

CHECKLIST · ROCKVALE

Moving to Rockvale Checklist: Your first 30 days (2026)

An ordered list for your first 30 days. There is no city government here, so the first task on the list is to build a contact list: law enforcement, codes, trash, water, power, registration, taxes and schools are separate doors.

SHORT ANSWER

We start this list with four warnings. First, and it decides everything else: **there is no city government here**. Rockvale is an **unincorporated settlement**, and a **mayor, a council, a city police department, a city court and a city tax were searched for and not found, because those offices do not exist**. Rutherford County provides the services, so **your first task is to build a contact list**. Second: **the complaint forum you go to in a dispute changes with the type of entity your provider is**, so open your bill and read the provider's name. Third: **there is no curbside trash collection** and the convenience center is **closed Mondays and Thursdays**. Fourth: put **January 1, 2027** on your calendar. **But do not make the opposite assumption either**: there is **transit you reach by phone**, **your library card is free because you are inside the county line**, and **this settlement appears on the list of public tornado shelters the county publishes**.

Calendar: the firm dates, and what could not be found

TASK	DEADLINE OR DATE	WHERE
Federal change of address	10 days . Moving within the same neighborhood is still moving	Through your online account or Form AR-11; enter the receipt number of every pending application
Notice to the court	5 days , if you have a pending case	With Form EOIR-33/IC. The court is not in this settlement ; the only immigration court in the state is in Memphis
State driver license	30 days after establishing residency	The full-service center at the county seat; there is no site here at all
Document regime for vehicle registration	January 1, 2027 , for initial registrations	Rutherford County Clerk. No document at renewal, warning notice on both
Deadline for sheriffs	January 1, 2027	The law's own calendar; the decision belongs to the sheriff , and there is no city council here to take it to
Verification regime for public benefits	July 1, 2026 , but for local governments at the first reprinting of the form	State agencies, local government units and local health departments; here the county is what falls inside the definition

TASK	DEADLINE OR DATE	WHERE
Clocks go back	November 1, 2026	The gap with Türkiye grows by one hour after that week
Days the convenience center is closed	Mondays and Thursdays	Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.; Saturday and Sunday 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Two rows in this table mislead people often. First: **a change of address at the post office does not satisfy the federal notice**, and filing the federal notice **does not automatically update the address on a pending application**; do both, uscis.gov/addresschange. Second: **giving your address to a state or local agency does not satisfy the federal obligation**; no address you give from a utility account to a school enrollment takes the place of that notice. One more thing changed in 2026: account for the federal rule that **took effect on June 29, 2026** and reorganizes alien registration and what counts as evidence of registration, text at the federalregister.gov entry.

Who opens which door: the list to build on day one

This is not a guess, it is a measurement. A home whose mailing address reads **Rockvale, TN 37153** is in fact served by **Rutherford County Govt**, seated at **Murfreesboro**. **None of these are in the same building**, and **the body you vote for is the county commission**.

SUBJECT	CONTACT	NOTE
Law enforcement	Rutherford County Sheriff's Office	There is no city police department. In an emergency, 911
Codes and building permits	Rutherford County Building Codes Department	Weekdays 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.; question line 615-898-7734
Trash	The county solid waste operation	No curbside collection ; you take it to a convenience center yourself
Water and sewer	Consolidated Utility District	709 New Salem Highway, Murfreesboro, TN 37129; 615-893-7225
Electricity	Middle Tennessee Electric	A member-owned cooperative; Smyrna office 505 Nolan Drive, Smyrna, TN 37167; 615-494-1600
Vehicle registration and wheel tax	Rutherford County Clerk	A single door; also where the county certification in the apostille chain is done
Property tax	Rutherford County Trustee	A single door; there is no city collector
Schools	Rutherford County Schools	2240 Southpark Drive, Murfreesboro, TN 37128; 615-893-5812
Library	Rutherford County Library System	Six branches, none of them here
Emergency management and shelters	The county's public health and safety operation	Publishes five public tornado shelters with their addresses

