

CHECKLIST · WEST SPRINGFIELD

Moving to West Springfield Checklist: The First 90 Days

What a newcomer has to do, in order, with the deadlines and where to do it. Print it and tick it off.

SHORT ANSWER

Two things here differ from the Boston suburbs and both change your first week. First, **water applications are processed on Tuesdays and Thursdays**: if you get the keys on a Friday, the water may not be on until the following week, so file before you move. Second, **PVTA buses are fare-free this fiscal year**, so you can reach Springfield and your appointments during the weeks before you have a license. If you are subject to the address-reporting requirement, report to USCIS within the first 10 days, and note one thing: the town's ZIP codes belong to the **Lawrence** field office, not Boston.

First 10 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Report your address to USCIS (AR-11)	Generally, most noncitizens, including Green Card holders, must report within 10 days of moving; A and G visa holders and Visa Waiver visitors are exempt. Crossing the river from Springfield counts as a move , because the two banks are two separate municipalities. uscis.gov/addresschange
☐ Know which office serves you	The town's ZIP codes (01089 and 01090) belong to the USCIS Lawrence field office, not Boston. Moving to the east of the state can shift your file to the Boston office and the reverse is also true; if you have a pending application, tell your attorney about the move.
☐ If you have an immigration court case, Form EOIR-33	Within 5 days: respondentaccess.eoir.justice.gov
☐ If you have an ICE check-in obligation	Report the address to ICE too, within 5 business days: portal.ice.gov
☐ Update your RMV address	Within 10 days. Have West Springfield entered as the garaging code, or the excise bill goes to another municipality.
☐ Sign up for alerts	Text TOWS to 888777 . Snow and emergency notices come through there. Emergency Management 413-732-2650.

First week

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ File the water application in advance	Service applications are processed on Tuesdays and Thursdays , so plan your moving day around that. The Water Connection/Disconnection Application is filed through the town's OpenGov portal , correspondence dpwpermits@tows.org . DPW at 26 Central Street Suite 17, 413-263-3242, weekdays 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.; the water division is 413-263-3230. We could not confirm whether the owner or the tenant opens the account in a rental, so get it into the lease.
☐ Where the water comes from	The town runs its own system: the primary source is four wells in the neighboring town of Southwick (the Great Brook section of the Barnes Aquifer); the water passes through 12 filter vessels each holding 20,000 pounds of granular activated carbon and is disinfected with calcium hypochlorite. The backup is an interconnection with the Springfield Water and Sewer Commission. The Boston area draws from the MWRA and Cambridge runs its own reservoirs; this is a well system. We print no rate: the town rate sheet is undated and the water division question-and-answer gives a different unit price, so ask for the current figure at 413-263-3230.
☐ Electricity and gas	Both come from Eversource (Eversource Gas of Massachusetts on the gas side): eversource.com or 1-800-592-2000. No deposit may be required from a residential customer (220 CMR 27.00). At sign-up the company accepts an SSN, a driver's license, a passport number , a military ID, a business tax number or another government ID. In Boston two different gas companies can split the streets; here one phone call opens both accounts.
☐ The electricity supplier: watch out	The town has a Community Choice Power Supply Program , advised by Colonial Power Group with First Point Power as the current supplier; it covers about 28,000 consumers. The price is 15.622 cents per kWh and it is set only from March 2026 to December 2026, that is, short term . In our Cambridge and Brookline guides we wrote that the price is fixed for years; nothing like that applies here, and the program says it plainly: the bulk purchase price may not always be below Eversource basic service. Compare your bill in January. Participation is voluntary and you can leave at any time. We took this from the consultant's pages rather than the town's own, so confirm the price and the supplier at 413-495-1891 or from your bill. Do not confuse it: the City of Springfield has a separate program and it does not cover West Springfield residents.
☐ Trash and recycling	In Cambridge the city's own crew collects the trash; here it is a contracted private hauler, USA Waste and Recycling . You put the carts out before 6 a.m. on collection day. You find your calendar by address on the town's interactive map; for information call 413-495-1891. We could not confirm whether a separate trash bill exists, so we do not say trash is free.
☐ Register the children for school	West Springfield Public Schools, central office 11 Central Street, 413-263-3289; registration through PowerSchool and in-person work by appointment: Central Enrollment 413-263-3388, centralenroll@wsps.org . You are not in the Springfield district . The enrollment pages list no SSN and no immigration question; a proof of residency, a 30-day proof of occupancy, a birth certificate or passport and an immunization record are asked for. Ask which school an address belongs to before you take a home.
☐ If you rent, know your rights	Up front only the first month, the last month, a one-month deposit and the lock cost; application, move-in, credit check and background check fees are illegal. The deposit sits in a separate interest-bearing account and is returned within 30 days; if it is not, the landlord may owe triple. Since August 1, 2025 a tenant cannot be charged a broker fee. There is no rent control and we found no local tenant handbook or notification bylaw , so you will have no written town document in hand: photograph the condition of the apartment before you sign and put every conversation in writing. Complaints: Building Department 413-263-3059 (Town Hall 2nd floor), Health Department 413-263-3206 (allhealth@tows.org).

