

CHECKLIST · NEW ORLEANS

Moving to New Orleans Checklist: The First 30 Days (2026)

Day one, week one, the first month and what to close before day thirty. Four habits break here, and the day one job is checking your address.

SHORT ANSWER

This list opens with four warnings. First, and it is a day one job: **a home with a New Orleans mailing address can sit in the neighboring parish**. There is no second layer of government inside the parish, because **the city is coterminous with the parish**; but **the trap is outside the parish** and tax, policing, schools, trash, zoning and courts all follow from it. Second: **if you came from Turkey your license is not transferred, it is earned from scratch**, and the approved course is **the longest item of the first month**. Third: **gas changed hands in 2025**; going to the former company sends you to the wrong counter. Fourth: **the water account is opened in person** and the trash fee arrives inside that same bill.

Deadlines in one table

TASK	DEADLINE	WHERE
Federal address report	10 days . Moves inside the city require a report too	Through the immigration agency's own channel; separately for each pending case
License address	10 days	The agency asks that it be done in person
Registration address	10 days	A separate transaction ; the corrected registration is free
License transfer	30 days , only for arrivals from another U.S. state	The old state license is surrendered and destroyed
License if you came from Turkey	Not a day count; the course schedule sets it	Temporary instructional permit, then 6 classroom hours and 8 behind-the-wheel hours
Title after buying a vehicle	Five days	Motor vehicle office or authorized tag agent
Vehicle registration for a new resident	Research could not find one	No day count in either official source; handle it in the first month
Flood policy	30-day wait before it takes effect	Renters can buy one too ; buying after a storm is named does not help

TASK	DEADLINE	WHERE
Marriage license waiting period	24 hours. The 72-hour figure in circulation is wrong	In this parish the clerk of court does not issue it, the state vital records registry does

Two rows of this table mislead readers often. First: **a change of address at the post office does not satisfy the federal report.** Second: **changing the address on your license does not change the registration address on your vehicles;** two separate transactions and both carry 10 days.

Day one

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Check whether your address is really in this parish	The city's own map metadata describes the boundary as coterminous with Orleans Parish , grounded in the first article of the city's own charter. But the neighboring parish sheriff's office writes on its own page that some areas with a New Orleans mailing address are in fact in another parish
☐ Use the official lookup tool	The city's own tool is called Where Y'At . The result determines not only your address but your school zone, your election district and your trash day
☐ Register for alerts	The city's preparedness brand is NOLA Ready . To register by text, send ALERT to 665248 . There is only one door here , because the city and the parish are the same; in some other communities in this state two separate registrations are needed
☐ If you have no car, add the assisted evacuation registration	This program with an institutional name is specific to this city . To register, send EVACNOLA to 77295 ; both registrations are free
☐ Note the emergency radio frequencies	870 AM and 105.3 FM . The parish emergency management phone is 504-658-8700 ; the multilingual phone door is 2-1-1

Week one

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ File the federal address report within 10 days	Update the address on any pending case separately. Moves inside the city require a report too
☐ Open the water account	Water, sewerage and drainage are all run by the city's public utility. New customers apply in person and the list of required information includes a Social Security number . No alternative route without a number could be found on the page; we do not say none exists, call customer service before you apply
☐ Do not look for trash as a separate bill	Trash is not a separate bill, it arrives inside the water bill , and it rose on October 1, 2026: from \$24.00 to \$32.25 a month for a residence

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Open electric and gas accounts	The electric company is regulated not by the state commission but by the city council; so a billing or service complaint goes to the city, not the state. Gas changed hands in 2025: the former company's own page says it completed the sale of the distribution business, and the buyer is Delta Utilities
☐ Get a library card	Free to parish residents and the door to free English classes. The real obstacle is not status but photo identification; bring photo identification and a lease
☐ If you came from Turkey, enroll in a driving school	First the temporary instructional permit , then the course. Course schedules can run for months and this is the longest item of the first month
☐ Start the Social Security number	The number is asked for on every license and on the water account. If you are not eligible, get the letter from the agency

