

**POLICY:**

Citrus County Board of County Commissioners establishes a procedure to provide tree saplings to qualified affordable housing by recognizing the positive benefits of tree presence within the community and contributing to the individual property values.

**PROCEDURE:**

1. On a form provided by the County, an applicant can request free tree saplings from the County's Tree Enhancement program sufficient to meet the County's tree regulations with completion and submission of designated Citrus County Request Form.
2. The application and supporting documentation shall be submitted 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.
3. An application 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.
4. After the County's review and issuance of a formal decision, the application shall be retained by Housing Services in accordance with State law.
5. Qualified applicants 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. The applicant shall then complete a selection from 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 shall provide a non-transferable voucher that may be redeemed when new stock is available.
6. At least once a quarter, the County shall have available at the Lecanto Government Building the requested tree saplings for pick-up by qualified parties. Qualified applicants will be notified of the date at least 7 working days before the retrieval date.
7. 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.

8. This program is limited to one request per property or one request per applicant. This limitation does not apply to affordable housing developers provided the trees are planted on individual properties or projects.
9. Large Affordable Housing Projects (exceed 5 units) shall have their applications reviewed by the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee for the purpose of qualification.
10. 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.
11. 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:** Supersedes AR 13.18 dated May 27, 2003.