

Tree Preservation Code Comparison: Broward County vs Coconut Creek

Below is a **side-by-side comparison** of tree preservation codes—Broward County’s Sec. 27-408 (left column) and Coconut Creek’s Sec. 13-448 (right column)—highlighting both their **similarities** and **differences**. Citations refer to excerpts of the codes found in **Broward County Code Sec. 27-408** and **Coconut Creek Code Sec. 13-448**.

Comparison Matrix: Broward County vs. Coconut Creek Tree Preservation Codes

Topic	Broward County (Sec. 27-408)	Coconut Creek (Sec. 13-448)	Notes:
1. Official Title / Citation	“Tree Removal License Requirements and Standards” under Chapter 27, Article XIV.	“Preservation and Protection of Trees and Tree Preservation Trust Account” in Sec. 13-448.	No significant differences.
2. Purpose & Intent	Emphasizes protecting the environment through tree preservation, mitigating impacts of tree removal, and ensuring sustainable development practices.	Broadly aims to protect public welfare by preserving tree canopy for air/water quality, erosion control, and general quality of life. Explicitly notes that excessive destruction of trees is a “public nuisance.”	No significant differences.
3. Permit / License Requirement (When is it needed?)	A tree removal license is required before removing, relocating, or otherwise “negatively impacting” a tree—except under certain exemptions.	A tree removal permit is required unless expressly exempt (e.g., specific residential scenarios, emergency conditions). The code also addresses how F.S. § 163.045 may affect local permit requirements for hazard/dangerous trees on single-family lots.	No significant differences.
4. Exemptions	- Removal of hazardous trees posing “imminent threat” (with photographic documentation). - Removal on owner-occupied residential properties ≤1 acre (except if the tree was previously preserved under a license, or if it’s a historic/specimen tree). - Certain nursery or commercial operations. - Various utility-related removals if documented.	- Similar exemptions: hazardous/diseased trees (with documentation), small single-family lots (1 acre or less), nursery operations, certain utility work, etc. - Additional detail on “special status” or “historical” trees—these are not exempt without special approval or a variance.	No significant differences.

Topic	Broward County (Sec. 27-408)	Coconut Creek (Sec. 13-448)	Notes:
5. Protected & Special Status Trees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Specimen Trees: Typically older, larger DBH (varies by local definitions; commonly ≥ 18" DBH) or historically significant. - Historic Trees or those in a Natural Forest Community (NFC) have extra protections and relocation/mitigation requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Special Status Category Trees: includes specimen trees (≥ 18" DBH), historical trees, or stands within a Natural Forest Community (≥ 2 acres of canopy, subcanopy, groundcover). - Must follow strict relocation or mitigation if impacted. 	No significant differences.
6. Permit Application Process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must submit a formal application, including site plan/tree survey if required. - Lists details about fees, plan drawings, and on-site inspection. - Applications reviewed by Broward's Regulatory and Environmental Department (RED). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Requires an application, supporting documents (surveys, site plans, etc.), and fee. - Detailed submittal requirements (species, DBH, reason for removal, relocation plan if feasible). - Reviewed by the City of Coconut Creek's Sustainable Development Dept. 	No significant differences.
7. Relocation Requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Must relocate a tree if feasible before removal is allowed. - Outlines root-pruning and canopy-pruning standards, transport methods, and one-year maintenance/monitoring. - Bonds required for specimen tree relocations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Also requires relocation if feasible and imposes best practices: correct timing, pruning, bracing, watering. - One-year survival monitoring; if a relocated tree dies, it must be replaced or additional fees paid. - Performance bonds may be required for relocating larger or multiple trees. 	No significant differences.
8. Replacement / Mitigation (When relocation is not feasible)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Canopy-based formula: trees fall into Category 1–4 with different "canopy area credits." The total canopy of replacement trees must at least equal the canopy removed. - Specimen Trees: replaced on a dollar-value basis (appraised using the Guide for Plant Appraisal). - Option to pay into the Broward County Tree Preservation Trust Fund if on-site planting is not possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Uses a similar canopy formula (Category 1–4, with 300, 150, 100, 50 sq. ft. credits). - Specimen Trees (≥ 18" DBH) also require appraised-value replacement or payment into a Coconut Creek Tree Preservation Trust Fund. - Emphasizes native species from a "Recommended Tree List." 	Minor difference: Broward County allows greater canopy replacement value under table 27-408(i) but only when replacement tree larger than the minimum size is proposed. See specific breakdown below this matrix.