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Town services	There is no 311 here and no request tracker like the SeeClickFix system in Cambridge. The town's "How do I?" page sends you to Town Hall, to the general number or to the individual department: the number to keep is 413-495-1891 . The only topic with an online form is blight complaints. Police non-emergency 413-263-3210, and 911 in a life-threatening emergency.
☐ Library card	West Springfield Public Library, 200 Park Street, 413-736-4561; Monday to Wednesday 9 a.m. to 9 p.m., Thursday to Saturday 9 to 5. The card is free and open to every Massachusetts resident aged 5 and up. Accepted photo IDs include a driver's license, a state ID, a passport , a student ID or a work ID; if the ID does not carry your current address you add a recent bill. No SSN is asked for and immigration status is not asked. You can borrow up to three items on the day you apply, the physical card comes by mail, and the card works across the whole CW MARS network. There is an ESOL page for adults and free Transparent Language Online for cardholders; the Massachusetts Literacy Hotline is 1-800-447-8844.
☐ Apply for an SSN (if eligible)	There is no SSA office in town; the nearest is the Springfield office across the river, a few miles by car. Confirm the street address and hours through ssa.gov/locator . The general line is 1-800-772-1213.

Within 30 days

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Book the learner permit appointment	It is \$30 and the written exam comes in Turkish (25 questions, 18 correct). The nearest office is the Springfield RMV Service Center, 1250 St. James Avenue; the road test is there too, weekdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. by appointment, \$35. The sponsor must hold a U.S. state license. A license is not a convenience here , so book the appointment the week you move.
☐ If you arrived with a car, insurance first	No agent stamp on the RMV-1 means no registration, and have West Springfield entered as the garaging code. No SSN and no U.S. license is required to register. Minimum coverage is \$25,000 / \$50,000 bodily injury, \$30,000 property damage and \$8,000 PIP.
☐ Inspection within 7 days	Within seven days of getting the plate, \$35, then annually. The town sends the excise bill: Collector/Treasurer, 26 Central Street Suite 9, 413-263-3006, online payment through UniPay.
☐ Use the free bus	PVTA fixed-route buses are fare-free through the 2027 fiscal year (the only exception is the premium B79). The R10 and the R14 name the town and every route connects to Springfield Union Station. The R14 last trip is at 7 p.m. and it runs roughly every 70 minutes, so the bus is no answer for someone with evening work or an evening class. PVTA 413-781-7882.
☐ A toll account (if you need one)	No SSN is required to open an EZDriveMA account. Without a tag you are billed from your plate and the discounted rate does not apply. There are no toll roads in Connecticut, but speeding and parking fines there follow that state's rules.

Health and insurance

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Life-threatening emergency	Call 911 or go to an emergency room: a hospital with an emergency department must screen and stabilize you regardless of your ability to pay, your insurance or your immigration status (EMTALA).
☐ There is no hospital in town	The nearest are across the river in Springfield: Baystate Medical Center , 759 Chestnut Street, 413-794-0000, open 24 hours and the only Level 1 trauma center in the region , with a children's hospital inside it and free parking around the clock. Mercy Medical Center emergency department, 271 Carew Street, 413-748-9670, 24 hours; 38 treatment rooms and a separate four-bed behavioral health unit (that information came from a search result, so confirm before you go).
☐ Call the financial counselors before the first bill	Baystate Health's policy dated January 1, 2025 gives clear thresholds: a family income at or below 150 percent of the federal poverty level gets a 100 percent discount on emergency or medically necessary care, and between 151 and 300 percent a discount applies, with no patient charged more than the amounts generally billed to insured patients. Financial counselors are at 413-794-2452 ; the application form is also available at hospital registration offices and in the emergency departments. Watch out: the documents the policy lists for the state application include citizenship and identity and "immigration status for non-citizens", so it does not say immigration status is irrelevant. We could not read Mercy's financial assistance policy, so call its financial counseling department when the bill arrives.
☐ There is no free clinic in town	This has to be written plainly: we found no free clinic, no community health center and no sliding-fee clinic in West Springfield. The only service with a price on the town Health Department page is a \$10 tuberculin skin test (Monday and Tuesday 2 to 4 p.m., cash or check, registration online or 413-263-3207) and that is not free. We also found no flu clinic on the department page. 26 Central Street, 413-263-3206.
☐ The two things we can call free	The City of Springfield vaccine clinics (flu, COVID-19 and RSV; pre-registration is required, capacity is limited and you are told to bring your insurance card if you have one) and the state Behavioral Health Help Line, 833-773-2445 (free, confidential, no insurance required, around the clock). An important warning: neither the city notice nor the news report says whether a West Springfield resident may attend those clinics; the two banks of the river are two separate municipalities, so call the Springfield Department of Health and Human Services before you set out. This season's dates are known only from a local news source: October 14, 2026 (Clodo Concepcion Community Center, 1187 1/2 Parker St), October 30 and November 2, 2026 (South End Community Center, 99 Marble St).
☐ Sliding fee, not free	Caring Health Center , 1049 Main Street, Springfield, 413-739-1100 (also 473-477 Sumner Avenue and 1235 Boston Road; no branch in West Springfield): it runs a Sliding Fee Discount Program and no patient is turned away for lack of insurance or ability to pay. Chicopee Health Center , 505 Front Street, Chicopee, 413-420-2222 and Holyoke Health Center , 230 Maple Street, Holyoke, 413-420-2200: both have a sliding fee schedule. Planned Parenthood , 3550 Main Street, Suite 201, Springfield, 1-800-258-4448: reproductive health only, insurance is not required, walk-ins are accepted, and its statewide page is the only one in this list that says care is given regardless of immigration status. Springfield Technical Community College dental hygiene clinic, appointments 413-755-4900 (2025 prices: cleaning \$35, X-rays \$30).
☐ Health Safety Net	It is not insurance; it is a fund that pays hospitals and community health centers, and there is no member card , so you ask for it at the registration desk. MassHealth 800-841-2900.