SUBJECT	CONTACT	NOTE
Political decision-making body	Rutherford County Commission	This is the body you vote for; there is no city council

AN ACCESS WARNING, AND WHY WE ARE TELLING YOU

- **The county's official site does not open from Türkiye.** The site applies a **country-level block** and returns an error to connections from Türkiye. **That does not mean the site is down, it means we cannot read it from here.** Many county items in this research were therefore read **indirectly**.
- **First consequence:** we do not write **there is none** about anything we could not read there; we say we could not find it and point you to the agency's own page.
- **Second, and the practical one for you:** a relative in Türkiye may not be able to open the county's site on your behalf. If you need someone there to look at a document or a form, **send them the downloaded file, not the page.**

The first thirty days

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Build the contact list on day one	Save the table above to your phone. There is no city government here and the doors are separate
☐ Open your bill on day one and find your provider's type	Electricity comes from a cooperative , water and sewer from a utility district . Your complaint forum follows from that type
☐ File the federal change of address within 10 days	uscis.gov/addresschange ; if you have a court case, Form EOIR-33/IC within 5 days
☐ Do not assume which utility serves your address	There is more than one provider across the county and whether a given address falls inside these two utilities could not be confirmed from the utilities' own service area maps . When house hunting, ask for the previous occupant's bill , then call the utility and read them your address
☐ Ask the right question when you open an account	Do not say you have no number. Ask: do you have a list of identification documents you accept and can you email it; is there a path for someone with no number; do you require a deposit, how much, and can it be paid in installments. We could not measure these rules, so we give you the question rather than the rule
☐ Memorize the trash schedule	No curbside collection. The convenience center is closed Mondays and Thursdays ; Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. , Saturday and Sunday 7:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. One visit per day and about one pickup truck bed , bulky items limited to three per day. Construction debris, yard waste and brush are not accepted
☐ Sign up for alerts and note your shelter today	Register through the county's current page, on Smart911 . The county publishes five public tornado shelters with their addresses and this settlement heads the list: 6540 Hwy 99, Rockvale, TN 37153

TASK	WHERE OR HOW
☐ Plan the license work around the county seat	There is no site here and testing is done only at the full-service center . Fill out the application online, send documents for five business day pre-approval , and book an appointment
☐ Register the vehicle with the county clerk	From January 1, 2027 an initial registration requires a status document; a county wheel tax must also be paid before a plate is issued, and the figure should be confirmed with the clerk
☐ Without a car, set the calendar early	The county's dial-a-ride service requires 24 hours notice for a local trip and 72 hours for a trip out of the county. Fares: \$2.00 within the city at the county seat, \$3.00 within the city and county, \$2.00 for each extra stop on a scheduled route, \$5.00 for each county line crossed, and a flat \$10.00 to Nashville. Cash or a bus pass only
☐ Get your library card	The measure is the county line, not a city line : since November 3, 2025 the system charges people from outside the county \$25 a year, while the card stays free for county residents. But there is no branch here ; of six branches four are at the county seat, one is in Smyrna and one in Eagleville
☐ Start school enrollment for the children	There is one district and it is the county district . Two separate proofs of residence are required, the two cannot come from the same source , and a post office box is not accepted
☐ Open your health file early	This state did not expand coverage and the gap is real. Evaluate everyone in the household separately : in the same household the mother may be covered while the child is not
☐ If you are marrying, know that you can choose the county	A license can be obtained from any county in the state and is valid for 30 days . In this county the amount is \$107.50 , or \$45.00 with the course, and here the course certificate is required to be notarized
☐ For a birth certificate your own county is enough	All ninety-five county health departments can issue birth and death certificates. The same sentence is not written for marriage and divorce records
☐ If you are buying, calculate three numbers together	The 2025 rate is 1.8762 and that is the county share only , because there is no city share; residential assessment is one quarter of appraised value; billing and relief applications run through one door, the county trustee

