**INFORMATION BROCHURE**

**Your South African Contact: Your American Contacts:**

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**INTRODUCTION**

**Work Abroad Network** serves as a link between South African laborers & American Employers. There are opportunities for South Africans to do seasonal work in the USA, that’s not limited by qualifications or experience. Seasonal Laborers, who can fluently & clearly communicate in English, are highly sought after in industries such as agriculture, tourism, construction & manufacturing.

**Work Abroad Network** are committed to:

* finding reliable, trustworthy & competent South African Seasonal Laborers for USA Employers; and
* offer South Africans a dependable & professional service, that entirely complies with all relevant domestic & USA employment laws.

Our business follows a full disclosure principle towards both Employer & Employee. It’s vital that both parties are completely informed & knows exactly what to expect, to ensure a smooth transition for everyone involved.

**Work Abroad Network** is a South African based recruitment agency who:

* recruit candidates in South Africa, suitable for Seasonal Work in the USA;
* facilitates the application process that includes interviews, background checks, medical tests & police clearances; and
* assists applicants with their visa applications, travel arrangements & health insurance.

Our focus is on building long-standing relationships, founded on honesty & trust, that translates to growth & development for all involved.

**Work Abroad Network, LLC** (our American branch) ensures that all legal requirements are met, by working directly with:

* the USA Local State;
* the Regional Department of Labor (DOL); and
* the United Citizenship and Immigration Service (USCIS former BCIS)

We are NOT lawyers. At **Work Abroad Network** we are all professional, expert recruiters with many years of experience & in-depth knowledge in the “working abroad” process.

The CEO of **Work Abroad Network**, Tina Andrew, is a former South African citizen & hence fully recognize the circumstances the country is faced with. Before settling in Kansas, Tina & her husband toured the world & worked in Israel, England, Europe & America. Tina now shares her widespread experiences & insights at **Work Abroad Network** by being fully involved in promoting, negotiating & building the very important employer/employee relationships.

**SERVICES**

At **Work Abroad Network** we focus our energy & efforts on making your experience of “working abroad” as painless, unproblematic & pleasant as possible.

We will assist & guide you throughout the entire process, when you’ve been registered with **Work Abroad Network** & have been selected by an Employer. We will brief you clearly & carefully, ensuring that you’re fully prepared for the visa application procedure at the American Embassy. You’ll be supplied with all visa application documentation & we’ll direct you through any further/other paperwork necessary to successfully complete your application.

In summary, we guarantee:

* Definite work placement
* Visa application assistance
* Basic/general health & travel insurance
* Travel & Flight arrangements
* Accommodation requirements

**QUALIFYING CRITERIA**

Every individual must:

* submit a duly completed application form;
* provide proof of citizenship (South African or Namibian);
* present the ability to pay for return travel, visa, visa application fees & related processes;
* demonstrate their intent to accept & complete the employment offered;
* can commence work on short notice; and
* be mentally & physically competent for the job.

It’s mandatory that you have adequate / sufficient Health Insurance cover *before* departure. Although **Work Abroad Network** can assist you in obtaining *general* cover, it remains your responsibility. **Work Abroad Network** is not by any means responsible for the scope of the cover.

**FEES – H2A & H2B APPLICANTS**

* None Registration Fee
* None Placement Fee
* $190 Visa Application Fee (Payable directly to the US consulate)
* R18000 Return Plane Ticket (Note that although we strive & negotiate for the best prices this is just an indication of what the ticket may cost)
* Optional Travel & Basic Health Insurance (age dependent)

**FEES – J1 APPLICANTS**

* R2500.00 Registration Fee
* $500 Placement Fee
* $600 - $1200 Based on the length of practical experience
* $190 Visa Application Fee (Payable directly to the US consulate)
* R1800 Return Plane Ticket (Note that although we strive & negotiate for the best prices this is just an indication of what the ticket may cost)
* Compulsory for all J1 Applicants. Optional Travel & Basic Health Insurance (age dependent)

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

1. **Explain the basic steps?**

1: Complete & submit the application forms & relevant documents:

* Copy of passport
* Copy of ID
* Copy of drivers’ license
* CV/Resume
* Police clearance certificate
* Proof of application
* Medical release certificate

2: Background check done by local agent, verifying submitted information.

3: Once application accepted, applicant submits fully refundable R1000 registration fee.

4: Registration fee will be fully refunded once job offer accepted. There is no charge to worker for our services, we simply charge a deposit to ensure workers are serious about placement as past applicants file applications with several agents and fail to communicate when they accept a job elsewhere putting us in an embarrasing situation when we submit resumes to employers for consideration, but workers are no longer available.

