How to Stake and File a Mining Claim in Utah

To stake and file a mining claim in Utah, you make a discovery, build a monument where you found it and post your location notice on it, mark the boundaries, record a copy of the notice with the county recorder, and file with the Bureau of Land Management (BLM). You have 30 days from the day you post the notice to record with the county, and 90 days to file with BLM. A new lode claim costs $274 in BLM fees, plus $40 or $45 for the county recorder.

Utah's county deadline is much shorter than BLM's, and Utah also requires a county filing every year by September 29, even if you pay BLM's yearly fee.

Last checked November 9, 2026. This is a plain-words summary of Utah 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 Utah filing guide is at goldmapsonline.com/how-to-stake-a-mining-claim-in-utah.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 your discovery monument	This starts the clock	No fee
2. Mark the boundaries	On the claim	Before you record	Your posts or stones
3. Record the notice	County recorder	30 days after posting	$40, or $45 in some counties
4. File with BLM	Online in MLRS, or BLM in Salt Lake City	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	September 29	$40, or $45 in some counties

Start with your map

A filled closed box on your Utah 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 placer box in Tooele County at T8S R5W Sec 3, Salt Lake Meridian, with the BLM code 26 0080S 0050W 003. 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. You can't stake in national parks, national monuments, wilderness areas, Indian reservations or military land, and private land is off limits.
3. **Watch for Utah state land.** Federal mining claims don't apply there. On state trust land, including school trust sections, you need a mineral lease from the state's Trust Lands Administration first.
4. **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.
5. **Make a discovery.** Every claim needs a discovery of a valuable mineral. BLM's test is whether a sensible person would spend more time and money trying to develop a mine there, and recording a claim and paying the fees won't make it valid without one.

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 notice and the 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. Utah's law says you can't locate a claim until you've made a discovery. When you make one, build a monument at the place of discovery and post your notice on it, for a lode or a placer claim.

A 2000 Utah Geological Survey article says to post the notice on a corner marker instead, but the law names the discovery monument, so follow the law. The notice has to give all of these:

- The name of the claim and the name of each locator
- The date of location, which is the day you post it
- **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 acres or square feet you claim
- A description of the claim, tied to a natural object or permanent monument, that's good enough to identify it

Add your mailing address too, since BLM asks for it even though Utah's law doesn't.

Step 2: Mark the boundaries

Utah's law says the boundaries have to be marked clearly enough that anyone can trace them on the ground. It doesn't set a deadline, or a number, size or material for the markers. Mark them before you record, inside your 30 days.

The state's Division of Oil, Gas and Mining says Utah has no set rules for markers. A post or a pile of rocks at each corner, as the Utah Geological Survey suggests, makes the lines easy to follow. BLM doesn't allow perforated or

uncapped pipe as markers, because of wildlife deaths.

Step 3: Record with the county recorder

Within 30 days after you post the notice, record a copy of it with the recorder in the county where the claim sits. That's much sooner than BLM's 90 days, so plan the trip before you stake.

Utah's recording law lets the recorder turn away a paper that doesn't meet these basics:

- A short title at the top of the first page that says what it is, like Location Notice
- Original signatures in ink, so sign a fresh copy instead of photocopying the posted notice
- Your name typed or printed just under your signature
- The claim's name, plus its BLM serial number once it has one
- Clear print in English that the recorder can copy

The same law says a paper has to be notarized unless another law says it doesn't. No Utah law clearly frees a location notice from that, and Emery County asks for a notary on papers that affect land. So sign the copy you record in front of a notary, or ask the recorder first. Some recorders' offices, like Emery's and Tooele's, don't notarize, so find a notary before you go.

Utah also lets each recorder set page rules, so follow them to be safe. Use white 8.5 by 11 inch paper printed on one side in black ink, with no staples or binding. Leave 1-inch margins on the sides and bottom, and a blank space 2.5 inches tall and 4.5 inches wide in the top right corner of the first page for the recorder's stamp.

State law sets the fee at $40 to record a location notice. Some counties add $5 under the same law, and Emery County, for one, charges $45. A notice with a sketch attached still counts as one paper. The recorder won't record anything until it's paid, so send the fee with a mailed notice. Mail it early, because the recorder dates it the day the office accepts it, not the day you mail it.

Step 4: 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 the recorded notice, a map of the claim 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 Utah State Office in Salt Lake City.

Utah doesn't ask for a map with the county copy, but BLM does. BLM's copy also needs the township, range, section and quarter section.

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 that isn't recorded with BLM and the county by the 90th day is abandoned and void under federal law, even if the ground is good. BLM says it refunds the location and maintenance fees in that case, after the appeal period. Utah's own county deadline is 30 days, so don't count on the full 90.

Re-staking a closed claim

Re-staking a closed claim means making a brand-new claim, and none of the old owner's rights carry over. Utah's law has no special rules for re-staking, so treat it as a new claim. Make your own discovery, build your own discovery monument and follow all four steps. Utah doesn't require any digging for it.

Check the old claim's status in BLM's records before you start. Leave other people's notices and markers alone, since Utah law makes tearing down a posted notice or pulling up a claim's stakes a crime.

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.

