



The Huntsville Move Checklist

For service members, DoD civilians and defense contractors moving to Huntsville, Madison or Athens for Redstone Arsenal.

6 phases · before orders → first 90 days Every rule sourced (see last page)

A printable, phase-by-phase checklist for moving to Huntsville, Madison, or Athens for Redstone Arsenal, U.S. Space Command, DoD civilian, or defense contractor work. Check items off as you go and skip whatever doesn't apply to you.

Two Alabama deadlines start when you arrive: your **driver's license (30 days after you become a resident)** and your **vehicle registration (30 days after the vehicle enters Alabama)**.^[1,2] Military members: your orders, transportation office, and relocation counselor have the final word on entitlements.

1. Before orders or a job offer

- ☐ Learn the area: compare [neighborhoods by gate](#), [school districts](#), and [cost of living](#).
- ☐ Space Command: your move date depends on your directorate's wave. Ask your chain of command or civilian personnel office, and track the [timeline](#).
- ☐ DoD civilians and contractors: get relocation benefits (shipment, temporary lodging, house-hunting trip, start date) confirmed in writing before you accept.
- ☐ Start a move binder (paper or encrypted digital) with orders or offer letter, IDs, birth and marriage certificates, Social Security cards, vehicle titles and registrations, and pet records.
- ☐ Check whether your driver's license is REAL ID-compliant. First-time Redstone visitors without one need an acceptable secondary ID.^[3]
- ☐ Bookmark Military OneSource's moving and PCS resources.^[4]

2. 60 to 90 days out

- ☐ Military: contact Redstone's Army Community Service Relocation Readiness Program as soon as you have orders.^[5,6]
- ☐ Military: build a personal checklist in Plan My Move.^[7]
- ☐ Military: start your household goods shipment in the Defense Personal Property System (DPS). Summer is the busiest moving season, so book as early as you can.^[8,4]
- ☐ Pick where to live based on your gate and commute. Before you sign a lease or contract, confirm the school zone with the district's own locator.^[9,10]

- ☐ Read the official Alabama report cards for the schools you're considering.^[11]
- ☐ Contact the Redstone school liaison. Ask how the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children applies to your kids.^[12,13]
- ☐ Request your children's school records, transcripts, and any IEP or 504 plan from their current school.
- ☐ Immunizations: Alabama districts list an Alabama immunization record as a required enrollment document. If your child's records are from another state, ask your pediatrician, a military clinic, or the county health department how to get the Alabama certificate.^[10,14,15]
- ☐ Military spouses with professional licenses: look into Alabama's license portability options for military families.^[16,17]
- ☐ Moving with TRICARE: request copies of your medical and dental records at least one month before you PCS.^[18]

3. 30 days out

- ☐ Confirm your pack, pickup, and delivery dates, and plan how you'll live between pickup and delivery. Redstone ACS can lend kitchen items and other basics while you wait for your shipment.^[19]
- ☐ Set up mail forwarding through USPS's official change-of-address site.^[20]
- ☐ Schedule utility start dates. Huntsville Utilities serves the City of Huntsville; Madison, Athens, and county addresses may have other providers.^[21]
- ☐ Fill prescriptions so they'll last through the move. Don't disenroll from your TRICARE plan before you move, because it covers you on the way.^[18,22]
- ☐ Check ALEA's document list for transferring your driver's license so you have everything in your hand-carry folder.^[23]
- ☐ Tell your auto insurer about the move. You'll need Alabama coverage to register your vehicle.
- ☐ Notify your current school, and get withdrawal paperwork.^[14]

4. Moving week

- ☐ Photograph high-value items and note their condition before packers arrive. Be there for pack-out and pickup.
- ☐ Pack an "open first" box with bedding, a shower curtain, basic tools, chargers, and kitchen basics.
- ☐ Hand-carry your move binder, medications, medical and school records, and valuables. Don't let them ship.
- ☐ Take final utility readings, return equipment such as cable boxes, and leave a forwarding address.

- ☐ Sign up for National Weather Service Huntsville alerts, and learn tornado safety before you arrive.^[24,25]

5. First 30 days in Huntsville

- ☐ Get onto post. DoD ID cardholders are registered automatically at their first gate scan. Everyone else registers at the Visitor Control Center outside Gate 9 (7 a.m.-3 p.m., Mon-Fri). Gate 9 is open 24/7.^[3] See [base access](#).
- ☐ Visit Army Community Service Relocation Readiness.^[19]
- ☐ **Alabama driver's license** within 30 days of becoming a resident. Transfers go through ALEA's Driver License Division.^[1,26,23]
- ☐ **Vehicle registration** within 30 days of the vehicle entering Alabama, at your county's licensing office (Madison County, Limestone County, and so on).^[2,27]
- ☐ Enroll your kids with your district:
 - [Huntsville City Schools enrollment](#) (see also its [military families](#) page)^[9,28]
 - [Madison City Schools enrollment](#): done online. Proof of residency is a lease or deed plus a gas, water, or electric bill; cable and cell phone bills aren't accepted.^[10]
 - [Madison County Schools enrollment](#): done through PowerSchool Enrollment. The district asks for a current Huntsville Utilities bill as one proof of residence.^[29,14]
 - [Limestone County Schools enrollment](#)^[30]
- ☐ Update your address in DEERS. After that, you have 90 days to change your TRICARE plan if you need to.^[22]
- ☐ Transfer prescriptions and choose a new primary care manager or doctor.^[18]
- ☐ Update your address with your bank, payroll, insurers, and subscriptions.