THE COMPLAINT FORUM CHANGES WITH THE PROVIDER'S TYPE

When you dispute a bill, lose service or cannot agree about a deposit, **the door you knock on depends on the type of entity. And the key result here is this:** the state public utility regulator's authority covers **only privately held, investor-owned companies; both of your main providers here are outside that regulator's reach.**

PROVIDER TYPE	WHAT IT IS HERE	WHERE YOU GO
Utility district	Water and sewer	The utility regulation board within the state comptroller's office
Electric cooperative	Electricity	Its own member board
A private, regulated company	Natural gas may fall to such a company	The state public utility regulator
A municipal utility	Not available here , because there is no city government	The city that owns it

A cooperative has two faces: a subscriber is also a member and has a vote in board elections, **but in a billing dispute there is no independent state forum to appeal to. A source note as well:** the sentence describing that limit on the regulator's authority could not be read directly from the agency's own page; we describe the distinction but **we do not give a quotation attributed to the agency. And one more item we could not close:** whether this state has a winter disconnection moratorium **could not be confirmed from a first-hand source**, and we **do not write** the dates circulating on some consumer sites. If you cannot pay, call the provider **before a disconnection notice arrives** and ask for a payment plan.

RENTING: FIVE THINGS TO CHECK BEFORE YOU SIGN

- **There is no thirty day rule on deposits**, and the statute sets **no cap** either. The real mechanism: **a separate account is required** and its location is disclosed **when you sign the lease and hand over the money**; after the landlord notifies you of the refund amount at your last known address, **if no response is received within sixty days the landlord may retain the money. Give the landlord your new address in writing on the day you move** and keep a copy.
- **Look for the bold print in the lease.** The state landlord-tenant act provides that a waiver placed in the lease **in twelve point or larger bold type completely removes** the tenant's right to a **pay within fourteen days** notice. **It cannot shorten the five day grace period**, but it changes everything after it. **If your English is not strong, do not translate the whole lease, translate the bold print.**
- **Eviction law got harder in 2024:** a continuance went from **fifteen days to seven**, one appellate route was closed, and **an appeal is accepted only on a bond equal to one year of rent. Call a lawyer the day the notice reaches you.**
- **Mandatory written notice:** in leases signed after 2025 the landlord must disclose **in writing** the **name and address of the agent authorized to manage the property**, the **person authorized to accept service on the owner's behalf**, and a **phone number, email address or online portal for maintenance. If those are missing from your lease, the lease is incomplete.**
- **In discrimination, your ground is state and federal law:** the protected classes are race, color, creed, religion, sex, disability, familial status and **national origin. Source of income and immigration status are not on the list** and cannot be added locally because of the preemption provision; **there is no local tenant ordinance here because there is no city government, but there would not be one even if there were: the state act occupies this field entirely.** The complaint forum has been **the civil rights enforcement division of the Attorney General's office since July 1, 2025**; any guide still pointing to the closed commission is stale.

HOW MANY PEOPLE MAY LIVE IN THE HOME: WE CANNOT ANSWER HERE

- The county has a **zoning resolution**; it took effect **January 1, 2013** and the text includes amendments **through December 11, 2025. But the full text could not be read:** the county site blocks Türkiye and the county is not registered in the database where municipal codes are collected.
- **So we do not write the county's definition of family, its limit on unrelated occupants, minimum lot sizes, its district codes or any minimum rental term. We do not say there is none, we say we could not read it.**
- **And we add a warning on purpose:** in the two cities we measured this cycle the same number came out **five times** apart. **Carrying a neighboring settlement's figure here would be a mistake**, and we are not carrying one.
- **The right move:** if you will have a long-term guest or you are a large household, **call the county building and codes department** before you take a house; the question line is **615-898-7734**, open weekdays 8 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.
- **A legal detail:** state law provides that **reasonable local restrictions** on the maximum number of occupants in a dwelling do not conflict with the housing discrimination ban, so if such a rule exists it **is enforceable** and not knowing it will not protect you.
- **If you are buying, learn one more rule up front:** the county **does not issue a permit to an owner who does not live in the home for construction or renovation intended for sale or rent.**