Utah also requires a county filing every year, whether you pay BLM's fee or do the work. State law gives you about 30 days after BLM's September 1 deadline. To be safe, record a sworn statement, called an affidavit, with the county recorder by September 29. It has to give all of these:

- Your name and address, as the claim's owner
- The name of the claim and its BLM serial number
- **If you paid BLM's fee:** a statement that you intend to hold the claim and that you paid the fee on time
- **If you did the work instead:** a statement that the yearly work needed to keep the claim was done

Sign it in front of a notary, since it's a sworn statement. The fee is $40, or $45 in some counties, for up to 10 claims, plus $2 for each claim past 10.

With 10 or fewer claims nationwide, you can do at least $100 of work on each claim instead of paying. 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 September 29.

A claim doesn't give you a free hand on the surface. Anything beyond casual use, which means little or no ground disturbance, can need a notice or a plan of operations, so talk to the local BLM field office or Forest Service ranger district first. Utah's Division of Oil, Gas and Mining also requires a notice of intention for exploration and mining, on federal land too, so ask it whether your work counts.

A suction dredge needs a recreational dredging permit from the Utah Division of Water Rights. It covers one dredge with an intake of 4 inches or less and 12 horsepower or less, for up to 45 days a year, only on the streams the permit lists. The Utah parts of the Green, Colorado and San Juan rivers are closed to it.

Who to ask

- **BLM Utah State Office:** Call 801-539-4001. The office is at 440 West 200 South, Suite 500, Salt Lake City, UT 84101, open 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday to Friday.
- **School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration:** Call 801-538-5100 about mineral leases on state trust land, where federal claims don't apply.
- **Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining:** Call 801-538-5340 about notices of intention for exploration and mining. The office is at 1594 West North Temple, Suite 1210, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, and it doesn't manage claims.
- **Utah Division of Water Rights:** Recreational dredging permits and the list of open streams, at waterrights.utah.gov.

Where these rules come from

- Utah Code Title 40, Chapter 1: discovery, location notices, markers, recording and the yearly affidavit
- Utah Code 17-71-402, 17-71-403, 17-71-407 and 57-3-105: document rules, notaries and county fees
- BLM's Utah State Office and mining claim fees
- Utah Division of Oil, Gas and Mining and the Division of Water Rights: mining notices, state land leases and dredging permits
- 43 U.S.C. 1744 and 30 U.S.C. 28f: the yearly filing and the maintenance fee

Utah 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
Beaver	105 East Center Street, Beaver, UT 84713 Mail: P.O. Box 431, Beaver, UT 84713	(435) 438-6480
Box Elder	1 S Main Street, Brigham City, UT 84302	435-734-3395
Cache	179 North Main St., Suite 101, Logan, UT 84321	(435) 755-1530
Carbon	751 E 100 N, Suite #1300, Price, UT 84501	(435) 636-3265
Daggett	95 N 1st West, Manila, UT 84046 Mail: PO Box 219, Manila, UT 84046	435-784-3180
Davis	61 South Main Street, Suite 106, Farmington, UT 84025 Mail: P.O. Box 618, Farmington, Utah 84025-0618	(801) 451-3225
Duchesne	734 North Center Street, Duchesne, UT 84021 Mail: P.O. Box 916, Duchesne, UT 84021	(435) 738-1160
Emery	75 East Main, Castle Dale, UT 84513 Mail: P.O. Box 698, Castle Dale, UT 84513	(435) 381-3520
Garfield	55 South Main Street, Panguitch, UT 84759 Mail: PO Box 77, Panguitch, UT 84759-0077	435-676-1110
Grand	125 E. Center St., Moab, UT 84532	435-259-1381
Iron	68 S 100 E, Parowan, UT 84761 Mail: PO Box 506, Parowan, UT 84761	435-477-8350
Juab	160 N Main Street, Office #110, Nephi, UT 84648	435-623-3430
Kane	76 North Main Street, Kanab, UT 84741	435-644-2360
Millard	50 South Main, Fillmore, UT 84631	435-743-6210
Morgan	48 W. Young St., Morgan, UT 84050 Mail: PO Box 886, Morgan, Utah 84050	801-829-3277
Piute	550 N Main, Junction, UT 84740 Mail: PO Box 116, Junction, UT 84740	435-577-2505
Rich	20 S. Main, Randolph, UT 84064 Mail: P.O. Box 322, Randolph, UT 84064	(435) 793-2005
Salt Lake	Mail: 2001 South State Street, Ste N1-600, Salt Lake City, Utah 84190	385-468-8145
San Juan	117 South Main, Room 103, Monticello, UT 84535 Mail: P. O. Box 789, Monticello, UT 84535	435-587-3228
Sanpete	160 North Main, Suite 204, Manti, UT 84642	435-835-2181 Ext. 3
Sevier	250 N. Main St., Richfield, UT 84701	(435) 893-0410

County	Recorder's address	Phone
Summit	60 N. Main, Coalville, UT 84017 Mail: P.O. Box 128, Coalville, UT 84017	435-336-3238
Tooele	47 S. Main St., Tooele, UT 84074	(435) 843-3180
Uintah	147 E Main, Vernal, UT 84078	435-781-5398
Utah	100 East Center St, Suite 1300, Provo, UT 84606	801-851-8179
Wasatch	25 N. Main St., Heber City, UT 84032	435-657-3210
Washington	111 East Tabernacle, St. George, UT 84770	(435) 301-7680
Wayne	18 S Main, Loa, UT 84747 Mail: PO Box 187, Loa, UT 84747	435-836-1303
Weber	2380 Washington Blvd, Suite #370, Ogden, UT 84401	801-399-8441