

\$250 A DAY, ACCRUING

Overgrowth notices, \$250/day fines, and the four paths back into compliance — without getting overcharged.



► AUTHOR'S NOTE

Why we wrote this.

Every week, we sit with Miami-Dade homeowners who got an overgrowth or lot-clearing notice and didn't know what to do next. The grass is high, the lot has debris, the inspector took photos, and the letter says you have fourteen days.

Most of them either ignore it — and watch the \$250-a-day fines stack up to forty or fifty thousand dollars in a single year — or pay the first guy with a truck and a weed-whacker who charges them \$1,800 for \$300 of work.

There's a better way. There are four paths forward, and the right one depends on the size of the lot, how much cash you have to clear it, whether you can fight the citation, and whether the property is worth carrying at all.

This playbook walks you through all four. By the end you'll know which path actually makes sense for your property — even if none of them involve us.

We're a local Miami-Dade team. We buy lots with active orders and clear them ourselves. Most homeowners don't need to sell. But everyone benefits from knowing the math. Read this. Then decide.

— *Maurice.*

THE FOUR PATHS →
CLEAR • FIGHT • SELL AS-IS • IGNORE



§1 THE BASICS

What a lot-clearing notice actually is.

And why the County treats it like a ticking clock.

A lot-clearing notice — also called an overgrowth or nuisance abatement notice — is a formal citation from Miami-Dade Code Compliance that your property doesn't meet county code on vegetation, debris, or storage. Grass over twelve inches, dead branches, tires, junked cars, accumulated trash.

Once issued, you have a compliance window — usually 14 to 30 days — to clear it. Miss that window and the daily fines start at \$250/day. The County can also send their own contractor in to abate the property, and bill you the cost plus an administrative fee — often \$1,500 to \$5,000 even on a small lot.

MOST COMMON CITATIONS

- 01 **TALL GRASS / WEEDS**
Vegetation over 12 inches; most common citation
- 02 **ACCUMULATED DEBRIS**
Branches, construction waste, household trash on lot
- 03 **JUNKED VEHICLES**
Cars on the property without current tags
- 04 **OUTDOOR STORAGE**
Tires, scrap metal, equipment visible from street
- 05 **DEAD TREES**

“ Most overgrowth fines start at \$250 a day. By the time you call us, the lien is bigger than the cost of clearing the lot twenty times over. ”

THE COMPLIANCE TIMELINE

↓ HOW IT ESCALATES

Day 0

Notice issued

First notice posted at property; cure window begins

Day 14-30

Cure window closes

Fines start accruing at \$250/day per violation

Day 45+

County abatement

County contractor clears the lot; cost + admin billed to you

Day 90+

Lien filed

Fines + abatement cost recorded as lien against property

§2 THE MATH

The math: cure cost vs. accruing fines.

What waiting actually costs you.

Most Miami-Dade lots can be cleared for \$400–\$2,500 by a licensed contractor. Here's what the same lot costs if you let the fines run.

DAYS UNRESOLVED	TOTAL FINES	WHAT'S HAPPENED
7 DAYS	\$1,750	<i>End of typical cure window — clear cost still wins</i>
30 DAYS	\$7,500	<i>One month — already 4× the clear cost</i>
90 DAYS	\$22,500	<i>Lien typically filed; County may abate</i>
180 DAYS	\$45,000	<i>Half a year — exceeds equity in many small lots</i>
365 DAYS	\$91,250	<i>One year — often a full year's mortgage payment in fines</i>

↳ REAL CASE • HOMESTEAD

Jorge L.. Got a lot-clearing letter in early 2025 for an empty lot next to his house. \$250 a day. He didn't have the cash to clear it — a contractor quoted him \$2,200 — and the fines piled up while he tried to figure it out. By the time he called me, the lien was at \$58K. We bought the lot, cleared it ourselves, and the order resolved at closing. The County stopped sending mail. That alone, he said, was worth more than the cash.

THE TAKEAWAY

On almost any lot under a quarter acre, the cure cost is a fraction of two months of fines. Acting in the first 14 days is almost always the right answer — if you can find the cash.



§3 THE FOUR PATHS

Your four options.

Pick the one that fits your situation — not the one someone else picks for you.

01

Clear it.

TIME **7-21 days**
COST **\$400-\$2,500**
RISK **Low**

Best if you have the cash and the lot is straightforward

02

Fight it.

TIME **30-90 days**
COST **\$200-\$2K**
RISK **Medium**

Worth it if the citation is wrong or already cured

03

Sell as-is.

TIME **7-14 days**
COST **\$0**
RISK **Low**

Best if cure cost exceeds equity, or the lot is a recurring problem

04

Ignore it.

TIME **—**
COST **\$250/day forever**
RISK **High**

Don't. County abatement + lien follow the property

Each option in detail on the following pages →



§4 • OPTION 01

Clear it.

How to actually get the lot cleared on the County's terms.

