

CHECKLIST · COLORADO

Moving to Colorado Checklist: The First 90 Days (2026)

Thirty days for the license, ninety for the registration, ten for the USCIS address report. Utilities, the question a landlord cannot ask, a license requirement, and the head tax.

SHORT ANSWER

The first three months of a move to Colorado are made of overlapping clocks, and they all start the same day: **30 days for the license, 90 days for the vehicle registration, 10 days for the USCIS address report, and 5 days** if you have a case pending before an immigration court. On the home side, know two items from the start: **the shutoff ban is not seasonal**, it is tied to the daily weather forecast and it works in both directions, so there is no calendar window to look up. And **there is a local income tax**, but it is not a percentage, it is a flat monthly amount per person; a person with two employers who does not file the right form is charged **twice**. The strongest protection in this guide is in renting: **a landlord cannot request, collect or disclose your immigration status**.

Four separate clocks, all starting the same day

TASK	DEADLINE	WHERE
Transfer the license to Colorado	30 days , and the trigger is any one of three things: owning a business in the state, working in Colorado , or living there 90 consecutive days. Because working alone is sufficient, the clock starts the day you begin a job	State driver license office, by appointment
Vehicle registration	90 days . It starts the same day and runs longer than the license clock	The county motor vehicle office where you live
Update the vehicle registration address	30 days . Updating the license address does not update this, and toll statements go to the registration address	County motor vehicle office
USCIS address report	10 days . If you have a case pending before an immigration court, also 5 days on Form EOIR-33	Online or on Form AR-11

Two of those four lines mislead readers often, so we spell them out. First: **mail forwarding is not an AR-11**, and meeting the AR-11 obligation **does not by itself update the address on a pending case**; do both. Second: **the license address and the vehicle registration address are two separate records**. A person who changes the address only on the license after moving never sees the toll statements going to the old address, and that chain ends in a hold on the vehicle registration.

The first thirty days

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Pre-register online for the license and book an appointment	The agency requires pre-registration from everyone applying for the first time, and an appointment on every route; walk-in service is not the norm
☐ Have Turkish documents translated by a translator who holds a U.S. state license or identification card	Colorado publishes no list of approved translators and instead requires the translator's own document number on the page bearing the translation . A translation prepared in Türkiye does not satisfy this, and a notary cannot certify it
☐ File the USCIS address report within 10 days	uscis.gov/addresschange ; update the address on your pending case separately
☐ Open the electricity and gas account, taking your passport and any Colorado identification card	Regulated utilities must offer at least one route that does not require a Social Security number ; in the company's own words a driver license or state identification is an accepted alternative
☐ Ask your previous utility for a 12-month good payment history letter	One of the published ways out of a deposit is that letter. Ask for it before you move , because getting it afterwards is hard
☐ Open the water, sewer and trash accounts separately	In the Denver example water comes from a city charter agency, sewer is billed on the same statement, and trash is charged separately and priced by cart size (recycling and compost included at no extra charge)
☐ Read every withholding line on your first pay stub	Federal, state and, where it applies, the local head tax. The state income tax is flat and was read as 4.4% for 2026 at medium confidence; confirm from the department's guide before you file
☐ If you have a child to enroll, verify the school district from the address	District boundaries do not match city limits, and some districts do not assign you to a neighborhood school automatically

Utilities: the SSN question and the shutoff rule

- **The answer in the rule is written and strong:** every utility requiring deposits must offer **at least one payment alternative that does not require the use of the customer's Social Security number**. Alongside it, a deposit may not be based on grounds such as **national origin**, it is capped at an estimated **90-day bill**, it may be paid **in installments**, and there is a **guarantor route**: a third party in good standing with the utility can stand as guarantor on the account, and that holds for 12 months of regular payment.
- **The ways out of a deposit are enumerated:** a **12-month consecutive good payment history letter** from a previous utility, participation in an energy assistance program in the last 12 months, or no more than two late payments in the previous 12 months. Deposits earn **simple interest**, and a utility must return the deposit of a customer with no more than two late payments over 12 consecutive months.
- **But the scope is limited, so use the right sentence.** These rules bind only **utilities the state regulates**. In the Denver example electricity and gas come from one regulated company and both sit inside the protective rule; **water, sewer and trash are on the city side and outside those protections**. Do not say

that Colorado does not ask for a Social Security number; **first find out which company serves your address.**