Topic	Broward County (Sec. 27-408)	Coconut Creek (Sec. 13-448)	Notes:
9. Maintenance & Monitoring	- License holder is responsible for one-year maintenance of relocated or newly planted trees, with re-planting required if they die. - Projects relocating 10+ trees can use a 10% mortality allowance.	- Similar one-year maintenance requirement. - If 10+ relocated or 100+ replacement trees are planted, a 90% survival rate is considered successful. Otherwise, re-planting or trust fund payment is required.	No significant differences.
10. Enforcement & Penalties	- Violations can result in fines, mandatory replanting, or both. - RED can draw on relocation bonds if transplanted trees die or are “effectively destroyed.” - Repeat violators face escalated enforcement.	- Tree removal or abuse in violation is deemed a “public nuisance.” - Fines, stop-work orders, and replanting or trust fund contributions can be imposed. - May require a recorded notice on the property detailing the replanting obligations.	No significant differences.
11. Appeals Process	- Appeals typically go through Broward County’s Environmental Protections processes or code enforcement boards as outlined in Sec. 27-57.	- Appeals may be filed with the city (Sec. 13-34 “Appeals”), potentially escalating to the City Commission.	No significant differences.
12. Unique Provisions	- Exempts owner-occupied residential ≤ 1 acre with exceptions. - Affordable Housing projects have special options for tree replacement and are partially exempt from license fees if they meet certain conditions.	- Identifies and protects Natural Forest Communities in detail, requiring resource management plans and conservation easements. - Requires compliance with overhead power line guidelines (“Right Tree, Right Place”) for planting.	No significant differences.

Comparison Tree Replacement Requirements: Broward County vs. Coconut Creek Tree Preservation Codes

27-408(i)(1)b6 of the Broward County code specifically states the following:

*RED (Resilient Environment Department) will base the number of required replacement trees on the size of the impacted area and the category of replacement trees the applicant selects. At a minimum, the size of the replacement trees at maturity must equal the size of the canopy removed. **The following table is used to determine the number of required replacement trees:***

Chapter 13-448(g)(1)d. of the City's code specifically states the following:

*A determination of the number of trees to be replaced shall be performed. This determination shall be based upon the area of impact and the category of replacement trees selected by the applicant. The replacement at tree maturity shall at least equal the canopy removed. **The following table is used to determine the number of required replacement trees:***

Note that both the County and City follow this similar language with, "**The following table is used to determine the number of required replacement trees.**" Staff recognizes that the language in the county's 27-408(i)(1)b6 citing "at maturity", which is repeated in the City's code, may appear to be ambiguous. However, when coupled with the data table, it becomes clear the intention for canopy replacement.

Following are the side-by-side sections of code for Broward County and Coconut Creek that determine replacement canopy.

Broward County Land Development Code - Chapter 27-408(i) Tree Replacement Requirements		City Land Development Code – Chapter 13-448, Table 13-448.T1 City of Coconut Creek Tree Replacement	
Replacement Tree Category	Equivalent replacement canopy area in sq. ft.	<i>Replacement Tree Calculator</i>	
Category 1	300 (for trees greater than or equal to a 12-foot minimum height) 350 (for trees greater than or equal to a 13-foot minimum height) 400 (for trees greater than or equal to a 16-foot minimum height)	Replacement Tree Category	Equivalent replacement canopy area in sq. ft.
Category 2	150 (for trees greater than or equal to an 8-foot minimum height) 200 (for trees greater than or equal to a 10-foot minimum height)	Category 1	300
Category 3	100 (for trees greater than or equal to a 5-foot minimum height)	Category 2	150
Category 4	50 (for trees greater than or equal to a 2½-foot minimum height)	Category 3	100
		Category 4	50

City staff does allow canopy calculations as noted in the County code if larger material is proposed. However, generally speaking, larger material costs more, may be root bound from being in the nursery too long, and may not establish as well as a smaller tree. We do not recommend using larger trees than are noted in the City's code unless no other option is available.