6. First 90 days

- ☐ Bought a home? Ask the county about the homestead exemption and its deadline.^[31]
- ☐ Register to vote at your new address.^[32]
- ☐ Review your state tax residency. Active-duty members and spouses follow federal rules, and MilTax offers free help.^[33,34]
- ☐ Veterans: connect with the Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs for state benefits, and set up care at the Huntsville VA Clinic.^[35,36] Leaving the service? Read [transitioning to Huntsville](#).
- ☐ Spouses job hunting: USAJOBS lists federal openings in the area.^[37]
- ☐ Make a tornado plan for your home: where you'll shelter and how you'll get warnings.^[25,38]
- ☐ Keep going with the detailed [first 90 days in Huntsville](#) guide.

More free, sourced guides at rocketcitymove.com: [neighborhoods by gate](#) · [Redstone housing](#) · [BAH explained](#) · [severe weather](#) · [weekly events](#). Not affiliated with the U.S. Army or DoD; your orders, transportation office and relocation counselor have the final word on entitlements.

Sources (checked October 24, 2026)

1. Code of Alabama §32-6-1 (driver license; new residents)
<https://alison.legislature.state.al.us/code-of-alabama?section=32-6-1>
2. Alabama Dept. of Revenue FAQ: I just moved to Alabama. How long do I have to register my vehicle?
<https://www.revenue.alabama.gov/faqs/i-just-moved-to-alabama-how-long-do-i-have-before-i-must-register-my-vehicle/>
3. Redstone Arsenal: Visitor Information (gate hours, access policy)
<https://home.army.mil/redstone/about/visitor-information>
4. Military OneSource: Moving & PCS
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/moving-pcs/>
5. Redstone Arsenal MWR: Relocation Readiness Program
<https://redstone.armymwr.com/programs/relocation-readiness>
6. MilitaryINSTALLATIONS: Redstone Arsenal Relocation Assistance
<https://installations.militaryonesource.mil/military-installation/redstone-arsenal/military-and-family-support-center/relocation-assistance>
7. Military OneSource: Plan My Move
<https://planmymove.militaryonesource.mil/>
8. Defense Personal Property System (DPS) / move.mil
<https://my.move.mil/>
9. Huntsville City Schools: Enrollment
<https://www.huntsvillecityschools.org/page/enrollment>
10. Madison City Schools: Enrollment (who can enroll, required documents, school zone locator)
https://www.madisoncity.k12.al.us/221371_3
11. Alabama State Department of Education: State Report Card
<https://statereportcard.alsde.edu/>
12. Redstone Arsenal MWR: Relocation Readiness extra support (school liaison, housing, finances)
<https://redstone.armymwr.com/programs/relocation-readiness/extra-support-services>
13. Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission (MIC3)
<https://mic3.net/>
14. Madison County Schools: Student Registration Information (required documents)
<https://www.mcsc12.org/enrollment/student-registration-information>
15. Alabama Department of Public Health: Immunization
<https://www.alabamapublichealth.gov/immunization/index.html>
16. Alabama Act 2023 SB37 (Military Family Jobs Opportunity Act, §31-1-6), enrolled PDF
<https://alison.legislature.state.al.us/files/pdf/SearchableInstruments/2023RS/SB37-enr.pdf>
17. Alabama Military Stability Foundation: Military spouses (licensure)
<https://www.heroeswelcome.alabama.gov/military-spouses/>
18. TRICARE FAQ: I'm PCSing, what do I need to do?
https://tricare.mil/FAQs/general/GEN_pcs
19. Redstone Arsenal MWR: Army Community Service
<https://redstone.armymwr.com/programs/acs>
20. USPS: Official change-of-address (mail forwarding)
<https://moversguide.usps.com/>
21. Huntsville Utilities
<https://www.hsvutil.org/>
22. TRICARE: Moving (keep your plan while you move; 90 days to change plans after a DEERS address update)
<https://tricare.mil/moving>
23. ALEA: Driver License document requirements and fees
<https://www.alea.gov/dps/document-requirements-and-fees>
24. National Weather Service Huntsville
<https://www.weather.gov/hun/>
25. National Weather Service: Tornado safety
<https://www.weather.gov/safety/tornado>
26. ALEA: Driver License division
<https://www.alea.gov/dps/driver-license>
27. Alabama Dept. of Revenue: Vehicle licensing offices by county
<https://www.revenue.alabama.gov/motor-vehicle/vehicle-licensing-offices/>

28. Huntsville City Schools: Military Families
<https://www.huntsvillecityschools.org/page/military-families>
29. Madison County Schools: Enrollment (PowerSchool Enrollment portal)
<https://www.mcsc12.org/enrollment>
30. Limestone County Schools: Enrollment
<https://www.lcsc12.org/o/lcs/page/enrollment>
31. Alabama Dept. of Revenue: Homestead exemptions (H-1 to H-4)
<https://www.revenue.alabama.gov/property-tax/homestead-exemptions/>
32. Alabama Secretary of State: Alabama Votes (voter registration)
<https://www.sos.alabama.gov/alabama-votes>
33. Military OneSource: Taxes (state residency, SCRA/MSRRA basics)
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/financial-legal/taxes/>
34. Military OneSource: MilTax free tax services
<https://www.militaryonesource.mil/financial-legal/tax-resource-center/miltax-military-tax-services/>
35. Alabama Department of Veterans Affairs (ADVA)
<https://va.alabama.gov/>
36. VA: Huntsville VA Clinic
<https://www.va.gov/birmingham-health-care/locations/huntsville-va-clinic/>
37. USAJOBS (official federal jobs site)
<https://www.usajobs.gov/>
38. Alabama Emergency Management Agency
<https://ema.alabama.gov/>