

VISTA STAFFING SOLUTIONS
Guide to Locum Tenens

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Guide to Locum Tenens

In Latin, locum tenens means “one holding a place.” In medicine today it means building a solid foundation for a new career, a successful transition into a new position, international adventure, or a satisfying move into flexible or part-time work. We created this Guide to Locum Tenens to help you determine if (or more likely when) locum tenens is the right career choice for you.

Why should I consider locum tenens?

To maximize your options

The health care employment landscape is shifting dramatically. With an anticipated shortage of 200,000 physicians by the year 2020, demand for your services will continue to grow. And with demand comes the ability to control your professional and personal life. That's the essence of locum tenens—the opportunity to practice great medicine for all the right reasons, without the constraints of building and managing a business, navigating political channels, or being locked into a routine.

Who works locum tenens?

Physicians looking for flexibility and control

Locum tenens is the perfect option for physicians in transition. Transition from training to practice, from one practice to another, or from one community to another. Transition into part-time work while you pursue another passion, like travel, art, or family. Transition into an active and fulfilling semi-retirement.

Where do locum tenens physicians work?

Everywhere medicine is practiced

Locum tenens physicians work in academic institutions, community practices, government facilities, urban hospitals—you name it. Many requests for coverage come from facilities or practices that are actively recruiting and need coverage until they find a permanent candidate. (Oftentimes, a locum tenens physician who has “tried out” the practice.) Other needs include peak demand coverage (i.e., tourist season or cold and flu season), coverage while a physician is on medical leave or vacation, or immediate staffing to help a facility launch a new program or service line. Assignments range from several weeks to more than a year. Our international opportunities are in similar practice settings, primarily in Australia and New Zealand.

How will it look on my CV?

Great!

Your locum tenens experience will add meat to your CV. The fact that you demonstrated the flexibility and skill to succeed in a variety of situations is attractive to future employers and partners. You will bring a depth of experience to each new situation. You'll also have a list of great references as you successfully complete assignments.

What about malpractice insurance?

You are covered

VISTA Staffing Solutions provides malpractice insurance for you, covering every minute you work through VISTA. The policy is through Evanston Insurance Company—one of the oldest and most stable medical malpractice carriers in the nation. Your individual limits are \$1 million per claim/\$3 million annual aggregate per physician. Because it's a claims-made policy, our coverage is continually updated to reflect economic trends, changes in the market, and shifting health policy. You are covered whenever a claim arises from work arranged by VISTA, even if you are no longer an active member of the VISTA physician group. (Coverage for international work is often provided by the client. Either way, you will be covered.)

How much money can I make?

Enough to pay off loans, fund vacations, or establish a whole new lifestyle

Think of your locum tenens compensation as a package. For U.S. locum tenens assignments you receive a competitive daily or hourly rate based on your specialty and the location of the assignment. You are compensated for call and beeper time. Travel to and from the assignment is paid for, as are your housing and local transportation while you are there. Malpractice insurance is also covered. Due to differences in the health care systems in Australia and New Zealand, total compensation for international placement is generally lower than compensation for domestic assignments. Compensation also varies based on your years of practice experience.

VISTA also offers long-term transitional jobs lasting 12 months or more. Sometimes it makes more sense for the client to provide a relocation package and to consider lease options for housing and transportation for these jobs. Basic compensation often includes some call and overtime for these positions.

What other support do I receive?

24/7 support—at no cost to you

Travel coordination—Our dedicated in-house travel team will contact you to arrange airline travel, rental cars, and accommodations for U.S. assignments.

Housing coordination—For U.S. assignments we coordinate with the facility or practice interested in working with you to arrange comfortable, safe housing. Depending on the location, the housing could be an extended stay hotel or condominium, a rental home, or a furnished apartment. (For international assignments you can expect assistance with housing and travel. Each assignment is unique.)

Local transportation—A rental car will generally be provided during your U.S. assignments.

