

CHECKLIST · BOSTON

Moving to Boston Checklist: The First 90 Days

What newcomers should do, in order, with deadlines and where to do it. Print it and check items off.

SHORT ANSWER

If you are subject to the address-reporting requirement, report your new address to USCIS within 10 days. In the first week, open electricity with Eversource (deposits and late fees are banned for residential customers), find out which company supplies your gas by your street, and enroll your children online; no SSN or immigration document is asked for. Book the learner's permit appointment right away, since the exam is in Turkish. With a car, the order is insurance, registration, inspection within 7 days. Health Connector open enrollment runs October 23, 2026 to January 23, 2027.

First 10 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Report your address to USCIS (AR-11)	Generally, most noncitizens in the U.S., including Green Card holders, must report a move within 10 days; A and G visa holders and Visa Waiver visitors are exempt. A move within Boston counts too. USCIS online account: uscis.gov/addresschange
☐ EOIR-33 if you have an immigration court case	Within 5 days: respondentaccess.eoir.justice.gov
☐ If you have ICE reporting obligations	Update your address with ICE too: portal.ice.gov
☐ USPS change of address	A post office change does not update USCIS. They are two separate steps.

First week

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Electricity	Eversource delivers electricity to all of Boston: 1-800-592-2000. A deposit and late charges cannot be demanded from a residential customer (220 CMR 27.00). You can use your passport number or an online ID verification at sign-up.
☐ Electricity supply	The City's own program, Boston Community Choice Electricity (BCCE), is the default. The Standard plan is \$0.14214 per kWh and fixed through December 2027; Eversource basic service is \$0.17323 per kWh from August 1, 2026 to January 31, 2027. So the default plan is about 3 cents cheaper. Sign nothing for anyone who knocks on your door about switching supplier.

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Gas	Two companies depending on your street: National Grid (Boston Gas) or Eversource (NSTAR Gas). National Grid asks for an SSN; if you have none, do not fight the form, call 1-800-233-5325 . Eversource (NSTAR Gas): 1-800-592-2000.
☐ Water and trash	The Boston Water and Sewer Commission (617-989-7800) bills the property owner; a tenant pays through the rent. Trash is a free City service with no separate bill; put it out after 5 p.m. the night before collection.
☐ Enroll your children in school	Online at apply.avela.org/boston . No SSN and no immigration document; two proofs of address from different categories, an immunization record and a physical from the past year. Helpline 617-635-8873.
☐ If you rent, know your rights	Up front a landlord may ask only for the first month, the last month, a deposit of at most one month and the cost of a new lock and key. The deposit sits in a separate interest-bearing account; a landlord who breaks the rule owes three times the deposit. No tenant-paid broker fee since August 1, 2025. No rent control. Boston rental units must be registered each year; Office of Housing Stability 617-635-4200.
☐ 311	For City services dial 311, or 617-635-4500 from outside the city, 24 hours a day. There is no Turkish version of the 311 information sheets or the app ; whether the phone line has a Turkish interpreter is not stated on the official page, so call and ask.
☐ Library card	A Boston Public Library card needs a photo ID with a signature plus proof of a Massachusetts address, and no SSN. Whether a foreign passport counts is not stated in writing; it very likely does, but call the branch first or bring a second ID.

Within 30 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Book the learner's permit appointment	\$30, and the written exam is in Turkish (25 questions, 18 correct). Haymarket Service Center, 136 Blackstone St., appointment required, no parking. The road test is not in Turkish and is given in Watertown by separate appointment, \$35; the sponsor needs a U.S. state license. A Turkish license is not exchanged.
☐ If you arrived with a car, insurance first	The RMV will not register a car until the agent stamps the RMV-1. Minimum coverage: \$25,000 / \$50,000 bodily injury, \$30,000 property damage, \$8,000 PIP. No SSN is needed to register.
☐ Inspection within 7 days	Within 7 days of registering, \$35, then every year. The City bills the excise tax: \$25 per \$1,000 of value. Keep your RMV address current.
☐ E-ZPass MA account	The transponder is free. A tunnel crossing is \$2.05 on Pay By Plate instead of \$1.50, and each plate invoice adds \$0.60.
☐ The MBTA	Subway \$2.40, local bus \$1.70, monthly LinkPass \$90. Transfers within 2 hours are unlimited if you pay the same way each time. The Silver Line SL1 from Logan into the city is free.

