

## Nursing Overseas

**This document is designed to help you with the process of getting an overseas nursing position. Working overseas can be extremely rewarding both professionally and personally.**

There is a worldwide shortage of nurses and New Zealand has a reputation for providing nurses of high calibre. International agencies advertise through Kaitiaki Nursing New Zealand, metropolitan newspapers, and the internet. NZNO cannot guarantee the quality of an agency's service or endorse any one agency over another. If you are planning to work overseas there is a lot of work to do before you leave New Zealand. The following information will help you.

### Before You Leave New Zealand: Things to Do

Do your homework. Find out as much as you can about the country you intend going to i.e. the type of nursing, the languages spoken in the practice setting, the facilities and lifestyle offered outside the workplace.

- > Apply for registration/enrolment directly to the registration authority of the country concerned. The registration authority will send you an application form to fill in. Do this as soon as possible because in some countries it can take up to six months or longer for this process to be completed.
- > The completed application form should be accompanied by photocopied certified copies of all information requested by the registration authority you are applying to:
  - A Justice of the Peace or lawyer should be able to certify the copies of these documents for you.
- > Don't resign until you have written confirmation of your visa, passport, tickets, and registration. Plans can change and you could be left without a job in either country.
- > Most countries ask for verification of your nursing registration in New Zealand and the Nursing Council of New Zealand (NCNZ) will provide this at your request. Information regarding verifications or letters of good standing can be found on the NCNZ website ([https://www.nursingcouncil.org.nz/Public/Nursing/Verifications\\_or\\_letters\\_of\\_good\\_standing/NCNZ/Registration-section/Verifications\\_or\\_letters\\_of\\_good\\_standing.aspx?hkey=9dd47232-8e77-4d55-b7e2-3c66196a6779](https://www.nursingcouncil.org.nz/Public/Nursing/Verifications_or_letters_of_good_standing/NCNZ/Registration-section/Verifications_or_letters_of_good_standing.aspx?hkey=9dd47232-8e77-4d55-b7e2-3c66196a6779))
- > It is important that you contact NZNO Membership on 0800 28 38 48 or [membership@nzno.org.nz](mailto:membership@nzno.org.nz) to inform us that you:
  - wish to remain a member while overseas (your subscription will be reduced) or
  - you wish to resign your membership
- > Find out the name and contact number of the appropriate nursing organisation in your country of destination.
- > Have you got your:
  - passport
  - visa (if applicable)
  - International driving licence?

**Note for new graduates: You must have completed the full NCNZ registration process before you can apply to work overseas.**

## Questions to Be Answered

- > Do you speak the language and have an awareness of the social and cultural norms of the country you are intending to work in? Communication is key to the provision of safe healthcare. To practice safely, and effectively care for patients you should have a basic knowledge of the language of the country, and its culture and customs where you will be working. It is important to note that even in English speaking countries, terminology may be used differently.
- > Does the country you intend working in require a written exam e.g. United States and in Canada each province requires a written exam) and/or an English language qualification, e.g. IELTS.
- > Does the country have standards in terms of number of hours in a particular nursing area and types of experience? E.g. United Kingdom.
- > Does the country have an orientation requirement? Some countries require foreign nurses to work for a period in an orientation programme. You need to check at what rate you will be paid during this time.
- > How much does registration in another country cost?
- > Are you using an agency?
- > Agencies vary and you need to check out whether there is any advantage in using one. Questions to ask include:
  - What will the agency charge you?
  - What services can you carry out more cheaply yourself?
  - Will the agency pay your fare?
  - What sort of contract does the agency offer the employee/employer?
  - Will you be required to repay your fare if it is provided?
  - Will the employer provide accommodation and at what cost?
  - Is the accommodation furnished or unfurnished?
  - What happens if the agency/employer breaks its contract with you while you are in transit to your new country of work?

Further information related to nursing in another country can be gained from a variety of useful websites. These are some examples:

- > <https://nurseslabs.com/want-nurse-abroad-6-things-must-know/>
- > [https://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0403/working\\_abroad\\_as\\_a\\_nurse.shtml](https://www.transitionsabroad.com/publications/magazine/0403/working_abroad_as_a_nurse.shtml)
- > <https://www.nursingmidwiferyboard.gov.au/Accreditation/IQNM.aspx>
- > <https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/register-nurse-midwife/trained-outside-uk/>
- > <https://nursing.jnj.com/work-in-the-united-states/>
- > <https://nursinglicensemap.com/states>

## Once You Arrive at Your Destination

For every job you should have a **contract of employment** signed by both parties. If you have arranged a job through an agency before you leave New Zealand, you should have this signed before leaving. Take a copy of this contract with you.

Your contract should include:

- an offer and acceptance of the job
- specific details about the amount of money you will be paid, before and after tax
- what the job involves, type of nursing
- the hours you agree to work, e.g. 40 hours per week, 8 hours per day etc
- types of shifts - you don't want to arrive and find you have agreed to do only night shifts
- overtime rates
- provisions for leave, e.g. parental, sick, holidays
- duration of contract
- who will you be responsible to and who will you supervise?

If it is indefinite:

- Can you and the agency get out of the contract?
- Is there an opt-out clause for emergencies?

## Indemnity Insurance Cover

- The NZNO Indemnity Policy provides cover 24 hours/day, 7 days/week, on or off duty, anywhere in the world except the USA and Canada, and
- Where primary workplace is outside NZ, the NZNO recommends you arrange separate indemnity insurance

## What Can You Do If You Need Help?

- contact the local New Zealand Consulate
- the embassies/consulates of the country

## Professional Association/Union Membership, and Sources of Information

- The embassies/consulates of the country
- NZNO National Office, PO Box 2128, Wellington 6140, New Zealand. Ph: 0800 28 38 48 from within New Zealand or +64 4 499 9533 from another country, <https://www.nzno.org.nz/>
- Nursing Council of New Zealand, PO Box 9644, Wellington 6141, New Zealand. Ph: 04 385 9589 from within NZ or +64 4 385 9589 from another country, <https://www.nursingcouncil.org.nz/Public/>.

## When You Return to New Zealand

- Rejoin NZNO (or if still a member update your contact details and membership status).
- Let NZNO know of any difficulties you had. We can then warn other nurses.

***Remember the experience of nursing and living in another country can be invaluable but New Zealand needs you to bring that knowledge and experience back to New Zealand.***

### NZNO Practice guideline:

Nursing Overseas

New Zealand Nurses Organisation PO Box 2128, Wellington 6140. [www.nzno.org.nz](http://www.nzno.org.nz)

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**Mission statement**

NZNO is committed to the representation of members and the promotion of nursing and midwifery. NZNO embraces Te Tiriti o Waitangi and works to improve the health status of all peoples of Aotearoa/ New Zealand through participation in health and social policy development.

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