

CHECKLIST · EVANSTON

Moving to Evanston 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 and Nicor Gas accounts (no SSN required), open the city water, sewer and garbage account through 311, and book the license appointment at Chicago North or Deerfield. Three errands are specific to the city: the \$90 wheel tax if your car is registered at an Evanston address, a \$50 permit if you live in a parking district, and the e-notify subscription. All of them go through 311 or 847-448-4311.

CITY HALL MOVED, DO NOT USE THE OLD ADDRESS

On April 1, 2025 the city moved its offices from the old Civic Center at 2100 Ridge Avenue to **Lorraine H. Morton City Hall, 909 Davis Street**. Old directories and maps online still show Ridge Avenue. Almost every department you need, including Health and Human Services, the City Collector and the City Clerk, is now at 909 Davis Street.

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 . Rogers Park to Evanston, Evanston to Skokie, or another apartment in the same building all count.
☐ If you are on F-1 or J-1, the SEVIS address	You also have to update the address in your school's SEVIS record; the USCIS notification does not satisfy that. Apartment, room or shared mailbox numbers get muddled around campus: USCIS wants the address where you actually live, not the university's general address.
☐ 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

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Tell the Secretary of State	If you hold an Illinois license or ID, report it within 10 days: apps.ilsos.gov/addrchange . A USPS change of address does not update the USCIS record.

The first week

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Electricity: ComEd	ComEd handles distribution to every property in Evanston; the outage line is 1-800-334-7661 and 1-877-426-6331 for businesses. The ComEd start-service guide accepts a foreign passport, an ITIN and a consular ID, and no SSN is required. Hardship help of up to \$2,000 for income-eligible households, veterans and service members: 888-806-2273.
☐ The municipal electricity program: it exists, and it matches ComEd	On January 12, 2026 the city approved a 36-month "ComEd Price Match" agreement with MC-Squared Energy Services. New residents are enrolled automatically; if you do not want it, you opt out within 21 days of the notice letter (855-697-0285). Joining and leaving are always free of charge. Do not sign with a salesperson at your door who says it is the city program: the city does not endorse door sales and MC-Squared does not canvass. Complaints: ICC 800-524-0795.
☐ Gas: Nicor Gas	1-888-642-6748. If you come from Chicago this changes: gas there comes from Peoples Gas, here from Nicor, so it is a new application to a new company. Nicor's own assistance fund is 773-205-3520 and LIHEAP is 877-411-9276. If you smell gas, leave the building and call from outside.
☐ Water, sewer and garbage: all from the city	All three on one bill, every two months. To start, move or get a final reading: 3-1-1 or 847-448-4311, water@cityofevanston.org , or the City Collector's Office at 909 Davis Street. After-hours water emergency 847-475-6880. We could not verify whether the account can be opened in a tenant's name, or whether a deposit or an SSN is required, so call before you move.
☐ Ask about your wheel tax status	If your car is registered at an Evanston address the annual wheel tax is mandatory: \$90 for a passenger car. No sticker is issued and enforcement is by plate recognition. The deadline for the 2027 year was September 30, 2026; on a newly bought car you have 30 days. 311 or 847-448-4311.
☐ Do you need a parking permit?	There are more than 25 residential parking districts. An on-street residential permit is \$50, or \$140 for a resident whose car is registered outside Evanston. Check whether your address is in a district with About My Place .
☐ e-notify and About My Place	e-notify sends street cleaning and snow-day parking ban alerts; a car left on the street on a ban day is towed. About My Place shows your ward, your council member, your garbage day and your street cleaning day once you enter your address.
☐ Monitored alarm registration	If your home has a centrally monitored alarm you register it with the city: \$100 for the first registration and \$30 to renew. Most newcomers have never heard of it and it is on the city's own new-resident list.
☐ Book the license appointment	The facility in town serves seniors. For a first license and the tests you book Chicago North (5401 N. Elston Ave.) or Deerfield, both appointment only: 312-793-1010. Do not lose the 90 days you have on a foreign license.

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ School registration	District 65 (PreK-8) by appointment, except Wednesdays: (847) 859-8065. ETHS (9-12): (847) 424-7180. One A plus two B documents, all dated within 60 days . School starts 2 to 3 business days after registration is finalized.
☐ Library card	Free for residents of ZIP codes 60201, 60202 and 60208. Main library 1703 Orrington Avenue, (847) 448-8600. A government-issued photo ID showing your current address; if the address is out of date, a bill, lease or statement dated within 60 days. No SSN and no citizenship question. If you live in 60203 you get the card from the Skokie Public Library, and then use that card at the Evanston library too.
☐ Apply for an SSN (if eligible)	Here you have an advantage: the SSA office is inside the city, at 2116 Green Bay Road, (888) 371-0791, about a mile from City Hall. Sources conflict on the hours, so confirm on the office locator . Your ZIP code decides which office serves you.

