

CHECKLIST · DES PLAINES

Moving to Des Plaines Checklist: Your First 90 Days

What to do and in what order, the deadlines, the numbers and where each errand is done. Print it and tick it off.

SHORT ANSWER

If you are subject to the address-reporting requirement, report your new address to USCIS within the first 10 days. In your first week open the ComEd (electricity) and **Nicor Gas** accounts in your name (both accept a foreign passport and neither requires an SSN), book a license appointment at 1533 Lee Street, and work out your school district before you enroll; the immunization deadline is October 15. Within 30 days handle the title and plates (\$316); there is no city vehicle sticker. Trash is \$20.31 a month and the water bill comes every two months.

The first 10 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Report your address to USCIS (Form AR-11)	As a general rule required for most people who are not U.S. citizens, green card holders included; holders of A and G visas and Visa Waiver visitors are exempt. Online account or the free AR-11: uscis.gov/addresschange . Moving from Chicago to Des Plaines, from Des Plaines to Mount Prospect, or to another apartment in the same complex all count.
☐ Form EOIR-33 if you have an immigration court case	Within 5 days: respondentaccess.eoir.justice.gov
☐ If you have ICE check-in obligations	Report the address through the ICE Portal too, within 5 business days of moving: portal.ice.gov
☐ Tell the Secretary of State	If you hold an Illinois license or ID, report the address change to the SOS within 10 days. A USPS change of address does not update the USCIS record; they are two separate steps.

The first week

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Electricity: ComEd	If you are coming from Chicago this side does not change. A foreign passport, an ITIN and a consular ID are accepted as identification, and no SSN is required. Two documents are asked for, at least one a government-issued photo ID. Phone 800-334-7661.

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Gas: Nicor Gas	This is the clearest change for anyone arriving from Chicago: gas comes from Peoples Gas in the city but from Nicor Gas here. You cannot transfer the old account; you make a new application. Phone 888-642-6748. If you smell gas, leave the building and call from outside.
☐ Do not expect a municipal electricity program	Des Plaines has no active municipal aggregation program, so you start on ComEd default supply. Do not sign a "township rate" offer at the door; compare it with the Price to Compare . You can rescind a new enrollment within 10 days. Complaints: ICC 800-524-0795.
☐ Book the license appointment	1533 Lee Street, weekdays 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., appointment required. Do not lose the 90 days you have on a foreign license.
☐ Work out your school district	The city is not one district. Most of it is District 62 and District 207; part of it is CCSD 59 and District 214. Looking at the property tax bill is the easiest method. District 62 asks for three proofs of residence and no SSN; the immunization and physical deadline is October 15 .
☐ Water and trash accounts	Water and sewer are a city service and the bill comes every two months. Utility billing 847-391-5322, utilitybilling@desplainesil.gov . If you rent, ask whose name the account is in. Trash, recycling and yard waste come from LRS: 844-633-3577.
☐ The DP 311 app	There is no 3-1-1 number to dial. Non-emergency requests go through the DP 311 portal or the app; requests are not monitored around the clock and are only addressed during business hours. If you need to speak to someone, City Hall is 847-391-5300. In an emergency, 911.
☐ Library card	The Des Plaines Public Library is its own independent district: 1501 Ellinwood Street, (847) 827-5551. The card is free for residents inside the city limits and asks only for a photo ID and proof of residency; there is no SSN field. The page does not say whether a foreign passport is accepted, so call first. Addresses in unincorporated Des Plaines fall in the Niles-Maine District Library area.
☐ Apply for an SSN (if eligible)	There is no SSA office in Des Plaines; the nearest is Mount Prospect, 705 N. Wheeling Rd., (866) 931-8350, about 4 miles away. But your ZIP code decides which office serves you: ssa.gov/locator . Waiting 10 days after entry is recommended.

Within 30 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Illinois insurance	Minimum \$25,000 / \$50,000 / \$20,000. Driving uninsured costs at least \$500.
☐ Title and plates	SOS, by appointment (1533 Lee St.): title \$165 plus plate \$151, \$316 in all. There is no city vehicle sticker ; the program ended in July 2020.
☐ Emissions test	All of Cook County is covered. Every two years, free, walk-in. A car that has not been tested cannot renew its plate: illinoisairteam.net , 844-258-9071.
☐ I-PASS or Pay By Plate	I-294 and IL-390 run along the edge of town, so a transponder matters more here than in Chicago. Pay a missed toll through Pay By Plate within 14 days.

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Metra parking permit	The lots are run by the city, not Metra (847-391-5300). Pay through the Passport Parking app; monthly permits online.
☐ Cook County Health CareLink	If you have no insurance: ages 19 to 64, resident of Cook County for at least 30 days; immigration status is not a barrier. The nearest site is the Arlington Heights Health Center, 3250 N. Arlington Heights Rd., 847-934-7669. You enroll in person; appointments 312-864-0200. It is a discount, not insurance.
☐ If you rent, build a document file	The deposit receipt, the photos you took on move-in and the correspondence. Ask whether the property holds a valid rental license, and ask for the full text of the crime-free addendum before you sign.

