

J-1 Visa Waiver Program National Interest Waiver Program



Purpose

The J-1 Visa Waiver Program improves the accessibility of health care in underserved areas by supporting J-1 Visa Waiver requests on behalf of J-1 physicians willing to practice in medically underserved areas.

The federal National Interest Waiver (NIW) Program allows certain foreign workers including foreign physicians (MDs) with advanced degrees or exceptional abilities to work in the United States.



ISSUE

A majority of Arizona communities are short of primary care providers.¹ People who are uninsured, low-income, members of racial and ethnic minority groups, or living in rural or inner-city areas are likely to lack a usual source of care.²

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

By participating in the J-1 Visa Waiver or National Interest Waiver Programs, you have the opportunity to provide health care services to the communities in need in Arizona.

J-1 Visa Waiver and NIW Program Policies

- Thirty (30) slots are available per year. Preference points are used if more applications are received than slots available.
- Annual application cycle is from October 1st through September 30th.
- ADHS' application review takes about 8 to 12 weeks.

ADHS will ONLY consider requests for NIW support from Arizona J-1 physicians meeting the following conditions:

- Practiced full-time at an eligible service site (within designated HPSA/MUA) for at least one year immediately preceding the request for an NIW support and will continue to practice in the same or similar setting to a total aggregate of 5 years (including J-1 Visa Waiver obligation)

Provider Eligibility

- Have an offer of full time employment at 40 hours per week at an eligible service site
- Serve a 3 year minimum obligation (J-1 Visa Waiver), 2 additional years (NIW)
- Provide primary care or specialty services in an approved site
- Have an AZ license or eligible for an AZ license

Eligible Disciplines

- MDs with primary care discipline (Internal Medicine, Family or General Practice, Pediatrics, OB/GYN or Psychiatry) or specialists

Service Site Eligibility

- Located in a designated Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) or Medically Underserved Area/Population (MUA/MUP)
- Accept Medicare and Medicaid (AHCCCS)
- Have a non-discriminatory policy in the provision of health services
- Implement a Sliding Fee Scale, Policy, Notice of Discount
- Demonstrate unsuccessful recruitment efforts of a US citizen physician
- Must be operational and providing care for at least six months as of the date of the

Bureau of Health Systems Development

www.azdhs.gov/j1visawaiver (602) 542-1219

Data Sources:

1. Arizona Department of Health Services, Bureau of Health Systems Development, Designations Data 2011.
2. Ruddy, G. et al. July 2005. [The family physician workforce: The special case of rural populations](#). American Family Physician, 72(1):147