The first month

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Enroll the children in school	There is no neighborhood school; the system is centralized and named NCAP , at enrollnolaps.com . Applications open November 2, 2026; a family arriving midyear is placed in person at a Family Resource Center
☐ Apply for health coverage	The state expanded coverage and removed the five-year waiting period for children. Sliding fee clinics are not free
☐ Register the vehicle and keep insurance proof in it	Policy first, plate second. A driver who cannot show proof has the plate seized; you have three business days to deliver proof
☐ Check four things before signing a lease	The waiver of notice clause (if it is there your five-day notice right goes to zero), the term (with none stated the lease is month to month by law), recordation (an unrecorded lease has no effect against third parties) and which bank of the river you are on (the court that hears an eviction changes with the bank)
☐ Note the deposit rule	Return within one month; if anything is withheld, an itemized statement within the same month. The lessee must leave a written forwarding address when the lease ends. No cap could be found
☐ Use the right door for marriage	In this parish the clerk of court does not issue the license, the state vital records registry does; the license is \$27.50 and the waiting period is 24 hours , not 72
☐ Get your vital records documents	The vital records central office is in this city, so you can get a certified copy the same day; ordering by mail takes 8 to 10 weeks. A Turkish passport counts as primary identification

IF YOU BUY A HOME, KEEP THE ORDER

- **In this city property tax is collected by the municipality:** elsewhere in the state the parish sheriff does it, here it is the city's own treasury bureau.
- The exemption requires the home to be **your domicile**, and the document list contains a chain: **an electric bill is required and a water utility bill is not accepted.**
- Identification must be a **Louisiana license or state identification card** and its address must match the property.
- **The correct order: act of sale, then the electricity account, then the exemption application.**
- **And the item never to skip in this city:** standard homeowner insurance does not cover flooding, **renters can buy policies too**, and a flood policy takes **30 days** to become effective. **Buying a policy after a storm is named does not help.**

HURRICANES: READ THIS AS A CALENDAR, NOT AS A HORROR STORY

- The season runs **June 1 through November 30.**
- **The evacuation order is normally issued by the parish government, not the governor**, and because the city and the parish are the same here, **the city issues it.**
- **The state's phased timetable is written in hours:** three zones come out at **50, 40 and 30 hours** before the onset of tropical storm force winds on the coast. **The thresholds count back from the onset of the winds, not from landfall.**
- **In a mandatory evacuation a 24-hour curfew takes effect automatically**, and a person in the zone who is not essential personnel can be detained.
- **Return is by permission:** no unauthorized person, residents included, may return until conditions allow and the order is lifted. **Plan not for coming back in three days but for staying away until permission comes.**
- **If you have no car:** the assembly point is the **Smoothie King Center**, 1501 Dave Dixon Dr. The baggage limit is **one carry-on bag** per person; medical equipment and a diaper bag do not count against it. People with medical or mobility needs can be **picked up at home if they complete the medical section** of the city's profile system; without it there is no pickup.

Before day thirty

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Your license file should be open	If you came from another state the 30-day window is closing; if you came from Turkey you should already be enrolled in a course
☐ Registration done and insurance proof in the vehicle	One stop without proof can end with your plate seized
☐ School enrollment and documents complete	Residency is verified annually and the family gets five business days when a question arises
☐ Utility accounts in your name	Water is opened in person; electricity and gas are with two different companies

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Dated copies of every immigration notice in your file	If you ever miss a hearing or an appointment, that is the only thing you will have in hand
☐ Answer a jury summons if one arrives	Jury service depends on citizenship. Do not ignore the summons, keep a copy of your answer and consult your attorney before sending it
☐ Do not touch the voter registration box	Voter registration is for citizens only. If the question appears at a license counter or on a form, check no box

A DARK TRAFFIC SIGNAL MEANS AN ALL-WAY STOP

- From the state's own driver guide: When a traffic-control signal is not functioning at an intersection, the intersection shall revert to an all-way or four-way stop.
- Every approaching vehicle stops and the order follows arrival.
- **Turkey has no such rule**, and in a city with frequent outages this is **a genuine crash risk** for a newcomer.
- **This is not a disaster rule, it is a permanent traffic rule.**

One last note: this list covers the items specific to this city. For rules that apply statewide see [our Louisiana guide](#).



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN NEW ORLEANS

Have a question about your immigration status?

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