Licensing—VISTA Staffing Solutions has a 15-member credentials verification and licensing team, familiar with the unique licensing requirements of every state and registration requirements of every country we serve. A licenser who specializes in your field of medicine will work with you to secure new state licenses and/or country registration as you plan for upcoming assignments.

Privileges—Like any physician, locum tenens physicians face close scrutiny when applying for hospital privileges. The work VISTA Staffing Solutions does to complete your initial credentials review makes the privileging process easier for you and the hospital.

Risk Management/Professional Feedback—VISTA's QA/RM team includes board certified locum tenens physicians and physician practice owners. In addition to reviewing files before a physician works with VISTA, this team reviews evaluations from both clients and physicians following assignments. They also oversee VISTA's Peer Review Committee, which analyzes all adverse outcomes and recommends follow-up.

Exposure to opportunities—VISTA Staffing Solutions makes contact with hundreds of medical practices and facilities every week to stay abreast of their staffing needs. We're a tremendous resource when you are interested in trying out different types of practices in different geographic settings, or zeroing in on a specific area or practice situation.

How much will I know about a practice going in?

A lot

When a practice contracts with us to provide locum tenens physicians, we develop a comprehensive description of the practice that gives you the kind of information you need to evaluate the fit of a potential assignment. For example, patient volume, the visit-to-admission ratio in an emergency department, the hours of lab and radiology coverage, the type and number of physicians available for back up and referral, and the amount of call you will be expected to take.

Phone interviews are often set up for physicians and practices considering a match—allowing you to probe further into areas that matter to you most. You will also have an orientation your first day on the job in every assignment.

How often do I have to work?

As much or as little as you like

All locum tenens work with VISTA Staffing is based on mutual agreement. Once you are on board, our scheduling team will offer you assignments they believe are a good match for your skills and interests. You are free to accept or decline any assignment. You can accept assignments several months in advance if you prefer, so you can build your vacation and personal schedule around jobs.

Can I moonlight or work weekends close to home?

Of course

Keep in mind that in most specialties, practices look to local resources to cover sporadic needs and weekend work instead of locum tenens staffing groups. However, many physicians working with VISTA do “return engagements,” returning to the same practice on a regular basis. This is a great option for physicians—including military physicians or emergency physicians for example—who can arrange their schedules to accommodate a week or two of locum tenens work every few months.

Do I have to sign an exclusive contract?

No

You are always free to make other work arrangements. We do hope that you'll consider us a primary resource, however, and let us keep you as busy as you want to be.

What does your credentials review process entail?

It meets or exceeds

Joint Commission and NCQA standards

Our credentials review process includes a thorough review and primary source verification of your education and training, any advanced training certificates you may hold, your work history, your current standing with specialty boards and state medical boards, the status of your medical license(s) and privileges with any medical institutions, and more. We investigate any past or pending malpractice cases filed against you, review any disciplinary actions, and talk with at least four professional references who have worked closely with you within the past two years. It's an intense, but very organized process. The result is a comprehensive file we can use to help you secure licenses in new states and privileges in hospitals where you have accepted assignments, and registration in new countries

How long does it take to get started?

That usually depends on you

Depending on your situation (and ability to complete and return our paperwork) we can complete your VISTA credentials review in a matter of weeks. We're then able to begin discussing specific work opportunities. Securing hospital privileges takes anywhere from a few days in urgent situations to six months in some locations. We recommend that you maintain a dialog with a physician recruiter at VISTA. Three to six months before the date of an anticipated transition (i.e., completion of your residency or the sale of your practice), contact your recruiter to initiate the application and credentials review process. This will give us time to coordinate credentialing, licensure, hospital privileges, and the schedules of organizations that book locum tenens coverage well in advance. It will improve your odds of making a smooth transition.

What's the first step?

Call us today!

