How to Stake and File a Mining Claim in Nevada

To stake and file a mining claim in Nevada, you post a location notice, mark the corners, file two copies each of a claim map and a certificate of location with the county recorder, and file with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). You have 90 days from posting to file with both. A new lode claim costs $274 in BLM fees, plus $59 in county fees in Elko, Esmeralda and Nye counties, and a little more in some others.

Nevada also requires a county filing every year by November 1, and its law says a certificate of location that leaves out a required fact is void, so follow each step closely.

Last checked November 9, 2026. This is a plain-words summary of Nevada and federal law, not legal advice. Fees and rules change, so confirm dates and costs with your county recorder or BLM before you rely on them. The newest version of our Nevada filing guide is at goldmapsonline.com/how-to-stake-a-mining-claim-in-nevada.html. Check it before you file, since fees and rules can change after you download your maps.

The steps at a glance

Step	Where	Deadline	Cost
1. Post your location notice	On the claim	This starts the clock	No fee
2. Mark the boundaries	On the claim	60 days after posting	Your posts or stones
3. Draw two map copies	At home	90 days after posting	No fee
4. Record with the county	County recorder	90 days after posting	$59 or more for one lode claim
5. File with BLM	MLRS online, or BLM in Reno	90 days after posting	$274 for a lode claim
Keep it each year	BLM	September 1	$200 per lode claim or per 20 acres of placer
Yearly county affidavit	County recorder	November 1	$24 or more for one claim

Start with your map

A filled closed box on your Nevada map means that section has no active claims today, which makes it a good place to start looking. Its pop-up gives you what the paperwork asks for: the county, the township, range and

section, and the BLM code.

One example from the November 2026 map is a closed lode box in Elko County at T33N R54E Sec 26, Mount Diablo Meridian, with the BLM code 21 0330N 0540E 026. A box covers a section of about 640 acres and doesn't show a claim's exact edges, so the map tells you where to look and your own checks tell you whether you can stake there.

Check the ground first

1. **Look it up in BLM's records.** Go to reports.blm.gov/reports/MLRS, choose Mining Claims – Geographic Report, enter the BLM code, and tick Active and Filed. Our step-by-step MLRS guide walks through each screen.
2. **Check that the land is open to mining.** BLM's Master Title Plats, on the GLO Records website, show what's open, and our maps don't show it. Nevada's state guide lists land you can't stake, such as Indian reservations, state land, wilderness and military land.
3. **Walk the ground.** A new claim can take up to 90 days to reach BLM's records, so look for fresh posts and notices before you put up your own.
4. **Make a discovery.** Nevada's law lets the person who discovers a vein or lode locate a claim on it, so find the mineral first, then post. The long-used test is whether a sensible person would spend more time and money trying to develop a mine there, and the courts have since made it stricter. Recording and paying won't make a claim valid without a discovery.

Lode or placer

A lode claim covers gold in solid rock, like a quartz vein, and can be up to 1,500 feet long and 600 feet wide. A placer claim covers loose gold in sand and gravel, and can be 20 acres per person, up to 160 acres for a group of eight or more. The markers and fees differ, so pick the type that fits what you found.

Step 1: Post your location notice

The day you post the notice is your location date, and every deadline counts from it. Post a separate notice for each claim, because a notice that covers more than one claim is void for all but the first.

- **Lode claim:** build a location monument at the point of discovery, using any marker type from Step 2, and post the notice in or on it.
- **Placer claim:** post the notice on a marker set anywhere along the claim's north boundary.

The notice has to give all of these:

- The name of the claim, plus the name and mailing address of each locator
- The date of location, which has to be the true date, since a false one is a felony in Nevada
- **Lode:** the feet you claim along the vein each way from the discovery, the width on each side of the vein's center, and the general course of the vein
- **Placer:** the number of feet or acres you claim

Step 2: Mark the boundaries

You have 60 days from posting to put a marker at each corner. A placer claim is marked the same way, but if it's taken by legal subdivisions on surveyed land, only the location point needs a marker. Each marker can be any of these:

- A tree at least 4 inches across, blazed and marked at least 3 feet off the ground
- A rock in place, capped with smaller stones to at least 3 feet high
- A wooden post at least 1.5 by 1.5 inches, or a metal post at least 2 inches across, 4 feet long and set 1 foot in the ground, with a hollow metal post capped or crimped shut and no open holes
- A loose stone at least 6 inches across and 18 inches long, set two-thirds of its length into a mound 3 feet across and 2.5 feet high

Plastic pipe no longer counts as a marker in Nevada, and BLM doesn't allow perforated or uncapped pipe, because of wildlife deaths. If bedrock or steep ground keeps you from sinking a post, set it in a mound of earth or stones.

