

CHECKLIST · NORTH CAROLINA

Moving to North Carolina: A First 90 Days Checklist

What to do in order, the deadlines attached to each item and where it is done. Print it and tick it off.

SHORT ANSWER

If you are subject to the address reporting duty, report your new address to USCIS within **10 days**; with a case pending before an immigration court the clock is **5 days**. In the first week put the electricity and water in your name and enroll your children. The license deadline is **60 days**, the vehicle deadline is about **30 days** or your first day of work, whichever comes first. A rent increase is capped nowhere in this state and cannot be capped, so budget accordingly.

The first 10 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Report your address to USCIS (AR-11)	10 days after you move. USCIS prefers the online report to the paper form, because the online report both satisfies the duty and updates the systems quickly: uscis.gov/addresschange
☐ Form EOIR-33 if you have an immigration court case	Within 5 days . Do not mix the two clocks. A hearing notice going to your old address can mean you are treated as having failed to appear, which can end in a decision made in your absence
☐ If you have an ICE reporting duty	Your contact is the office named in the reporting instructions you hold. We could not verify ICE and CBP offices in the state in this research , because the agency's site refused every request; keep that document
☐ Update your vehicle registration address	The renewal notice, the insurance termination notice and the toll invoice all go to the address in your DMV record
☐ Print your I-94 record	i94.cbp.dhs.gov · Your period of stay is the date on the I-94, not the validity of the visa in your passport. Correct a wrong name, date of birth or status early

The first week

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Electricity account	There is no supplier to choose ; this is a regulated monopoly state. The online form asks for an SSN for identity, but a customer without a number can call customer service and run the request on other identification : a driver license, a passport number or a matrícula number. There is a guarantor route as well; the guarantor form is requested on 800-777-9898. We could not read these lines directly on the company's handbook, so they come from that document's search index
☐ If a deposit is asked for, do not read it as a refusal	The rule is in state regulation (NCUC Chapter 12): a cash deposit may not exceed two twelfths of the estimated bill for the coming twelve months, a deposit held more than 90 days earns 8% a year , and the deposit is refunded automatically after twelve consecutive bills paid without interruption. The regulation expressly allows a guarantor in place of a credit history
☐ Water, sewer and refuse	The City of Raleigh bills all of it monthly and says on its own page that no SSN is required . Its twelve acceptable documents name a passport, a student or work visa, a green card, the I-94 and the I-765 employment authorization card. If online verification fails, go in person to 222 W. Hargett Street, Raleigh with two identity documents and a lease. New customer deposit \$90, service start \$50 per meter
☐ Natural gas	The gas company for the Raleigh area changed hands , and we could not read the new company's current trading name, the transfer date, its customer service number or its deposit and identity rules. Take the company name from your own bill or from the regulator's list, not from the internet. Many homes are all-electric and you may have no gas account at all
☐ Enroll the children	Schools are county work and the base school place is assigned automatically. An SSN does not appear on the document list. Proof of address must be in the parent's name; if you have none, ask about McKinney-Vento
☐ Apply for an SSN if you are eligible	Go a few days after you arrive, because immigration records take time to reach the system. National line 1-800-772-1213 , ask for a Turkish interpreter. Get the office address from the official locator ; we publish no street address because the agency's locator refused every request in this research

IF YOU ARE RENTING: THREE PREEMPTIONS AND ONE SHORT NOTICE PERIOD

- **A rent increase is capped nowhere and cannot be capped.** G.S. 42-14.1 forbids any county or city to enact, maintain or enforce an ordinance regulating the amount of rent charged for privately owned residential or commercial rental property.
- **Source-of-income protection is preempted too.** A landlord may lawfully refuse a housing voucher and a city cannot stop it.
- **General rental registration and inspection are preempted as well.** G.S. 160D-1207 forbids a local government to require a rental owner to obtain a permit or to register the property; the exceptions are narrow and tied to verified violations.
- **The deposit cap changes with the lease term:** two weeks' rent weekly, **one and a half months'** monthly, and **two months'** for any term longer than month to month. A standard twelve-month lease permits two months. The deposit must be accounted for within 30 days, or an interim account within 30 days and a final account within 60.
- **Late fees are capped by statute:** no more than \$15 or 5% of the monthly rent, whichever is greater, and only once the rent is five calendar days or more late.
- **Ending a month-to-month tenancy takes only seven days' notice.** Note that specifically if you come from a state with a 30 or 60 day rule. We could not confirm the calendar details of an eviction case, because nccourts.gov refused access.