APPLYING FOR A PUBLIC BENEFIT: HERE THE COUNTY IS THE ONLY CONTACT

- **A state law effective July 1, 2026** requires state agencies, **local government units** and **local health departments** to verify that every applicant eighteen or older is a citizen or lawfully present, and to report persons **receiving** a public benefit who are not lawfully present, with all of their identifying information, to the state's **centralized immigration enforcement unit**. **Knowingly failing to report is a criminal offense for the official**. A unit that does not comply can have all of its state funding, **including shared taxes**, withheld.
- **And here is the part specific to this settlement:** the law's definition of a **local government unit** covers **counties and incorporated cities and towns**. **Rockvale is not an incorporated city or town, so it does not itself fall inside that definition; but Rutherford County does**. In a settlement with a city government a reader faces **two separate covered agencies**, while **here there is one contact and it is the county**.
- **The subtle point on the calendar:** the obligation does not begin everywhere at once on July 1, 2026; it takes effect **at each form's first reprinting after that date**. **An attestation line that is not on a form today may be there tomorrow**, and the absence of one is not an exemption, it is a matter of timing. **Indeed no visible attestation line was found on any of the local service pages we looked at as of October 12, 2026**, but whether that is because they fall outside the definition or because the forms have not been reprinted **could not be measured, and we are not choosing between the two**.
- **The part in your favor is in the law's own list:** among the items excluded from the definition of a public benefit are **treatment of an emergency medical condition, immunizations, testing and treatment of symptoms of communicable diseases, short-term disaster relief and short-term shelter**. **But the list says verification is not required, it does not say these are free**.
- **Two more rules favor you:** a document submitted counts as a **presumption of eligibility** until final verification arrives, and an agency **may not delay a benefit solely because it is waiting on verification**; and the verification obligation applies to applicants **eighteen and older**.
- **There is a court order and we write it in three layers:** Snader v. Tennessee Dept. of Health, No. 26-0825-I, Davidson County Chancery Court Part I, Chancellor Patricia Head Moskal; temporary restraining order **June 24, 2026**, agreed temporary injunction **July 14, 2026**. **Its scope is narrow** (one state program for children with disabilities), **it is temporary**, and **the merits were not decided**. **We do not say the law was blocked**.
- **Consult your lawyer before applying for a benefit**, and if an **attestation of citizenship or lawful presence signed under penalty of perjury** is put in front of you, ask before you fill out the form.

SEVERE WEATHER: TWO REGIMES AT ONCE, AND THERE IS AN ADDRESS TO GO TO

The winter side is real and it has been measured: the transportation department's statement of **January 25, 2026** described the ice as **statewide**, said crews were in their **fourth day**, and asked drivers **not to travel**. **Salt has a limit:** when the road surface temperature drops below **16 degrees Fahrenheit** salt is no longer effective enough. **The priority order is written down too, and it matters directly in a rural settlement:** interstates and freeze-prone points such as hills, curves, ramps, bridges and interchanges first, secondary state routes after. **When the interstate opens your road may still be closed.** For road conditions dial **511**. **Research found no mandatory snow tire or chain rule;** the handbook describes winter equipment in the language of **advice**. **We do not say there is none, we say we could not find mandatory language.**

On the tornado side this list carries its most notable item: in this settlement with no city government there is a **published, permanent, publicly accessible tornado shelter**. The county publishes **five buildings** as public tornado shelters **as a list with their rules**, and **this settlement heads the list**.

