



TREE SERVICE LICENSE INFORMATION

Thank you for your interest in obtaining a Tree Service License. [Chapter 57, Section 71](#), of the Denver Revised Municipal Code requires any business engaged in the care of trees and shrubs to be [licensed with the Department of Excise and License](#), by testing and receiving approval for licensing through the Office of the City Forester. The license requirement applies to any person who provides tree and/or shrub pruning and/or removal for monetary pay, barter, or trade of services. This licensing requirement was enacted to provide Denver's residents with professional tree care service and protect Denver's urban forest from substandard practices.

The tree license is issued to an individual in the ownership or employment of a tree service company. A licensed company is required to have a minimum of one license holder (the licensee) representing the company. If the licensee leaves the company for any reason, that company has thirty (30) days for a new licensee to be established. If a new licensee is not established within the thirty (30) day period, the company is no longer licensed in the City and County of Denver until another representative fulfills the current licensing requirements.

Classes of Licenses

Licenses are issued under three classes and the scope of service to be provided by the applicant's business will determine the class for the company.

General - Issued to an individual working for a business engaged in tree and/or shrub pruning and/or removal that will require workers to leave the ground through climbing or use of an aerial lift. Work may be done on any size tree, shrub, or evergreen.

Ornamental - Issued to an individual working for a business engaged in tree and/or shrub pruning and/or removal that do not require workers to leave the ground through climbing or use of an aerial lift. The Office of the City Forester will allow businesses to use a ladder with a maximum height of twelve feet (12') to remain under this classification.

Sawyer - Issued to an individual working for a business engaged in tree and/or shrub pruning and/or removal that do not require workers to leave the ground. This classification is issued for tree and/or shrub work upon public places, except public right-of-way, for the purposes of controlling invasive tree species, fire mitigation, and improving forest health.

Insurance Requirements

[Chapter 57, Section 77](#), of Denver's municipal code requires each applicant for a Tree Service License to maintain insurance at application and for the duration of the license. It is the responsibility of the Tree Service License holder to maintain a current Certificate of Insurance with the Office of the City Forester at all times. It is strongly encouraged that you list the Office of the City Forester as a 'Certificate Holder' on your policy so that your insurance company forwards policy renewals for you, otherwise you will need to email a valid copy of your insurance to forestry@denvergov.org. Failure to provide a valid insurance document will result in license suspension.

Department of Parks & Recreation, Office of the City Forester
101 West Colfax Avenue | Denver, CO 80202
www.denvergov.org/forestry
720.913.0651

The Office of the City Forester shall be notified of cancellation of any coverage within thirty (30) days, ten (10) days if due to non-payment of premium. Upon notification of cancellation or lapse in coverage, the license is invalid, and the holder of the license shall do no further work until such time as adequate insurance is provided. The company name will be removed from the Office of the City Forester's [Licensed Tree Service Contractors](#) list on the webpage if your insurance certificate renewals are not received in the same month that the current insurance is expiring.

The following are the insurance requirements for all license holders;

Commercial General Liability - coverage of all operations of the applicant with minimum amounts of \$500,000 for general license contractors and \$100,000 for ornamental license contractors. The City shall be named as additional insured.

Workers' Compensation Insurance - workman's compensation insurance satisfying the statutes of the State of Colorado and cannot be cancelled without a thirty (30) day notice to the Department of Excise & License and the City Forester. For more information; <https://cdle.colorado.gov/dwc>

Auto Liability Insurance - coverage in the minimum amount of \$150,000 combined single limit.

Tree Service License Fees and License Term

The current fee for a Tree Service License is \$25.00 annually, plus a first time \$25.00 application fee. All tree service licenses are valid for the year in which they are issued and expire on December 31st. All licensees must [renew yearly](#) and can renew up to ninety (90) days prior to expiration. There is a ninety (90) day grace period after the expiration date in which licensees can still renew, however, late fees will be charged. Failure to renew the tree service license within ninety (90) days of expiration will result in loss of license and require the applicant to start the licensing process over from the beginning. In addition, licenses may also be suspended or revoked for any violation of Denver Revised Municipal Code or Forestry Rules and Regulations.