The first 30 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Register the vehicle	The deadline is the sooner of accepting gainful employment or the expiry of the roughly 30-day reciprocity period . The 60 days on the license does not extend it. The insurer must be licensed in the state and the minimums are 50/100/50
☐ Plan for the Highway Use Tax	3%, but capped at \$250 where the vehicle has been titled in your own name in another state for at least 90 days. On a \$30,000 car the difference is about \$650
☐ Driver license visit	60 days. A legal presence document and a Social Security document are required; we found no published route for a lawfully present applicant without a number, so call (919) 715-7000 before you go. No exam language list is published, so request the free interpreter in advance
☐ Watch for the Tag and Tax notice	The registration fee and the county vehicle property tax arrive on one sheet, sent 90 days before expiry, and the tag is not renewed without paying the tax . If you have just moved, the "T" limited registration plate defers the tax for 60 days, with no grace period after that
☐ Toll account	An NC Quick Pass transponder gives a 50% discount off the invoice rate; a driver without one pays double. With no booths it is easy to enter the Triangle Expressway by accident between Raleigh, Cary, Apex, Morrisville and Durham
☐ No sticker since October 1, 2026	The plate sticker and the automatic printed registration card were abolished. Download the digital registration card and keep it on your phone, or order a printed one for \$5

IF YOUR LICENSE HAS EXPIRED YOU CANNOT SIMPLY WAIT

A Class C license that expired on or after July 1, 2025 remains valid for driving through December 31, 2027. But the same announcement says the expired card is **not valid as identification and not valid for air travel**, and the federal guidance says an expired state license is **not acceptable for Form I-9**, the employment eligibility form. We could not read the body of that federal page, because uscis.gov refused both of our tools, but the page exists and its title is unambiguous. So you may drive on that card but you cannot start a job with it. The moratorium is not a convenience, it is a trap.

Health and insurance

- **Medicaid expanded on December 1, 2023:** ages 19 to 64, income up to 138% of the federal poverty level. The state's own measure is about \$1,800 a month for one person and \$3,065 for a household of three. There is no monthly premium and the copay never exceeds \$4.
- **Immigrant eligibility changed on October 1, 2026** and the state's own page says so **without naming the federal statute**. Read it as a change to check rather than a settled rule. The statuses the page lists are green card holders, a lawfully residing child under 19 without permanent status, a person who is pregnant or gave birth in the last 12 months and is lawfully residing without permanent status, Cuban and Haitian entrants, and COFA migrants. Most green card holders face a **five-year wait**; the exceptions are 40 qualifying work quarters, veterans and active duty service members with their families, and exempt humanitarian statuses such as refugee or asylee.
- **In an emergency, do not hesitate.** The state's wording is plain: no immigration document is required for Emergency Medicaid, because the care must be provided under federal emergency treatment law. Separately, under federal **EMTALA** an emergency department must give a medical screening examination to anyone who walks in and must stabilize an emergency condition it finds. That is a screening and stabilization duty, not a promise of free treatment, and the hospital can still bill you.
- **When the bill arrives, do not give up. All 99 eligible hospitals in the state** joined the medical debt relief program, because joining is a condition of an enhanced payment the hospital receives. Unpaid hospital debt back to January 1, 2014 is canceled for anyone enrolled in Medicaid; two-year-old debt is canceled for patients not on Medicaid whose household income is at or under 350% of the poverty level; and future bills are discounted between 50% and 100%, scaled by income, up to 300% of the poverty level. **This is not free care**, it is an income-tested bill reduction, and the state's pages say nothing at all about immigration status. The first step is to call the hospital's financial assistance office; cancellation letters arrive by post.
- **We could not find a clinic whose own page says its care is free.** The two federally funded organizations around Raleigh run a **sliding fee**, which is a reduced payment, not zero. Treat a place as free only because its own page says so.