SHELTER	ADDRESS
Rockvale	6540 Hwy 99, Rockvale, TN 37153
Kittrell	8055 Woodbury Pike, Readyville, TN 37149
Lascassas	6525 Lascassas Pike, Lascassas, TN 37085
Walter Hill	6413 Lebanon Pike, Murfreesboro, TN 37129
Plainview	4950 Sledge Rd, Christiana, TN 37037

- **The rules come from the county's own text: you sign in on arrival and sign out on departure; you follow the instructions of the volunteer officers and stay until an official all clear is given; pets are not accepted, including emotional support animals, but service animals as defined by law are.** The county writes that the rules align with the federal emergency agency's guidance, and each building's architectural program includes **accommodation for fourteen people**.
- **We build the comparison in the language of could not be found:** in the two settlements with city governments we measured this cycle, **no such permanent, publicly accessible list could be found;** what was found in both was a system for **registering your own private shelter with the authorities**, and **those two are not the same thing as this, so do not conflate them**.
- **A verification caution:** the addresses on the county's own page and the lists some news sources published in **spring 2025 do not match at two points**, and at one point a news source lists **an entirely different building**. **We do not pick a side:** the table above comes from **the county's own page**. **Confirm before you set out on a storm day.**
- **Even with an address to go to, build the plan inside your own building.** In weather events a **watch** is the time to prepare, and a **warning** is not the time to set off but the time to already be in place. **That is a general rule; this cycle we could not find a text from any Tennessee agency describing that timing in its own words**, and we do not attribute it to any agency. **The practical consequence:** setting off when a warning is issued can mean **being caught on the road** in a rural settlement; if you are late, go to the lowest floor, an interior room without windows, and away from wide-roofed spaces.
- **And a legal note:** the state's 2026 public benefits law lists **short-term shelter** among the items excluded from the verification regime, so entering this shelter is **outside the letter of that regime**.

Read that as falling outside the law's own definition, not as a guarantee.

- **Alerts:** registration is through **Smart911** on the county's current page; **an older system is still described on a city site and whether both run at the same time could not be confirmed. Research could not find which languages alerts are sent in;** make sure a phone belonging to someone in the household who reads English is registered too.

TAXES: WE DO NOT WRITE THE SENTENCE THAT THERE IS NO TAX

There is no state income tax on wages and salaries, and the state's only personal income tax, on interest and dividends, **was repealed effective January 1, 2021. But we do not write the sentence that there is no tax:** the sales tax is high and the property tax is entirely local. **A local tax on wages was searched for and not found; we do not say there is none,** so ask your employer whether there is a local deduction on your pay. There is a professional privilege tax at the state level covering only five professions: **\$400** a year, due each **June 1**.

And when we write the rates we say which boundary they were measured for: the rates below apply to **the unincorporated area of the county,** that is, to Rockvale. **An unincorporated place has no city row** and you are subject directly to the county rate. The figures were read from the state revenue department's own machine-readable rate file on **October 12, 2026**.

ITEM	STATE	LOCAL (COUNTY)	TOTAL
General merchandise	7 percent	2.75 percent	9.75 percent
Food	4 percent	2.75 percent	6.75 percent

Two extra rules work in your favor: the local tax applies **only to the first \$1,600** of the sale price of a single article; a separate state rate applies to the portion between \$1,600 and \$3,200, and **anything above \$3,200 is not subject to this tax.** On a manufactured home purchase the state rate is **3.5 percent. On property tax the result is one sentence:** the 2025 rate is **1.8762** and that is **the county share only,** with residential assessment at **one quarter** of appraised value. **Watch the year label:** a more recent certified rate is circulating in a secondary source and **we do not write it because it could not be verified;** confirm the current rate with the county trustee and, when you see a figure, **ask which year it belongs to. No general homestead exemption open to all homeowners was found in this research;** the only thing found is a reimbursement program conditioned on **age, disability or veteran status,** and **you pay the tax first and are reimbursed afterward.**