- **The honest answer on the water utility:** the published checklist asks only for the service address, the billing address, a phone number and a start date, and **the page says nothing about identification, a Social Security number or a deposit.** Read that neither as a confirmation that none is asked for nor as an obstacle; ask when you call.
- **Call on the day you realize you cannot pay.** Most of the doors (a payment plan, medical documentation, installments) open more easily **before a shutoff notice arrives**, and paying at least one tenth of the balance and entering a plan stops a shutoff, but only if you call and ask for the plan.

THE SHUTOFF BAN IS NOT SEASONAL: IT TRACKS THE FORECAST AND WORKS BOTH WAYS

- **There is no calendar-based shutoff ban in Colorado.** The regulator's rule ties postponement of a residential shutoff to two triggers, and both look at that day's forecast.
- **Cold:** no shutoff on any day when the National Weather Service local forecast **issued between 06:00 and 09:00** predicts the temperature will be **32 degrees Fahrenheit (0 Celsius) or lower at any time in the next 24 hours.** **Heat:** the same forecast predicting **95 degrees Fahrenheit (35 Celsius) or above** does the same.
- **There are two consequences and both have to be known together:** the protection is real but **cannot be learned from a calendar**, and **on a mild January day there is no protection at all.** A freezing day in October is protected, and so is a 95-degree day in July.
- The rules alongside it: a **90-day** medical postponement on documentation from a Colorado licensed physician; no shutoff for amounts **under \$50**, for amounts not yet due, for **a previous occupant's debt** or for disputed amounts; and shutoffs only **Monday through Thursday between 08:00 and 16:00** and not on days close to a holiday.
- **And the scope is the same again:** these rules bind regulated companies, not the city's water and trash services.

Renting: the question a landlord cannot ask

- Colorado has a statute called the **Immigrant Tenant Protection Act** (C.R.S. 38-12-1201 to 1205). Unless required by law or a court order, a landlord may **not request, demand or collect information about the immigration or citizenship status** of a tenant or prospective tenant (the one exception: where the landlord is also the employer, information required by an employment form may be collected).
- The same statute also prohibits: **demanding different or additional documents because of a perceived status; disclosing or threatening to disclose** the information to any person, agency or law enforcement body; **harassing, intimidating or retaliating** against a tenant who exercises these rights; **refusing to rent solely or in part on that basis**; attempting to **discourage** a tenant from living there because of status; and **attempting to evict** on that basis.
- **The application rules alongside it are the most favorable regime we have seen for someone with no U.S. credit history:** rental and credit history may be considered back only **seven years**, **arrest records cannot be considered at all**, a landlord cannot set an income requirement above **200% of the annual rent**, a **portable screening report** you had prepared at your own cost within the last 30 days must be accepted

and no application fee may be charged to someone who provides one, and a rejected applicant can **ask for the reasons in writing**.

- **Cause is required to evict** (HB24-1098, signed April 19, 2024): no-cause eviction is prohibited even at the end of a lease, and where a no-fault cause is used the tenant gets **at least 90 days** after notice. **The deposit is capped at two months' rent**, the return or a written statement of deductions is due within **30 days** (60 if the lease says so), and wrongful withholding carries **treble** damages; but before suing you have to send **a certified letter giving the landlord seven days**, and skipping that letter closes the door to treble damages.