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Insurance is mandatory	Massachusetts has an individual mandate and you report it on Schedule HC; for tax year 2026 the penalty runs from \$26 to \$211 a month, with no penalty at or below 150 percent of the poverty level. Health Connector open enrollment is October 23, 2026 to January 23, 2027 , 1-877-623-6765. The October 1, 2026 and January 1, 2027 changes take many lawfully present groups out of coverage, so read every notice you get. Crisis line 988.
☐ Book daytime appointments	Because there is no clinic inside the town and the bus timetable ends in the evening, you have to put non-urgent appointments in the daytime.

60 to 90 days and beyond

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Taxes	The town has no income tax of its own. The state income tax is a flat 5 percent and short-term capital gains 8.5 percent, with an extra 4 percent above \$1,107,750. The personal exemption is \$4,400 single and \$8,800 married filing jointly. The deadline is April 15. Sales tax is 6.25 percent. Half the rent you pay, up to \$4,000, is deductible on the state return. A border note: with the Connecticut line 10 miles south, the use tax is worth remembering here; shopping in another state does not remove the 6.25 percent and you report it yourself.
☐ Good news for an ITIN	Under the IRS list updated on August 24, 2026, the Massachusetts offices that review ITIN documents in person are Boston, Brockton, Fitchburg, Hyannis, Springfield , Woburn and Worcester. So unlike many cities in this series, your nearest option is across the river. It is by appointment only: 844-545-5640. Confirm the street address when you book; a third-party aggregator says the Springfield office does not review ITIN documents, but the IRS list is what counts. File Form W-7; processing is normally 7 weeks and 9 to 11 weeks in the tax season.
☐ If you bought a home: there is no exemption	The FY2026 residential rate is \$14.02 per \$1,000 of value and the commercial and industrial rate about \$29.59 (the second figure came from a search result, so have the Assessors confirm it). The town pages describe no residential exemption: Cambridge grants 30 percent and Brookline 20 percent, and we found none here. Budget on the assumption that there is none and get the definitive answer from the Assessors: 26 Central Street, 413-263-3050, all_assessor@towns.org. The town writes that exemptions are narrowly construed, must be applied for in time every year, and that abatement deadlines cannot be extended. There are statewide clause 22 and 41C exemptions for seniors, veterans, blind residents and widows or orphans, and those apply in every municipality; statewide the deadline for most exemptions is April 1 and for an abatement three months after the bill is sent, but we could not find the town's own calendar, so verify by phone.
☐ Do not compare the rate the wrong way	The rate alone is not the bill: the tax is the rate times the assessed value, and home values in the Springfield area are far below the Boston area. Cambridge's \$6.67 rate sounds better but home values there are several times higher. Make the real comparison with the assessed value of the house you are looking at. A Declaration of Homestead is not a tax discount but protection against creditors, and immigration status is not a requirement. The municipal lien certificate comes from the Collector/Treasurer, \$25 to \$150 and three to five business days.

