



Alliance for ETHICAL INTERNATIONAL RECRUITMENT Practices

A division of CGFNS International, Inc.®



QUICK GUIDE: Becoming a U.S. Healthcare Professional

The Alliance for Ethical International Recruitment Practices is proud to provide this Quick Guide on what to consider if you want to migrate to the United States as a healthcare professional.

If there's a singular piece of advice to consider, it's to strongly consider working with an Alliance Certified Ethical Recruiter. Each has been through a rigorous application process and demonstrated compliance with our [Health Care Code](#). Look for the seal shown to the right, which identifies certified firms.



If you have questions, email us at staff@cgfnsalliance.org.



Considering an Expert to Guide the Way

Once you've determined your dream is to live and work in the U.S., one of the most important decisions happens right at the start of your journey. This decision is selecting a firm you trust to provide the support you'll need to arrive in the USA in the shortest length of time.

You will generally see two types of organizations that you can sign on with for assistance in navigating the route to the USA. These two options are:

Staffing Firms provide U.S. career opportunities wherein your professional services are contracted out to one of their healthcare facility clients while you remain an employee of the agency.

Placement Firms recruit for career opportunities for their U.S. client healthcare organizations at which you'll become a direct employee. Many global healthcare professionals call this "direct hire."

Please note that a few U.S. healthcare organizations may recruit directly without the use of an agency partner. This is infrequent, but all of the considerations of choosing an agency still apply if you are recruited directly.

The staffing firm versus placement firm decision is a personal choice with good opportunities and organizations representing both options. It is important to research and ask the right questions before signing an agreement. How to make a smart choice is covered in the following section.

Making a Smart Agency Selection

Before signing with a firm, you should research the agencies you are considering. Examine their online reviews and social media pages as well. Do they have a strong following? What services do they state they provide and are those in alignment with your personal and family needs?

Here are a few items to help you spot firms to be cautious about:

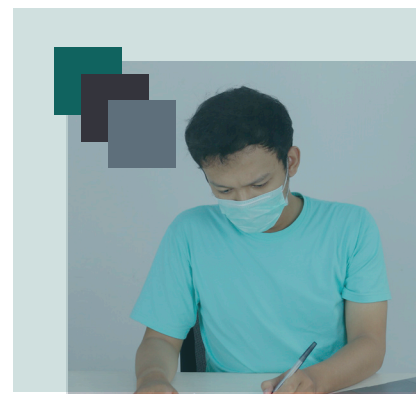
- Promises that you'll arrive in the USA in a surprisingly fast length of time or much quicker than with other firms
- Promotes the use of different U.S. visa types than what seems customary for your profession
- Requests for a recruitment fee or money to speed up your visa processing or arrival in the USA
- Lack of clarity on their U.S. client healthcare organizations
- Unwillingness to offer information on how much you'll earn

Reiterating what we covered at the start of this Quick Guide is that we strongly consider working with an Alliance Certified Ethical Recruiter that have demonstrated compliance with our ethical code.

Performing a Thorough Contract Review

After initial discussions or an interview with an agency, you should expect they will send you a contract if you qualify for their program. Here's a list of contract items to be mindful of

Review: Be sure that the agency allows you ample time to review the contract and enables you to seek a legal review if you feel you need a second opinion.



Service Level: Base-level services include visa filing and U.S. placement. Additionally-provided services may include test prep, relocation assistance, and U.S. clinical readiness training.

Obligations: Understand at what stages in the process you become obligated to repay the firm if you do not fulfill the agreement and the costs. You may become obligated even before you're matched to a U.S. healthcare organization. Ensure you understand the actions required and your duration of service to satisfy the agreement.

Additional Agreements: Ask if a second employment contract or employment agreement will be required to be signed once you're matched to a U.S. healthcare organization. Ask to see a copy of what this typically entails.

U.S. Placement: In many cases, you'll not know an exact U.S. location or setting in which you'll work at the time of signing the firm's contract. It can take several months to meet the firm's criteria to be eligible for client interviews and staffing needs change constantly. However, it's reasonable to inquire about the number and location of their current U.S. jobs and how your preferences and skills will be matched to clients once you become interview-qualified.

Setting a Reasonable Arrival Timeline

It is not unreasonable for it to take 2-3 years from the time you sign with a firm to arrive in the USA. But this may vary widely by items you may have already completed such as passing English language and U.S. licensure exams. Arriving in the U.S. quickly requires that you're conscientious in test prep and complete paperwork promptly. Likewise, your firm is responsible for status updates and informing you of changes that may impact your arrival timeline.

Making Financial Preparations

Take advantage of the several months it'll take to receive your U.S. license and visa to save money. Most firms suggest how much you should bring with you to the USA. Also, check your contact to see if you're owed any funds



from your firm upon U.S. arrival as well. If you are coming from a developing country your income in the USA will be much higher, but the cost of living is as well..

Ensuring Your Clinical Readiness

Keeping your professional skills sharp is every bit as important as the exam and financial preparedness. As much as possible keep working in the profession and setting, to which you'll be assigned in the USA. Also, ask your selected firm (or even before choosing one) what training they provide to best prepare you for U.S. professional practice standards.



Additional Resources

The following is a recommended, but not comprehensive, list of resources for review when readying yourself for a career as a healthcare professional in the USA.

- [Alliance Code of Practice](#)
- [PNAA Handbook](#)
- [American Association of International Healthcare Recruitment \(AAIHR\) Code of Ethics](#)

Select Nationality-Specific Associations

- [Philippine Nurses Association of America](#)
- [National Association of Nigerian Nurses in North America](#)
- [National Association of Indian Nurses of America](#)

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