Health and insurance

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Life-threatening emergency	911 or an emergency room: hospitals with an emergency department must screen and stabilize you regardless of your ability to pay.
☐ The only free option	The Family Van , a mobile clinic: no insurance asked for and no charge, with screenings, counseling and referrals; not a full primary-care practice. Stops: Tuesday Nubian Square, Wednesday East Boston, Thursday Codman Square, Friday rotating in Dorchester (familyvan.org/schedule).
☐ Income-based sliding fee (not free)	The neighborhood health centers (Harvard Street, NeighborHealth, Codman Square, Fenway Health, Mattapan) discount by income and family size: the price comes down but the care is not free.
☐ Health Safety Net	Not insurance but a fund that pays hospitals and community health centers; there is no member card . Say at the front desk that you want to apply for the Health Safety Net. MassHealth 800-841-2900.
☐ Coverage is mandatory	Most adults must carry coverage; the 2026 penalty is \$26 to \$211 a month by income, and none at or below 150% of the poverty level. Health Connector open enrollment is October 23, 2026 to January 23, 2027; choose and pay by December 23, 2026 for January 1 coverage (1-877-623-6765).
☐ Dates that change coverage	From October 1, 2026 some lawfully present immigrant groups lose comprehensive MassHealth; from January 1, 2027 Health Connector financial help and ConnectorCare are limited to green card holders, Cuban and Haitian entrants and COFA migrants. Do not ignore any letter; you may have a window to appeal.

60-90 days and beyond

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Taxes	Boston has no city income tax. The state income tax is a flat 5%, plus 4% above \$1,107,750; the return is due April 15. You can file with an ITIN (Form W-7; Boston IRS office by appointment only: 844-545-5640). Sales tax is 6.25%. Half of your rent, up to \$4,000, can be deducted on the state return.
☐ If you bought a home: property tax	Boston bills in four installments: August 1, November 1, February 1 and May 1. The first two are estimates; the third carries the real rate and your exemption. The FY2026 residential rate is \$12.40 per \$1,000. For an owner-occupied home the residential exemption saved up to \$4,353.74 last fiscal year; the FY2027 deadline is April 1, 2027. The form asks for an SSN and nothing official says an ITIN is accepted, so call 617-635-4287 before you fill it in.
☐ The City's immigrant office	The Mayor's Office for Immigrant Advancement, 617-635-2980: free telephone consultations with volunteer lawyers on the first and third Wednesday of each month, noon to 3 p.m. Appointment required, interpreters provided. It gives advice only and does not take on your case.
☐ Marriage license	Registry Division, 1 City Hall Square, Room 213, 617-635-4175. By appointment only; there are no walk-ins. \$50, a 3-day wait, valid 60 days, usable only in Massachusetts. A certificate copy is \$12 in person.

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Military registration for men	Men born in 2007 and anyone without a deferral, by December 31, 2026

IF YOU ARE NOT A CITIZEN, REMEMBER

- Registering and voting are for citizens only. Answering "yes" to the citizenship question at the Registry of Motor Vehicles registers you to vote automatically; if you are not a citizen, answer no.
- **A jury summons can reach a noncitizen.** Massachusetts builds its jury list from each city's annual census of residents, not from the voter rolls and not from the RMV. Do not ignore the summons: answer it, say you are not a citizen and send your alien card number, visa status or a copy of your passport. Office of Jury Commissioner: 560 Harrison Avenue, Suite 600, Boston, 1-800-THE-JURY.
- Talk to an immigration attorney before you apply for, or drop, any public benefit: the new federal public charge rule has applied since September 18, 2026, and MassHealth, SNAP and housing assistance can be weighed in some green card cases.
- The state's PROTECT Act has two halves. G.L. c.147 s.64, in force since September 4, 2026, bars state and local police and court employees from asking about immigration status and from holding anyone solely on an ICE detainer. G.L. c.221D, from November 3, 2026, requires a judge-signed warrant or order for a civil arrest at a courthouse. But the first law **does not bind ICE or CBP** and gives **no private right of action**; the Attorney General enforces it. Do not read either as a promise of protection.
- Check your I-94 record at i94.cbp.dhs.gov. Your license term and work permit may depend on it.
- If a green card application is pending, do not leave the country without advance parole.

TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN BOSTON



Have a question about your immigration status?

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