MARRIAGE, VITAL RECORDS AND TWO CONTRADICTIONS

- **The county clerk issues the license and you can get it from any county in the state;** the state source's own sentence says a license may be issued **regardless of the parties' residence or the county where the ceremony will take place. The common guidance that you must use your county of residence is wrong.** The license is **valid for 30 days.**
- **In this county the amount is \$107.50,** or **\$45.00** with the course, and **it is the highest of the four counties we measured;** the others run **\$97.50 to \$100. The payment method is a real trap:** one of the counties we measured accepts **cash only** and another **does not accept checks. Here the course certificate is required to be notarized;** tell your instructor before you take the course. The figures were read from county clerk pages **indirectly,** so **confirm by phone before you go.**
- **First contradiction:** on whether the sixty dollar discount also applies to people residing outside the state, **two official sources say different things;** the state revenue department does not limit the discount, while the county technical assistance unit writes that it applies only in a single county, and **this county is not that county. We do not pick a side; ask the clerk.**
- **Second contradiction:** the state sources' list of license requirements contains **no waiting period item,** but a **2010** document published by another county we measured this cycle states a **three day wait. We do not pick a side;** before you fix the wedding date, call the clerk and ask **whether you can marry the same day you get the license.**
- **For someone with no number the agency has a written answer:** the form asks for a Social Security number, but under an Attorney General opinion **the statute does not require possessing a number to obtain a license** and **applicants who have not been issued a number are not required to provide one;** the field is left blank. **If there is a problem you have the right to go to another county;** there is no residency requirement.
- **Research could not find a witness requirement** and **notaries may solemnize a marriage. We do not say there is none;** the clerk's own form may ask for something else.
- **Birth and death certificates are available from all ninety-five county health departments,** so you do not have to leave this settlement for that step. **The same sentence is not written for marriage and divorce records;** for those it is the central office or the mail. **The identification list favors you: a valid passport is sufficient on its own** and the list does not say a U.S. passport; an alien or resident card and an employment authorization card are also sufficient on their own, while **a Social Security card counts only as secondary and only if signed. And the most practical way out:** if the application is signed and notarized, **no additional identification is required.**

HEALTH AND CLINICS: DO NOT CONFUSE TWO SENTENCES

- **This state did not expand coverage** and the gap is real: **a childless adult**, whatever their income, generally cannot get into the state program, and marketplace help begins at one hundred percent of the poverty line. **The specific person who falls in between:** a childless, working adult whose income is **below** that line.
- **From October 1, 2026 refugees and asylees move out of the state program;** the program director's own figure is **about 8,500 people**. **A much older 2014 document sits on the same server without a warning and still shows refugees as eligible; do not use it as a source.**
- **The pregnancy door is open today:** the state covers pregnant women through the **unborn child category of the children's health program**, and as of **October 12, 2026** the program's own page still says **no immigration documents are required if you are pregnant**; an income test applies separately. **But the same sentence cannot be written for the child:** the child must either be a citizen or fall within a narrow list. **So in the same household the mother may be covered while the child is not.**
- **A sliding-fee clinic is not a free clinic.** The discount is calculated from household income and household size and **you still pay a fee**. Being uninsured is not a ground for refusing service, and neither is immigration status, **but the fee does not drop to zero.**
- **And in this settlement what produces the divide is not income but distance.** We queried the official service that lists federally funded health center sites on **October 12, 2026: zero sites within a five mile radius and zero within ten; within a twenty-five mile radius twenty-nine sites and five organizations** appear, and among them is **a primary care organization that serves in this county**. **So there are sites inside the county, just not in the immediate area. These radii are parameters of the query itself, not a distance between the settlements in this guide. We publish no address and no operator name;** query the sites with your own address through the [federal search tool](#).
- **Solve the transportation first:** demand-response trips leaving the county require **seventy-two hours** notice and **each county line crossed is added to the fare**. If you are enrolled in the state health program, arrange your ride through **your plan's own transportation broker; that is the one item that genuinely works here.**
- **The rule is different in an emergency room:** under federal law a hospital emergency department must examine and stabilize anyone who arrives, **regardless of ability to pay and regardless of immigration status. But that does not mean it is free.**



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN ROCKVALE

Have a question about your immigration status?

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

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