apply to affordable housing developers provided the trees are planted on individual properties or projects.
8. Should a sapling die within 30 days of receipt, the applicant may submit a written request for replacement. If sufficient stock is available, a replacement will be provided. Only one replacement request per applicant/project will be honored.

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**FOOTNOTES & REFERENCES TO RELATED AR's:** Supercedes AR 13.20 dated March 23, 2010; AR 13.20-1 dated May 11, 2010.