If the lot is straightforward and you can afford the cure, this is almost always the cheapest path. The trick is hiring the right contractor and getting the re-inspection scheduled fast — not waiting for the inspector to come back on his own schedule.

Don't hire the first guy who knocks on your door. Some of them specifically chase code-compliance letters and charge double. Use a licensed contractor with insurance.

↳ THE STEPS

01 Read the notice carefully.

Note the case number, the specific cited conditions, the cure deadline, and the inspector's contact.

02 Call the inspector directly.

Ask exactly what they need to see for compliance. 'Mow and edge' vs. 'cut, haul, and grub' is the difference between \$400 and \$2,000.

03 Get 2–3 licensed contractor bids.

Florida license + general liability insurance + workers comp. Cheap unlicensed crews often leave debris that gets re-cited.

04 Schedule re-inspection the same week.

Once cleared, you have to call to be re-inspected. Most owners forget this step and the case stays open.

05 Get the closure letter.

Code Compliance issues a written closure. Keep it forever — title companies ask for it on future sales.

× COMMON MISTAKES

- × Hiring an unlicensed crew that doesn't haul debris off-site
- × Clearing the lot but never calling for re-inspection — the case stays open
- × Paying door-to-door 'lawn guys' three to five times market rate
- × Forgetting that overgrowth often returns; a maintenance contract beats another citation

✓ WHEN THIS FITS

The lot is straightforward, the cure cost is well below the equity, and you can find a licensed contractor in time.



§4 · OPTION 02

Fight it.

When the citation was wrongly issued.

It happens more than people realize — wrong address on the notice, the lot already cleared before the photos were taken, the cited section doesn't apply, or the inspector mismeasured.

Fighting takes time and usually a little money, but if you have a real defense it can void the citation entirely — and stop the daily fines.

↳ THE STEPS

01 Request a re-inspection in writing.

If you already cleared it, demand a re-inspection within 7 days. Photograph everything.

02 Request a hearing before Special Master.

Usually within 20 days of notice. Miss this and you lose the right to contest.

05 Document everything.

Timestamped photos before and after, receipts from any clearing work, the surveyor's lot lines if there's a boundary dispute.

04 Decide: attorney or pro se.

Simple cases you can self-represent. For accruing fines over \$10K, get a code-compliance attorney.

× COMMON MISTAKES

- × Missing the hearing deadline (no recourse after)
- × Showing up without timestamped photos
- × Arguing emotion instead of code — Special Masters care about facts
- × Continuing to let the lot grow while waiting on the hearing — the fines keep running

✓ WHEN THIS FITS

You have a real factual defense — wrong lot, already cleared, or measurement error — and a hearing date you can make.



§4 · OPTION 03

Sell as-is.

When clearing doesn't pencil out.

If the cure cost approaches your equity, or you've been getting re-cited every year for the same overgrowth, selling the lot to a cash buyer who clears the order at closing is often the cleanest exit.

A fair cash buyer pays roughly 70–85% of the lot's market value, then nets out any fines and abatement costs. Anything significantly below that is predatory — they're betting on your panic.

↳ THE STEPS

01 Get a real lot valuation.

Pull comps in your neighborhood for similar undeveloped or single-family lots. That's your ceiling.

02 Get the violation payoff in writing.

Call Code Compliance and request the accrued total. The buyer should net it out transparently.

05 Solicit 2–3 cash offers.

Different buyers have different appetites for properties with active orders. The first offer is rarely the best.

04 Demand a fast close.

Cash buyers should close in 7–14 days. Anything slower and the fines keep running.

05 Confirm the order resolution at closing.

The title company should record the satisfaction the same day. Get the closure letter.

× COMMON MISTAKES

- × Accepting the first offer in a panic — you leave 10–25% on the table
- × Letting the buyer add inspection contingencies (real cash buyers don't need them)
- × Not asking how the violation gets settled at closing
- × Signing without a closing date and clear terms

✓ WHEN THIS FITS

Cure cost is close to or exceeds your equity, the lot is recurring trouble, or you simply want the file off your name.



§5 WHAT TO DO TODAY

What to do next.

A 60-second decision tree.

01 Have you read the notice and called the inspector?

YES → Continue →

NO → Stop. Do this first. Today.

02 Is the cure cost less than 25% of the lot's equity?

YES → Clear it (Option 1)

NO → Continue →

03 Was the citation wrong or already cured?

YES → Fight it (Option 2)

NO → Continue →

04 Can you wait 30+ days while fines accrue?

YES → Reassess in 14 days

NO → Sell as-is (Option 3)

★ FREE PROPERTY REVIEW ★

If you'd like a free, no-obligation review.

I look at lot-clearing files every week in Miami-Dade. Send me your address and your case number, and I'll tell you — honestly — whether your situation looks like a clear, a fight, or a sell. No pressure. No commitment. Whether or not you ever sell to me, you'll leave the call with a clear plan.

— Maurice

→ helpwithviolations.com

*“The cheapest fix is the one
you do this week.”*

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