Step 3: Draw two copies of your claim map

Within 90 days of posting, make two copies of a map of the claim. You don't need a surveyor, but the map has to show the claim's edges and location as well as you're able to. Each copy has to meet all of these rules:

- Drawn at a scale of 1 inch to 500 feet, which meets the law's scale rule
- Shows where the corner markers sit in relation to each other, with each one numbered
- Tied by directions and distances to an official corner of the government land survey, or to a landmark like a bench mark or a road crossing if the land isn't surveyed or you can't find a corner
- Gives the township and range, plus the section and quarter section if surveyed, for the claim and landmark
- On an 8.5 by 14 inch sheet that can be photocopied, or a 24 by 36 inch mylar print that can be copied

A placer claim on surveyed land can be described by legal subdivisions instead. The Nevada Division of Minerals has free suggested forms, including a map form, but most date from 2015, so check each one against the law.

Step 4: Record with the county recorder

Within 90 days of posting, take both map copies and two matching copies of your certificate of location, called duplicate certificates, to the recorder in the county where the claim sits. The recorder keeps one of each and sends the other to the county surveyor.

Record a separate certificate for each claim. It doesn't need to be sworn or on a set form, but a certificate that leaves out any of these is void:

- The name of the claim, and for a placer, a line saying it's a placer claim
- The name and mailing address of each locator, and the date of location
- **Lode:** the feet along the vein each way from the discovery, the width on each side of its center, the vein's general course, where each corner is and how it's marked, and a statement that your location work was making the maps under NRS 517.040
- **Placer:** the number of feet or acres you claim

Bring the fees, since nothing gets recorded until they're paid. In Elko, Esmeralda and Nye counties, one lode claim costs $59: $32 for its certificate, including $10 in state fees, and $27 for its map. A placer map is $1 per acre plus $12. Other counties can add up to $6 per document, so ask for the county's fee sheet.

Nevada's recording law sets these rules for the certificate, though not the map. The recorder can accept a page that misses one, but don't count on it:

- White 20-pound paper, 8.5 by 11 inches, printed on one side in black ink, in type at least as large as 10-point Times New Roman

- Margins of 1 inch on the left, right and bottom, a blank 3-by-3-inch space at the top right of the first page, and a 1-inch top margin on later pages
- Loose pages with no staples, binding, highlighting or anything attached
- Your name typed or printed under your signature

Keep personal information, like a Social Security number, off every page, and put a return name and address on the first page. The Division's forms already carry the no-personal-information line that some recorders ask for.

Step 5: File with BLM

BLM needs its own filing by the 90th day, and it advises recording with the county first. Send BLM a copy of your recorded certificate of location, your map and the fees. You can file online in MLRS at mlrs.blm.gov with a login.gov account, or by mail or in person at BLM's Nevada State Office in Reno.

Claim	Fees	Total
Lode	$25 + $49 + $200	$274
Placer, up to 20 acres	$25 + $49 + $200	$274
Placer, 21 to 40 acres	$25 + $49 + $400	$474

The three fees are the processing fee, the location fee and the first maintenance fee, for claims located on or after September 1, 2026. Each added 20 acres of placer, or part of 20 acres, adds $200.

A claim not recorded with BLM and the county by the 90th day is void under federal law, and BLM's Nevada office says a filing on day 91 is rejected. BLM refunds the location and maintenance fees after the appeal period.

Re-staking a closed claim

Re-staking a closed claim makes a brand-new claim with none of the old owner's rights, so post a new notice and meet every deadline. For a lode claim, Nevada's law adds its own steps. Make two map copies, and either put up new boundaries or use the old ones by replacing any corner markers that are gone. Either way, build a new location monument. File the maps and duplicate certificates with the same map fee as a new claim. Nevada doesn't require any digging for it. Its law doesn't cover placer claims, but the state's guide says to re-stake them the same way.