Call VISTA Staffing Solutions today and ask to speak to a recruiter in your specialty, on our international team, in our long-term staffing division, or on our permanent placement team--whatever meets your needs. Your recruiter will get to know you and your specific interests and situation. You will work together to complete your credentials review

and plan your transition. Your recruiter can advise you on timing, keep you informed of potential opportunities, and help you shape the next phase of your career. Start the process today by calling 800.366.1884 or visiting our web site, www.vistastaff.com, and completing the physician contact form. We'll be in touch shortly.

Why VISTA?

VISTA Staffing Solutions was founded in 1990 by three veterans of the physician staffing industry--Mark Brouse, President, Katie Abby, Executive Vice President, and Clarke Shaw, Senior Vice President. Their vision was to create a team of knowledgeable, invested professionals dedicated to helping physicians make the most of transitions in their personal and professional lives. We now serve thousands of physicians and practices in need of staffing.

People come first at VISTA, a distinction we think helps us see the big picture and drives us to build long-term relationships with physicians. The company offers exceptional stability to both employees and physician partners, and maintains the highest standards for quality in the industry. As a result, we can play an active role in helping physicians shape truly satisfying careers.

VISTA provides opportunities for physicians in the following medical specialties:

Anesthesiology	Otolaryngology
Critical care	Pathology
CRNA	Palliative care
Dermatology	Pediatrics
Emergency medicine	- Developmental pediatrics
- Pediatric emergency medicine	- Pediatric critical care
Endocrinology	- Pediatric hematology/oncology
Family medicine	Physical medicine and rehabilitation
Hospitalists	Psychiatry
Internal medicine	- Child and adolescent psychiatry
IM subspecialties	Pulmonology
- Cardiology	Radiology
- Gastroenterology	Rheumatology
- Hematology	Surgery
- Infectious Disease	- General
- Nephrology	- Neuro
- Pulmonology	- Orthopedic
- Rheumatology	- Thoracic
Neurology	- Trauma
Neonatology	- Transplant
Obstetrics and gynecology	- Vascular
Perinatology	Urology
Occupational medicine	
Oncology	
- Hematology	
- Radiation oncology	

VISTA also offers physician search and consulting services including modified retained search, executive search, and in-house recruitment program development.

On Assignment

VISTA Staffing Solutions is a division of **On Assignment, Inc.**, one of the largest healthcare and scientific staffing companies in the U.S.

About the author: Therus Kolff, MD, MPH, is the founder of the locum tenens industry and Medical Director for VISTA Staffing Solutions. Shortly after completing medical school in 1976, Dr. Kolff was part of Health Systems Research Institute, Inc., a non-profit organization formed by the University of Utah, the Intermountain Regional Medical Program, and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to develop innovative solutions to rural health care issues. He had responsibility for a team that managed 22 clinics and five hospitals in nine western states. He was also the team leader for Yellowstone National Park Medical Services.

The need for traveling physicians who could fill in for geographically isolated practitioners and cover vacant positions was obvious and urgent, leading

Dr. Kolff to establish the first locum tenens company in the United States in 1979. Dr. Kolff was central to establishing credentialing standards and protocols, supporting infrastructure, and an appreciation for the ultimate quality of patient care within the industry. At VISTA he is focused on fostering a peer-review, best-practices-driven culture and increasing the clinical knowledge of every employee owner. True to his passion for locum tenens, he is licensed to practice medicine in Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, and Pennsylvania.

NALTO membership

VISTA Staffing Solutions is a member of the National Association of Locum Tenens Organizations (NALTO), an industry standards group established to ensure sound business practices. NALTO members are held to a strict code of ethics and dedicated to providing quality service to the health care industry.

ASPR Gold Sponsor

VISTA Staffing Solutions is a Gold Sponsor of the Association of Staff Physician Recruiters, and a supporter of several regional chapters of the association.

MGMA Membership

VISTA Staffing Solutions is also an affiliate member of the Medical Group Management Association.