

Conrad 30 J-1 Waiver Program

The J-1 visa allows foreign medical graduates the opportunity to obtain medical training in the United States. At the end of the training, the physician is required to return home for two years before returning to the U.S. to practice medicine. However, several programs exist for the waiver of the “home” requirement. Here we will discuss the Conrad 30 J-1 Visa Waiver Program.

The purpose of the Conrad 30 waiver program is to place up to 30 primary care physicians in areas designated by the U.S. government as Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) or Medically Underserved Areas (MUA). The program places primary care physicians in rural and urban areas and assures local communities with access to quality, affordable health care services. Primary care physicians include family practice, internal medicine, general pediatrics, OB/GYN, and psychiatrists. In some cases, specialists are eligible for placement.

The program requires employers to make an application before a State health agency to demonstrate that it meets certain requirements. The employer must demonstrate that it intends to offer the physician a full-time, three-year contract at a wage comparable to one offered to a U.S. physician. The employer must also demonstrate that it offers patients a formal sliding fee scale and accept Medicaid, Medicare, uninsured and under-insured patients. Finally, the employer must demonstrate that its facility is located in a HPSA or a MUA. Upon this showing, the State health agency will make a recommendation to the U.S. Department of State that the waiver be granted. After further review, the Department of State will recommend to the U.S. Citizenship & Immigration Services (USCIS) that the waiver be granted. The USCIS makes the final grant of the waiver and then the applicant will seek issuance of an H-1B visa. The adjudication timeline for the process is about five to nine months.

After serving three years in their position while maintaining H-1B status, the physician may be eligible to seek Lawful Permanent Residence. Aside from the economic benefits that physicians bring to these communities, studies show that nearly half of the physicians remain in their placement community.

For more information

For more information, please contact Lee Lane Smith LLP via email at enquiry@leelanesmith.us or toll free at (800) 513-5699.