WE WRITE THE LIMIT OF THIS PROTECTION IN THE SAME PLACE

- **The statutory text was not read.** These provisions were read in Denver's official renter handbook, with a citation to the statute; the law's own wording could not be examined line by line. So **no statutory language is quoted in this guide**. In a dispute your attorney will need to consult the full text.
- **And this is a tenancy protection, not a protection against immigration enforcement.** It binds your landlord; it does not bind a federal officer. What to do if a federal officer comes to your door is an entirely separate question.
- **What to do is keep a record:** if a landlord asks about your status, or demands different documents from you because of it, put the exchange in writing (the date, the time, who said what, screenshots of any messages). That record turns out to be the most valuable thing later.

A landlord license is required, and that helps the tenant

This is the opposite of some states: on the Colorado side **Denver requires a license for every rental**, a single-family house included. Denver City Council passed the program on **May 3, 2021**, and it is administered by the **Department of Excise and Licenses**, 201 W. Colfax Ave., Dept. 206, Denver, CO 80202, phone **720-865-2740**. A license is required for any building rented as a residence for **30 days or longer**, and the text names **single-family houses, duplexes, townhouses and apartments**; since **January 1, 2023** two or more units on a single parcel are covered, and since **January 1, 2024** a single unit on a single parcel. The license runs **four years** and lapses on a change of ownership, and a **passing report from a certified private home inspector** is required. Fees start at **\$50** for a single unit, but **those amounts were read indirectly**, so confirm them. **The usable consequence for a tenant:** you can ask before signing whether the unit is licensed, and **an unlicensed unit is a sign of a landlord operating outside the system**. Also, since **January 1, 2022** a written lease is required for all new tenancies longer than 30 days, and a copy of the city's tenant rights document must be given to the tenant when the lease is signed.

The local income tax: a flat amount per person, not a percentage

ITEM	AMOUNT
Employee share, withheld from pay by the employer	\$5.75 a month , from an employee who performs services in Denver and earns at least \$500 from that employer for that calendar month
Business share, paid by the employer	\$4.00 a month for each taxable employee, and \$4.00 a month for every owner, partner or manager doing business in the city, regardless of earnings

ITEM	AMOUNT
Minimum per entity	At least \$4.00 for every month of activity in the city, whether or not there is a permanent place there
Where the tax arises	Not where you live but where you work. Someone living in Aurora and working downtown pays Denver's tax
Two cities at once	Denver's own tax guide names Aurora as another city levying this tax and writes that a person meeting the earnings thresholds in two separate jurisdictions is liable in both . We could not verify other cities' rates and thresholds , so there is no city list here

And here is the detail that costs the most money: with **two employers in the same city you pay the employee share only once, but only if you file Form TD269 with the second employer.** You can obtain the form by calling **720-913-9400**. Without it **both employers withhold**, so you pay twice; the second employer still owes its own \$4.00 business share. The amount is small, but the withholding becomes permanent and reversing it turns into paperwork. None of these taxes is a public benefit and none of them turns on your immigration status; but if you are unsure how your tax filing looks in an immigration file, write to us.

The next sixty days

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Register the vehicle at the county and find out your emissions status	Title first, then registration. The emissions boundary is drawn by county , and people living outside the program area who commute into it regularly are covered too
☐ Check the vehicle registration address	Updating the license address does not update it, and toll statements go to this one
☐ If you open a toll account, choose the transponder by the corridor you will use	The free ride with three people works only with the switchable transponder and only on some corridors; not on the mountain lane and not on C-470
☐ If renting, ask about the license; if buying, read the special taxing districts	A house in a newer development can carry its own district levy on top of the base rate. The property tax protest window is May 1 to June 9 and it is the same every year
☐ Do not expect an exemption	There is no general homestead exemption for a working-age buyer; the senior exemption requires ten consecutive years in the same home
☐ If a document is going to be used in Türkiye, start the apostille chain	Secretary of State, Denver; payment by check or money order only , and you can e-mail a PDF for a free pre-review
☐ Open every official envelope in your mailbox	In this state a non-citizen can receive a jury summons, because the pool is also drawn from driver license records. Do not ignore it and do not serve: use the disqualification request form



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN COLORADO

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