



# **EVERYTHING YOU EVER WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT TAKING A LOCUM TENENS ASSIGNMENT IN NEW ZEALAND**



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Enjoying a locum tenens assignment in New Zealand is an exciting, multi-step process that requires time, attention and patience. Here you'll find some of the most commonly asked questions by doctors thinking about an assignment in the Land of the Long White Cloud.



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## How long are the assignments? Can I go short term?

Our assignments range in length from 6-12 months, however, most of our clients prefer 12 months. Unfortunately, due to the length of time it takes to get you registered and the costs involved, shorter assignments are very difficult. We may on occasion see needs for 3-4 months, but they will typically request doctors who have worked in-country previously and can settle in quickly. Our clients are looking for continuity of care so the longer the physician can stay, the more appealing they are.

## What is the compensation?

Compensation will vary from location to location. Though, keep in mind, we offer our positions for the experience and the chance to help in an area of need.

In New Zealand you'll be on a typical locum-type contract where you can earn NZ \$500 per day for a GP, or NZ \$600 per day for a specialist. This will also include your airfare, housing and car for the entire time (or a stipend to pay for these items). Overtime and on-call, if required, are paid at additional rates (this varies by location and specialty). This is enough money to live comfortably and travel.

## How does licensing and registration work?

As long as you are U.S. board certified, or the equivalent in a comparable country and hold an active license, you are eligible for temporary registration. New Zealand also requires an English exam if English is not your first language.

Overall, the process will take about three months once a job has been offered. Unfortunately we cannot start the registration process without a job offer. (We have a list of required documents on file which we will send before confirmation.)

## What is it like to practice in New Zealand?

New Zealand is a socialized country so practicing as a physician here may be somewhat different than what you're used to. Our doctors like the fact that they don't have to clear tests through insurance; they say they can take the time necessary with their patients.

There are waitlists, but never for urgent matters. Schedules can vary by location but will typically be 40 hours per week.

Practicing in New Zealand is generally more laid back and the patient load is very manageable. The Kiwis seem to enjoy their leisure time and have a good work/life balance. They don't live to work, they work to live.



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### **Where are the positions located?**

We work on both the North and South Island of New Zealand. We don't see a lot of openings in the major metropolitan areas because these aren't typically areas of need. However, we can sometimes find you something relatively close.

### **Will I get health insurance?**

Health insurance will be your responsibility. It's optional in New Zealand (although strongly recommended). Most doctors will purchase a policy with a New Zealand company and find it relatively inexpensive compared to U.S. rates. We've heard that for a family of four with no pre-existing conditions, a policy should be around \$1,500 for a year of coverage. We have a list of companies that have been recommended to us over the years we can send to you. This way you can shop around for the best policy to meet your needs.

### **What is the cost of living in New Zealand?**

Most doctors say the cost of living is slightly higher than what they're used to. New Zealand, being a small island country, has to import a lot of things so you're going to see this reflected in the price of many goods. On the flip side, anything local should cost less. The one thing we regularly hear is how expensive the cost of fuel is. It also depends on the location.

### **What are the taxes like?**

You will need to speak with an international tax accountant for the best advice but a general rule is to plan on paying about a third of your income in taxes anywhere you go. Keep in mind, you will never be double-taxed on the income you earned because there is a tax treaty in place that prevents this from happening.

For U.S. citizens, as an independent contractor on a Global contract, you can go to New Zealand for up to 182 days (this is days in country, not working days) without being deemed taxable. You will just pay taxes in your home country concerning the income earned. There are some things you can't get out of paying into, like social security. At the end of the tax year, we will send out a 1099 earning statement, reporting your income earned. You'll use this when filing your taxes. If your assignment is going to be 6+ months, you'll be taxable from day one.

If you're working more than six months under a Global contract, we're required to automatically withhold 30% of your pay and remit it to the New Zealand taxing authorities. These are the general rules, so again, you'll need to speak with an international tax accountant for the best advice regarding your particular situation.