Within 60 to 90 days and after

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ If you are getting married	The county Register of Deeds issues the license, both parties in person, no appointment needed, \$60 for example in Wake County. The license is valid 60 days and the ceremony must take place inside the state. Identification showing your full Social Security number is normally required, but an applicant who has none signs an affidavit held at the office. Read both halves together
☐ Birth or death certificate	The county Register of Deeds takes walk-ins and is cheaper: first copy \$24, each additional copy \$15. The main Raleigh office can issue a certificate for any birth in the state since 1971 and any death in the state since 2021 . The state office is appointment-only and ordering online adds \$13.95
☐ U.S. passport application	The same office is a passport acceptance facility : Suite 1700, 919-856-5460, weekdays 8:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. by appointment, walk-ins before 1 p.m. You can collect the birth certificate on the first floor and go upstairs the same morning
☐ Apostille for use in Türkiye	The Authentications division of the Department of the Secretary of State, \$10 per document . A document issued by a federal agency is apostilled by the U.S. Department of State, not by the state
☐ If you are starting a business	Forming an LLC costs \$125 and the annual report is \$200. There is no general business license at all , and since July 1, 2015 the City of Raleigh has not required one. The state's formation form contains no occurrence of citizen, lawful, immigration, alien or Social Security; we downloaded it, converted it to text and searched it, and the count was zero
☐ Turkish consular matters	The Consulate General in Miami covers this state, roughly 796 miles from Raleigh. In-person applications are taken 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. only

Taxes: there is no third line

TAX	PAID TO	LOGIC
Federal income tax	IRS	Worldwide income
State income tax	NCDOR	Residence, plus state-source income. The rate is flat and falling: 3.99% for 2026
City or county income tax	None, and none may be levied	G.S. 105-247 forbids any city, town, township or county to levy an income tax
Property tax	Billed by the county	On 100% of appraised fair market value, with the municipality adding its own rate as a separate line. Example: county \$0.5371 plus city \$0.3720, a total of \$0.9091
Homestead exemption	There is no general one	Relief is based on age, disability and income, plus a separate item for disabled veterans. A working-age buyer gets nothing. The application is Form AV-9 and the deadline is June 1

TAX	PAID TO	LOGIC
If you cannot get an SSN	ITIN	Form W-7, as a rule attached to the federal return. An ITIN is not work authorization and not a status document. An ITIN unused on a return for three consecutive years expires

IF YOU ARE NOT A CITIZEN, REMEMBER

- **Do not register to vote.** The state elections board says on its own page that citizenship documents are not required to register; the form asks you to tick a box and sign. That is exactly why it is dangerous: nobody stops you, but ticking that box means signing a false statement.
- **A jury summons can still reach you,** because the jury list is built from **driver license records as well as the voter roll**, so a non-citizen who holds a license can be summoned.
- **Talk to an immigration attorney before you apply for any public benefit.** On the federal side a **new public charge rule took effect on September 18, 2026**, and as of September 19, 2026 no court had stayed it. That is a snapshot of litigation, not an official source, so check the current position before you file.
- **On the state side, Session Law 2026-19** directs the health and commerce departments, the housing finance agency and **all local housing authorities** to stop providing state-funded benefits to noncitizens residing in the United States without legal permission. If you receive housing assistance or plan to apply, ask the authority about your own situation and note the answer with the date. **We were not able to read the enacted text of the law;** these items come from the General Assembly's own bill summary.
- **School enrollment is not a public benefit application** and neither of these rules affects your child's place.
- If you have a green card application pending, do not travel abroad without advance parole.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN NORTH CAROLINA

Have a question about your immigration status?

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