Keeping your claim each year

On or before September 1 each year, pay BLM $200 per lode claim, or $200 for each 20 acres of a placer claim, or the claim is forfeited. If you stake before September 1 but file with BLM after it, you'll owe two maintenance fees at once, one for each year, unless you qualify for the small miner waiver and file it when you record the claim.

Nevada also requires a county filing on or before November 1 each year, whether you pay BLM's fee or do the work, and earlier if that day falls on a weekend or holiday. In Elko, Esmeralda and Nye counties, it costs $24 for one claim and $12 for each added claim.

- **If you paid BLM's fee:** record an affidavit and notice of intent to hold, with your name and address, the claim's name and BLM serial number, the date, and a statement that you intend to hold the claim.
- **If you did the work instead:** record an affidavit of the work that says what you spent, the kind of work, the claim, the dates, the owner and who did it.

With 10 or fewer claims nationwide, you can do at least $100 of work on each claim instead of paying BLM. File the free waiver form with BLM by September 1, on paper because it can't be filed online, then file an affidavit of the work with BLM by December 30 at $15 per claim. The county affidavit is still due by November 1.

Hand tools, pans and metal detectors need no permit on open land, but BLM wants a notice or a plan of operations for bigger work, so talk to the local BLM or Forest Service office first. A suction dredge in a Nevada river, stream or lake needs a Department of Wildlife permit, and navigable waters also need one from the State Land Registrar.

Who to ask

- **BLM Nevada State Office:** Call 775-861-6500. The office is at 1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89502, open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday.
- **Nevada Division of Minerals:** Call 775-684-7040 or 702-486-4343. It keeps the suggested claim forms and answers staking questions.

Where these rules come from

- Nevada Revised Statutes 517 and 247, NAC 517.200 and 513.315: rules for staking, recording and fees
- Nevada's state guide, BLM fees, 43 U.S.C. 1744 and 30 U.S.C. 28f: closed land, fees and the yearly filing

Nevada county recorders

A claim is recorded in the county where the ground is. Call before you mail anything, since offices move and hours change.

County	Recorder's address	Phone
Carson City	885 E Musser St, Courthouse First Floor, Carson City, NV 89701	(775)887-2260
Churchill	155 N Taylor Street, Suite 131, Fallon, NV 89406	(775) 423-6001
Clark	500 S. Grand Central Pkwy, 2nd Floor, Las Vegas, NV 89106 Mail: 500 S. Grand Central Pkwy, 2nd Floor, Box 551510, Las Vegas, NV 89155-1510	(702) 455-4336
Douglas	1616 Eighth St., Minden, NV 89423 Mail: P.O. Box 218	775-782-9025
Elko	571 Idaho Street, Room 103, Elko, NV 89801	775-738-6526
Esmeralda	403 E Crook Ave, Goldfield, NV 89013 Mail: PO Box 458	775-485-6337
Eureka	10 S Main Street, Eureka, NV 89316 Mail: PO Box 540	775.237.5263
Humboldt	25 W Fourth Street, Winnemucca, NV 89445	775-623-6412
Lander	50 State Route 305, Battle Mountain, NV 89820	775-635-5173
Lincoln	181 North Main Street, Suite 202, Pioche, NV 89043 Mail: P.O. Box 218	775-962-8076
Lyon	27 S. Main Street, Yerington, NV 89447	(775) 463-6581
Mineral	105 S. A Street, Hawthorne, NV 89415 Mail: P.O. Box 1447	(775) 945-3676
Nye	101 Radar Road, Tonopah, NV 89049 Mail: P.O. Box 1111	(775) 482-8116
Pershing	398 Main Street, Lovelock, NV 89419 Mail: P.O. Box 736	(775) 273-2408

County	Recorder's address	Phone
Storey	26 S. B St., Virginia City, NV 89440 Mail: P.O. Box 493	(775) 847-0967
Washoe	1001 E. Ninth St. Bldg. A, Reno, NV 89512 Mail: P.O. Box 11130, Reno, NV 89520-0027	(775) 328-3660
White Pine	801 Clark Street Ste 1, Ely, NV 89301	(775)293-6507