### **What are the taxes like? (continued)**

If your accountant doesn't have any experience with international taxes (which most do not), we have a firm in Portland, Oregon that we can refer you to: Thompson Kessler. Their number is 1-503-223-7557 and the contact is Asif Muzaffarr or David Kessler.

If you're not a U.S. citizen, rules vary by country. To learn more contact one of our Physician Placement Specialists.

### **What if I don't like it? Can I leave?**

Fortunately this situation does not come up very often, but in the event that it should, we will work with you to try and resolve any issues you are experiencing. If we are unable to come to a resolution we would then look into finding you another location to work, and if that fails then we may have to look at the option of you returning home. Again, this is not a situation which often occurs—most doctors love their time overseas. Please be assured that we are here to be your advocate and to help you through any situation you might run into while on assignment.

### **Can I bring my family?**

Yes! About half of our doctors are married and about half of them bring their families. We will confirm your needs when presenting your details for consideration and give our client a heads up.

### **Where will I live while on assignment?**

Under a Global locum contract your housing will be provided and it will be fully furnished (everything from bed linens down to kitchen utensils). Each location is slightly different and the accommodations that local doctors live in are typically more modest than what you may be used to. Some locations will have housing they generally use for locum doctors and some will have to rent accommodations as needed for the assignment. We let the facility know ahead of time how many people you are traveling with so they can make sure the accommodation is large enough. (Keep in mind that if you are traveling with children they might have to share a room.)

Ultimately, we ask our clients to provide housing that they would live in themselves, something that is clean, comfortable, safe, and within a reasonable distance from the hospital (no more than 20 minutes). Some locations will provide a housing stipend, in which case you can book your own housing using that money. In this situation, the hospital or clinic is typically very helpful in getting this arranged.



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### Can I bring my pets?

This is an area that is changing and a few doctors have gone through the process with their pets at their own expense, but it is expensive (about \$5,000 before airfare) and it can be time-consuming. There is a minimum 10- to 30-day quarantine time, depending on the country, plus other requirements that need to be addressed months before you leave. We suggest looking at what the requirements are as soon as possible, as it can be a lengthy process. We've found this website quite helpful for anyone wishing to bring their pets: [www.iptlax.com](http://www.iptlax.com). Also, please keep in mind that bringing pets will likely limit your housing options for the assignment.

### How does Global Medical compare to other international agencies?

Global has been placing doctors overseas for over 20 years. We started out in the international market, and pioneered bringing North American doctors into Australia and New Zealand. We have long-standing relationships with many of our clients, as well as with the immigration and registration authorities. One of the biggest differences between Global and other agencies is the *Global Locum Contract* that we offer.

The three (3) major benefits to you under this contract are:

- For assignments under six months, you just pay tax at home and do not need to worry about paying foreign taxes.
- We make sure that you have housing and car assistance for the entire length of the assignment.
- You're under our *Safety Net*, which basically means we are in a better position to negotiate with the client on your behalf for anything that comes up during the assignment.

We're also known for our thorough vetting process with doctors. Our standard is to check five references with every doctor and our clients have come to expect a higher caliber doctor from us. This reputation has helped our candidates get to the "top of the pile," because if they are coming from us, they can be sure they are getting a great doctor.

We also never spam out your CV; we run each location by you first to ensure you're truly interested in the location and what the practice has to offer. In other words, we get your permission to submit your details for consideration.

Ultimately, we're your advocate. We walk you through the process of finding an assignment plus obtain medical registration and a visa for you. In addition, we continue to touch base with you throughout your assignment. This *Safety Net* ensures you and your family feel well supported on your adventure.



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## HAVE MORE QUESTIONS?

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Call toll-free from the U.S. & Canada  
For international placement: 800.760.3174 | For U.S. placement: 866.858.6269

For all other toll-free or freephone numbers visit:  
[www.gmedical.com/contact-us](http://www.gmedical.com/contact-us)



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