TASK	WHERE / HOW
☐ Starting a company	A Certificate of Organization for an LLC is \$500, the annual report \$500 every year, a name reservation \$30, an amendment \$100 and a certificate of good standing \$25; an EIN is free. If you trade under a name other than your own you get a business certificate (DBA) from the Town Clerk: the application runs through an online portal, but we could not verify its fee, its validity or whether a notary is required , so do not budget from a neighboring town's figures. Call 413-263-3012. The FY2026 commercial property rate is about \$29.59, roughly double the residential one; personal property requires a Form of List every year (413-263-3050). For a restaurant, a shop or liquor service, the town License Commission issues the licenses through the Town Clerk office and publishes no fee schedule: ask before you sign a lease.
☐ Marriage license	Town Clerk, 26 Central Street, West Springfield MA 01089, 413-263-3012, weekdays 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., department head Otto Frizzell. Licenses are issued by appointment only , both parties apply together in person, and the fee is \$30 (cash or a check payable to the Town of West Springfield), cheaper than the \$50 charged in Cambridge and Boston. The license is released after a three-day wait, is valid 60 days, and the ceremony has to take place in Massachusetts. An important warning: the town page lists Social Security numbers among the information asked for and offers no alternative for someone without one; state guidance says a person without a number writes down why on the form, but we could not confirm that the clerk accepts that statement. Call before you book and ask what to do without an SSN. There is no residency requirement, so if it cannot be resolved here you can speak to another clerk.
☐ Birth certificate: two separate offices	Because there is no hospital in town, a baby is normally born in Springfield and the birth is recorded by the Springfield City Clerk: City Hall Room 123, 36 Court Street, Springfield MA 01103, a certified copy \$20 ; Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Thursday 8:30 to 6, and personal checks are not accepted. The West Springfield Town Clerk issues records for births and deaths that occurred in the town and for marriages it licensed: \$10 per copy, ready the following business day. Call 413-263-3012 before you go and ask which office holds the record, so you do not cross the river for nothing. Order at least two certified copies. One statewide change: from July 1, 2026 death certificates no longer show the decedent's Social Security number.
☐ Help with program fees	The town Park and Recreation department (26 Central Street, 413-263-3284, parkandrec@tows.org) gives financial help to families who cannot pay a program fee; proof of residency, household composition and income is asked for. A small but real item for families with children.
☐ Consular business for Turkish citizens	The Turkish Consulate General is at 31 Saint James Avenue, Suite 840. This is the longest consular trip in the series: about 90 miles. The most practical day trip is the 7:40 a.m. Peter Pan bus from Springfield Union Station (South Station at 9:45). Handling the services that can be done by mail (birth, marriage and death registration) by mail can remove a whole day of travel.
☐ Military service registration for men	Those born in 2007 and anyone without a deferral: by December 31, 2026 . The registration can also be completed through e-Devlet, which is the only step that does not require a trip to Boston; try that first.

IF YOU ARE NOT A CITIZEN, REMEMBER

- Registering and voting are for citizens only. Answering "yes" to the citizenship question at the RMV registers you automatically, and because a license is nearly compulsory here, that trap comes up more often; if you are not a citizen, say no and read the form yourself. To cancel a registration, the Town Clerk's election office: 26 Central Street, 413-263-3012.
- **A jury summons can reach a noncitizen.** West Springfield residents are called for **Hampden County**, and because the town has no courthouse of its own you report to **50 State Street** in Springfield; trial jurors go to the 4th floor at 8 a.m. and grand jurors to the 3rd floor at 9 a.m. The Hampden County jury line is (413) 748-7950, called after 3 p.m. the day before. Answer the summons, state that you are not a citizen, and send your alien card number, visa status or a copy of your passport (jurorhelp@jud.state.ma.us, 1-800-THE-JURY, Office of Jury Commissioner, 560 Harrison Avenue, Suite 600, Boston MA 02118).
- Talk to an immigration attorney before you apply for, or drop, any public benefit: the new public charge rule has been in effect since September 18, 2026.
- **The town has no immigrant affairs office and no welcoming bylaw.** On the town pages (the mayor's office, police, Town Clerk, health) we found no program or interpreter statement aimed at immigrants, and no text limiting police cooperation with immigration agencies. The City of Springfield across the river has had a Welcoming Community Trust ordinance since 2019, but **that text does not apply in West Springfield**. On the other hand, since September 4, 2026 state law (G.L. c.147 s.64) binds West Springfield police and the Hampden County sheriff too: it bars asking about status and holding anyone solely on an ICE detainer. But that law does not bind ICE or CBP and it gives you no private right of action.
- Regional legal aid: according to a legal aid directory, the Springfield office of Community Legal Aid reports that it represents low-income people in immigration court in Berkshire, Franklin, Hampden, Hampshire and Worcester counties. We could not verify that from the organization's own page; check the eligibility rules yourself at communitylegal.org. This is a referral, not a recommendation or an endorsement.
- Check your I-94 record at i94.cbp.dhs.gov. If you have a pending green card application, do not travel abroad without advance parole.



TURKISH-SPEAKING IMMIGRATION ATTORNEY IN WEST SPRINGFIELD

Have a question about your immigration status?

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