Within 90 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ The 90 days on a Turkish license	They are running out: schedule the Illinois license tests inside that window.
☐ Türkiye paperwork	An appointment at the Turkish Consulate General in Chicago. From Des Plaines the Metra UP-NW line reaches Ogilvie in about 40 minutes for \$5.50 one way. The consulate covers 13 states, so appointments fill early: konsolosluk.gov.tr
☐ If you bought a home, the homeowner exemption	It takes \$10,000 off the assessed value of the home you live in; no SSN is asked and a consular ID is accepted. It starts only when you apply, then renews automatically.
☐ Set up your tax file	Illinois income tax is a flat 4.95 percent and there is no city income tax. If you cannot get an SSN, use Form W-7 for an ITIN; the nearest IRS office is Schiller Park, by appointment only on 844-545-5640.

Numbers to know in Des Plaines

SUBJECT	NUMBER
Metra UP-NW one way (Zone 3 to Ogilvie)	\$5.50 · day pass \$11.00 · monthly pass \$110.00
Metra trip that does not enter Zone 1	one way \$3.75 · monthly \$75
Pace bus	\$2.00 with Ventra transit value · \$2.25 cash · reduced \$1.00 and \$1.10
Trash, recycling and yard waste (LRS)	\$20.31 a month since April 1, 2026 · senior discount by application
Water and sewer	\$6.468 per 100 cubic feet for water plus \$1.18 sewer, a \$4.00 capital contribution (rising to \$5.00 in 2027) and a \$4.30 monthly facility charge · billed every two months
Title and plates	\$165 plus \$151, \$316 in all · no city vehicle sticker

SUBJECT	NUMBER
Marriage license (Cook County Clerk, Skokie)	\$60 · both parties in person · effective the day after issue · valid 60 days · ceremony in Cook County only
Certified birth certificate (Clerk)	\$15 for the first · \$4 for each additional copy
Apostille (Illinois SOS Index Department)	\$2 per document
City real estate transfer stamp	\$2 per \$1,000 of the price, paid by the seller
Illinois income tax	flat 4.95 percent · personal exemption \$2,925 (2026) · no city income tax
Security deposit cap (suburban Cook County)	one and a half months rent · returned within 30 days

If you rent

- **The crime-free addendum:** a 2009 city ordinance (4-17-3) requires leases signed after January 1, 2010 to carry a Crime Free Lease Addendum, and in the Police Department's own words the addendum states that the acts it lists will cause the tenant's lease to terminate immediately. We could not read the list of acts in the published document, so **ask for the full text before you sign**. The conduct of everyone living in the home, and of guests, can fall under that clause.
- **The rental license:** owners of rental property in the city must apply for a rental license and attend the police-run Phase 1 Crime Free Multi-Housing seminar. The rule covers apartments, condominiums, single-family homes and townhouses, and an interior inspection may be required before the license is issued. Ask the lister whether the property has a current license.
- **Deposits:** Des Plaines is not covered by Chicago's tenant ordinance (the RLTO). The suburban Cook County Residential Tenant Landlord Ordinance (RTLO) applies here: a deposit is capped at one and a half months rent, the deposit and the damage list come back within 30 days, non-renewal notice is 60 days and a notice for unpaid rent is 5 days. A violation costs double the deposit plus attorney fees.
- **Properties outside the ordinance:** it excludes owner-occupied buildings of six units or fewer and the single property of an owner who lived there within the last year. Check whether the unit you are taking is covered.
- **If you have no SSN:** the Illinois Human Rights Act has banned immigration status discrimination in housing since January 2024, and the Department of Human Rights lists screening out applicants who have no SSN among its examples of unlawful conduct; an ITIN has to be accepted. Ask for the reason for a refusal in writing.
- **Free legal help:** 855-956-5763 for suburban Cook County.

If you bought a home: property tax and the transfer stamp

- Des Plaines has no property tax counter of its own; the process runs through Cook County: the Assessor (value and exemptions), the Clerk (rates), the Treasurer (the bill) and the Board of Review (appeals). Tax is paid in two installments in arrears; the dates shift from year to year, so check the [Treasurer due dates page](#).

- Most of the city sits in **Maine Township**, and Maine Township was reassessed in 2025; the Assessor says the new values appear on 2026 bills. A new owner may see a higher installment than expected in the first year. A small part of the city sits in Wheeling Township.
- The Maine Township Assessor's office (1700 Ballard Road, Park Ridge) helps in person with exemption applications and appeals. We could not verify its phone and hours, so call before you go.
- **When you sell:** the city transfer tax is \$2 for every \$1,000 of the price, paid by the seller. The stamp comes from the Finance Department: City Hall, 1420 Miner St., 847-391-5319, retstamp@desplainesil.gov, weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. **All city fees and water balances must be paid before a stamp is issued**, so if you are buying, ask the seller for proof that the water is paid.
- Do not send a tax payment from an account in Türkiye; the Treasurer returns payments made from a foreign bank.

IF YOU ARE NOT A CITIZEN, REMEMBER

- Do not check the "I am a U.S. citizen" box on any form and do not register to vote. If a jury summons arrives, do not throw it away: a Des Plaines resident is summoned to the Skokie courthouse, not Rolling Meadows, and if you do not meet the qualifications you call (312) 603-5879 before your service date.
- Talk to an immigration attorney before applying for SNAP, Medicaid, All Kids or any other public benefit: means-tested benefits received on or after September 18, 2026 can be weighed in a green card case. Cook County Health CareLink is a discount program, not insurance.
- Check your I-94 record at i94.cbp.dhs.gov. If it is wrong, the CBP office in O'Hare Terminal 5 is minutes from your door.
- If a green card application is pending, do not leave the country without advance parole.

TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN DES PLAINES

Have a question about your immigration status?



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