Reciprocal Licensing; Applicants Holding Current Licenses in Other Cities

In an effort to reduce the need for businesses to take repeated municipal tests to prove their arboricultural qualifications, the Office of the City Forester, in cooperation with the City of Aurora and the City of Lakewood, has established a reciprocal licensing program. The Office of the City Forester will waive the need for applicants to complete Denver's written and field tests when the applicant has satisfied those testing requirements through either the City of Aurora or the City of Lakewood. The Office of the City Forester reserves the right to check with the reciprocal cities to verify testing requirements were met and/or may require any applicant to complete Denver testing when deemed necessary by the City Forester.

Applicants licensed in one of Denver's reciprocal municipalities will be required to furnish a copy of the cooperating city's license, provide proof of insurance in the amounts meeting Denver City Code minimums, pay the license fee, complete a Denver Tree Service License application with the [Department of Excise and Licensing](#), and provide two (2) forms of identification, one must be a picture ID.

Applicants Holding International Society of Arboriculture Certifications

The Office of the City Forester will waive the need for applicants to complete the required written test if the applicant can provide documentation verifying that they are a current International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist.

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The Office of the City Forester will waive the required tree climbing practical of the testing if the applicant can provide documentation verifying that they are a current International Society of Arboriculture Certified Tree Worker.

The Office of the City Forester reserves the right to verify said documentation.

Links to International Society of Arboriculture

International Society of Arboriculture www.isa-arbor.com

Rocky Mountain Chapter International Society of Arboriculture www.isarmc.org

Testing Requirements

Written Test –

Applicants who are not International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) Certified Arborists nor have met Denver's testing requirements through a qualified reciprocal testing community will be required to schedule and pass a written test. Testing is scheduled through the Office of the City Forester at 720-913-0651 or forestry@denvergov.org. A grade of at least seventy percent (70%) is required on the exam. Denver will accommodate those with reading and writing disabilities. The written exam must be passed prior to taking the field test. The written exam covers general knowledge of: tree biology, tree identification, safety, insects and diseases, practical tree work skills, and tree risk assessment. The associated written test fee is \$35 per attempt.

Failure to pass a test will result in a thirty (30) day wait period to retest. Failure to obtain a passing score after the third (3rd) attempt will result in a wait period of one (1) calendar year. The results of the written test are valid for only six (6) months from date of test. If remaining requirements for the Tree Service License are not completed within six (6) months, the entire application is void, and the applicant must start the licensing process over.

Field Test (*proof of required insurance must be provided prior to field test*)-

Applicants who are not ISA Certified Tree Workers nor have met Denver's testing requirement through a qualified reciprocal testing community will be required to pass a field test after completion of the written exam within six (6) months. Testing is scheduled through the Office of the City Forester at 720-913-0651 or forestry@denvergov.org. The field exam includes practical work competencies and worker/work-site safety. General license applicants must provide their own personal climbing and safety equipment, pruning equipment in safe and proper operational condition, and be prepared to conduct aerial work in a large tree. The associated field test fee is \$85 per each attempt.

Ornamental license applicants need to come with personal protective equipment, tree pruning equipment in safe and proper operational condition, and be prepared to prune a small tree or shrub. Field tests average two (2) hours in length, so please be prepared to be available for the duration. A grade of at least seventy percent (70%) is required on the exam. The field test can only be taken once per scheduled day. A non-passing score will result in the applicant having to schedule another test after a thirty (30) day wait period. Failure to obtain a passing score after the third attempt will result in a wait period of one (1) calendar year.

Lapse in valid license

If a company did not hold a valid tree license for the previous year, a new license will need to be obtained, all associated fees to be paid, and the necessary testing completed successfully.

License Testing Study Resources-

International Society of Arboriculture: Arborists Certification Study Guide and Tree Climbers Guide
American National Standards Institute A300 Tree Pruning Standard American
National Standards Institute Z133.1 Tree Worker Safety Standard The Tree
Climber's Companion, 2nd ed.

Regional tree information – <https://extension.colostate.edu/garden/>

General tree care - <http://www.treesaregood.com>

Tree Identification - <http://www.treebrowser.org>

Denver tree inventory: <https://denverco.treekeepersoftware.com/>

City Codes

All licensed contractors are required to have knowledge of and abide by applicable City Ordinances and rules, as well as pass this knowledge on to their employees. If a tree service plans to work within the right-of-way in Denver, it is important to understand and operate within the rules and regulations established by Department of Transportation and Infrastructure and the Colorado Department of Transportation.

For more information about the Office of the City Forester visit www.Denvergov.org/forestry or to schedule a tree license test, contact us at forestry@denvergov.org or call 720-913-0651.

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