Within 30 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Illinois insurance	Minimum \$25,000 / \$50,000 / \$20,000.
☐ Title and plates	Title \$165 plus plate \$151 = \$316. The Evanston facility lists the plate line without an appointment marking but serves seniors; call 800-252-8980 first, and otherwise use Chicago North.
☐ Emissions test	All of Cook County is covered. Every two years, free, walk-in. We could not verify a station in or next to Evanston: search by plate on illinoisairteam.net .
☐ Ventra card	CTA train \$2.50, bus \$2.25, a 30-day pass \$75, the card itself \$5. On Metra, all three Evanston stations are in Zone 2: \$3.75 one way, \$75 a month.
☐ Metra parking	The lots are run by the city's 311 center, not Metra: 847-866-2923. Main Street riders who want a monthly permit call the Union Pacific line: 312-496-4749.
☐ Cook County Health CareLink	If you have no insurance: ages 19 to 64, uninsured, resident of Cook County at least 30 days, and not eligible for Medicaid. The agency states plainly that a person's immigration status does not affect eligibility. The nearest suburban site is the Arlington Heights Health Center, 847-934-7669; verify the hours and phone before you go. It is a discount, not insurance.
☐ If your income is low, Access Evanston	One application opens three doors: the income-based water and sewer rate (\$2.09 per 100 cubic feet for water, \$1.94 for sewer), the senior wheel tax discount and the military permits. Documents asked: an Evanston ID or driver's license, a utility bill, last year's tax return and, for tenants, the lease. You apply at the Levy Senior Center, Fleetwood-Jourdain, Robert Crown and Prieto community centers. The income limits on the page are from 2024, so ask for the current threshold.
☐ If you rent, build a document file	The deposit receipt, the photos you took on move-in and all correspondence. Before signing, ask in writing for the utility costs of the past 12 months and for confirmation of whether the unit is outside the ordinance: the city ordinance puts both on the landlord.

Within 90 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ The 90 days on a Turkish license	They are running out: book the Chicago North or Deerfield appointment inside that window.
☐ Türkiye paperwork	An appointment at the Turkish Consulate General in Chicago. From Evanston the trip is short: about 12.6 miles and 25 minutes by car, or around an hour on the CTA. The consulate covers 13 states, so appointments fill early: konsolosluk.gov.tr
☐ If you bought a home, apply for the exemption	The homeowner exemption takes \$10,000 off the assessed value; no SSN is asked and a consular ID is accepted. The city's own warning: four exemptions have to be applied for or renewed every year (homeowner, senior homestead, senior freeze and home improvement).
☐ 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; there is no IRS office in Evanston, and the two nearest are Schiller Park and downtown Chicago (230 S. Dearborn St.), both about 14 miles, by appointment only on 844-545-5640.

Numbers to know in Evanston

SUBJECT	NUMBER
CTA train / bus · 30-day pass	\$2.50 / \$2.25 · \$75 · the Ventra card itself \$5
Metra UP-N one way (Zone 2 to Ogilvie)	\$3.75 · day pass \$7.50 · monthly pass \$75.00
Wheel tax (passenger car)	\$90 a year · tax year October 1 to September 30 · no sticker issued
Residential parking permit	\$50 · \$140 for a resident whose car is registered outside Evanston
Monitored alarm registration	\$100 first registration · \$30 renewal
Water (two-month minimum, 500 cubic feet included)	\$17.21 · above the minimum \$4.82 per 100 cubic feet
Sewer (two-month minimum)	\$13.30 · above the minimum \$2.66 per 100 cubic feet
Garbage cart	35 gallon \$11.93 a month · 65 gallon \$14.00 a month (since April 1, 2026) · 95 gallon \$26.95 a month · food and yard waste \$7 a month
Late penalty (city bill)	10 percent after 5 p.m. on the due date · reconnection \$25 (\$75 after hours)
Title and plates	\$165 plus \$151 = \$316
Birth certificate (Evanston City Clerk)	\$15 first copy · \$4 each additional · death certificate \$17 and \$6 · shipping \$20
Marriage license (Cook County Clerk, Skokie)	\$60 · both parties in person · effective the day after issue · valid 60 days

SUBJECT	NUMBER
Apostille (Illinois SOS Index Department)	\$2 per document
Sales tax	general merchandise and prepared food 10.5 percent · groceries and prescriptions 2.25 percent · titled vehicles 8.25 percent
Illinois income tax	flat 4.95 percent · personal exemption \$2,925 (2026) · no city income tax
Security deposit (city tenant ordinance)	at most one and a half months' rent · returned within 21 days

