

Florida Resident Checklist

- Own or lease and *occupy* a residence in Florida.
- File a Declaration of Domicile in your new county with a form provided by the county's Clerk of Courts.
- If you own your Florida home, apply for the Florida's Homestead Exemption. Generally, you should apply in January or February of the year you want the exemption to start. Applications are made to the county's Property Appraiser's office. Make sure you terminate any out-of-state homestead or resident based exemptions.
- Obtain Florida auto insurance, register all your vehicles and obtain Florida tags/license plates *within ten days* of becoming a new resident. Cancel registrations in your former state. Make sure you have the current registration and title for your vehicles.
- Obtain a Florida drivers' license *within 30 days* of becoming a new resident and turn in your license issued by your former state. You will need to provide:
 - Proof of ID either a valid US Passport (not expired) or your certified birth certificate.
 - Proof of Social Security number (an original Social Security card)
 - Two Proofs of residential address such as a deed or utility bills from last two months)
 - The Driver's License issued by your former state.
 - Vision and hearing tests are required.
- Register to vote in Florida. This can be done at *the same time* you obtain your Florida Driver's License.
- If applicable, file your final tax return as a resident of your former state.
- Notify Social Security, Medicare and other relevant government agencies that your address has changed.
- If you have any professional licenses held in your former state, and you continue to work in Florida, you need apply and obtain licenses from the appropriate Florida authority.
- Update your estate planning documents to reflect your Florida residency and to comply with Florida law these include your will, revocable trusts, health care directives and power of attorney. A review by a Florida-based attorney is suggested for these documents
- Have bills and mail sent to your Florida address.
- Use your Florida address for all official documents, passports, tax returns, insurance and credit cards.
- Open Florida bank accounts and move any direct deposits to your Florida accounts such as Social Security payments.

If you retain connections in your former state:

- Engage an attorney in your former state to confirm non-residency status.
- If you are required to file tax returns, such as a business you still own, in your former state *file as a non-resident*.
- Retain any evidence that shows you spend more than half the year in Florida, or at least not in your former state of residence.
- Any property outside of Florida should be *insured* as a secondary, seasonal or vacation home.
- Cancel recreational licenses that were issued on the basis of your former residence.
- Keep your safe deposit box in Florida.
- If you have pets, identify a veterinarian *immediately in your local Florida area* and have records transferred. Start a file of Florida vet records. This was a determining factor in a lawsuit brought by the Internal Revenue Service and the State of New York against a private equity owner who claimed to have changed his residency to Texas. He sold his firm, which resulted in huge capital gains. He never travelled without his dog so the IRS asked for veterinary records, which revealed that the dog spent the majority of his time and was treated in New York City as opposed to Dallas. New York, New Jersey and California are notorious for their pursuit of collection of state income taxes.
- Cancel newspaper and other periodical subscriptions in your former state.