If you rent: the city has its own ordinance

- Evanston has its own residential landlord and tenant ordinance (Title 5 Chapter 3 of the city code, amended July 22, 2024, in force since January 1, 2025), and Chicago's RLTO does not apply here. **Three numbers:** the deposit is capped at one and a half months' rent and held in a separate account; it comes back within **21 days** of move-out with an itemized list; and a rent increase, renewal or non-renewal needs **90 days** written notice. Coming from Chicago or another suburb, two differences: the return is 21 days rather than 30, and the increase notice is 90 days rather than 60.
- **The other deadlines:** a notice for unpaid rent is 10 days in writing and the landlord must accept the full amount within those 10 days; a lease violation notice is 30 days with 30 days to cure; the late fee is \$25 if the rent is \$1,600 or less, and above that \$25 plus 5 percent of the excess. On a wrongful withholding the tenant can sue for twice the amount plus attorney fees. Changing the locks without a court order is prohibited.
- **What the landlord must disclose:** the contact details of the manager or owner, who pays the utilities and **the utility costs for the past 12 months**, building code violations in the past year, lead hazards, any pending foreclosure and bed bug information. That 12-month utility figure is a rare right in this series: it lets you learn the heating cost before you rent.
- **Banned lease clauses:** non-disparagement, waiver of tenant rights, excessive late fees, barring calls to emergency services, and shifting the landlord's attorney costs onto the tenant. If you see such a clause, ask about it before you sign.
- **What is not covered:** dormitories and fraternity or sorority houses, licensed shared housing, medical and geriatric facilities, short hotel and motel stays, co-ops occupied by the shareholder and rent-to-own units. A landlord must disclose in writing that a unit is outside the ordinance before taking any money. There are many dorms and student houses around the university, so do not sign a lease without reading that line.
- **If a repair is not made:** after written notice and 10 days you can have work costing less than \$500 or half a month's rent done and deduct it from the rent. With no heat, water or electricity, after written notice you can supply the service yourself and deduct it, deduct the cost of temporary accommodation, and end the lease if it is not fixed within 7 days. Retaliation for exercising your rights is barred.
- **Free help, paid for by the city:** the Metropolitan Tenants Organization tenant line is 773-292-4988 (weekdays 1 to 5 p.m.), and its text line takes messages around the clock, with a reply in 1 to 2 business days, if you text "Evanston" to 205-736-0293. The Lawyers Committee for Better Housing is the city's other contracted agency. Rent assistance: Suburban Cook County Entry Point 877-426-6515, Connections for the Homeless 847-475-7070 ext. 134. Healthy homes 847-859-7831.

- **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. The city's own Fair Housing Ordinance protects source of income, national origin and covered criminal records, but we could not reach the full text, so we cannot confirm whether immigration status is a separate protected class: the text you rely on is state law.
 - **Looking for an affordable rental, there is one waitlist:** the Inclusionary Housing ordinance has been in force since April 1, 2025, and the affordable units from new developments are gathered on one central waitlist run by Community Partners for Affordable Housing: CPAHwaitlist@cpahousing.org, 847-263-7478 ext. 16. The city contact is IHO@cityofevanston.org, 847-448-4311. Joining the list once is enough, instead of applying building by building.
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If you bought a home: who gets the bill?

- Homes in Evanston are taxed by Cook County: the Assessor sets the value and grants exemptions and the Treasurer sends the bill. Tax is paid in two installments in arrears; the second installment for tax year 2025 was due October 1, 2026 and the annual tax sale is December 15, 2026. The dates shift, so check the [Treasurer due dates page](#).
- **Most of the bill is carried by the schools, not the city.** In tax year 2023 the average composite rate was 8.026, of which District 65 was 3.322 and District 202 was 2.112; the City of Evanston was 1.269, Cook County 0.493, MWRD 0.345, Oakton Community College 0.227, the library 0.221, the general assistance fund 0.029 and mosquito abatement 0.008. So more than half of what you pay goes to the school your child attends. We could not read the 2024 and 2025 rates on an official page.
- **Evanston Township was reassessed in 2025**, the first reassessment since 2022; the Cook County Assessor published the new values on April 9, 2025 and total assessed value across the township rose 28 percent. The new values appear on the second-installment bills issued in 2026, so a buyer in 2026 may find the first bill higher than expected. Do not budget from the old tax figure the seller showed you.
- Some Cook County townships have their own assessor office that helps in person with applications and appeals; we found none for Evanston Township, so run exemptions and appeals through the Cook County Assessor. The appeal window opens and closes separately for each township.
- 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. Do not take a form from the registration tables set up on campus, around Fountain Square or at the farmers market. If a jury summons arrives, do not throw it away: Evanston is in the Second Municipal District (the Skokie courthouse), but read where to report from your letter rather than from a map, and if you do not meet the qualifications 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. CareLink is a discount program, not insurance.
- **Do not read the Welcoming City ordinance as a promise of protection.** The city states that municipal employees do not take part in federal civil immigration enforcement and that nobody's status is asked; but the ordinance binds city employees only, ICE and CBP officers are not subject to it, a valid criminal warrant signed by a judge is an exception, it creates no right to sue and it changes nothing in your own case. In December 2025 federal activity took place on Oakton Street.
- Check your I-94 record at i94.cbp.dhs.gov. If it is wrong, the CBP office in O'Hare Terminal 5 fixes it. If a green card application is pending, do not leave the country without advance parole. In an emergency call 911; for immigration resources, 311 or 847-448-4311; the ICIRR family support hotline is 1-855-435-7693.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN EVANSTON

Have a question about your immigration status?

Attorney Asim Clinch serves clients in Evanston and the surrounding area, in Turkish and English.

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