5: Upon verification of your information, your documentation will be forwarded to the USA branch to start the process of matching you with an Employer, per your specification.

***Important to note****: Your “working abroad experience” will fail if you are dishonest about your skills and working background. You will not be transferred to another Employer if we find that you’re not suitably matched. We strongly urge and advise you to contact your USA Employer to confirm his/her expectations in terms of tools & apparel. It’s also an appropriate time to confirm contact details & get an impression of your Employer.*

***\*****See Transferring*

6: The Employer will be presented with a selection of suitable candidates to choose from, based on your information supplied. They Employer will notify the agent of their selection, whereupon the agent will notify the successful candidate.

7: Contacting the Employer. The Employer may call you for an interview (you will be notified of time or you may be required to contact the Employer at a scheduled time).

8: Upon your acceptance of the job offer, you will sign a job specific employment contract & pay the Consulate Application Fees to **Work Abroad Network**.

9: When the payment is received, you will be provided with the documents to assist you with obtaining a work permit from the Consulate. Payment will only be expected once **Work Abroad Network** have already received the DOL & USCIS approval documents. Please note that the consulate fees are non-refundable. If your visa is denied at the Consulate, they do not refund you. It is imperative that you disclose any potential issues that may cause your application to be denied.

10: All travel arrangements will be advised by your South African agent. We assist in finding the cheapest travel fares. You are free to personally search for best fares, however, arival and departure has to be scheduled according to Employer’s specifications and you are required to send us a copy of your itinerary and receipt for amount paid for airfare. Prior to paying for the ticket, you must communicate details to your South African agent to get US Employer’s approval. If ticket cost more than what Work Abroad Network can secure, you will risk not being reimbursed your full travel cost as US Employer is only obligated to pay for most reasonable fare to US and back. Your travel expense will be reimbursed 50% at 50% completion of your contract and then 50% when you finish your contract.

11: We will arrange for your prospective Employer to receive you, or make alternative arrangements to get you to your place of employment, safely.

12: Any concerns should be addressed to your agent. Take note of where you are phoning to & from in the USA, as the time difference is 6-10 hours depending on location.

13: There will be an interview, at the discretion of the Consular Officer. It’s your responsibility to make sure your agent receives all relevant documents, to assist in obtaining your visa. All related Consular Fees non-refundable.

14: We recommend that you contact our USA Branch as soon as possible upon arrival. It’s important that you remain in contact with us, so that we can assist immediately should problems or concerns at your place of employment, come up. The sooner we know of issues, the sooner we can deal with it.

15: If it were to get to the point that you want to terminate your employment contract, for valid reasons, you’ll return to South Africa within ten (10) days.

16: It’s your Employers’ responsibility to inform the USCIS of your contract termination. You are only allowed to work for the Employer stated on your visa.

17: Once your contract expires, you need to depart the USA within ten (10) days. Take good care of your contract & visa “status”, as the US Immigration has zero tolerance towards illegal laborers. **Work Abroad Network** strongly advise that you therefore keep your passport with you at all times, especially when traveling. You don’t want anything to jeopardize future employment opportunities.

1. **What are the Visa types?**

**H2A Visa**

* Non-immigrant
* Seasonal agricultural (farm work) visa
* Based on seasonal demands
* Valid for maximum of ten (10) months
* Travel reimbursement from SA to place of employment
* Employer is required to supply furnished accommodation
* Employee is responsible for own provision & preparation of food
* Hourly rate, “Adverse Effect Wage Rate” as determined by Labor Department, unique to each State
* No taxes are withheld
* Workman’s Compensation or similar insurance to be provided by Employer
* You are still required to obtain travelers insurance
* Your transportation to and from US will be reimbursed by US Employer

**H2B Visa**

* Non-immigrant
* Skilled or unskilled
* Non-agricultural
* Issued for the following industries
  + Service
  + Manufacturing
  + Tourism
  + Trucking
  + Construction etc
* Seasonal demands determine contract length
* Maximum of ten (10) months
* Laborers to pay own accommodation – about $50-$100 per week when supplied by Employer

**H1B Visa**

* Valid for three (3) years; extendable for an additional three (3) Non-immigrant
* Speciality occupational
* Requirements:
  + Bachelor’s Degree or higher (or equivalent) and job must require a Bachelor’s Degree or higher; OR
  + Ten (10) years’ relevant experience
* without exceeding six (6) years.

**J-I Visa**

* Two-year home stay rule applies in certain cases.
* Cultural exchange program
* Offers employment & living rights to international students in the US
* Length of stay depends of time needed to complete exchange objectives
* Your travel cost is your own expense
* The organizations that **Work Abroad Network** works with, use the 12-18-month contract
* Third party fees are determined by length of program
* Compulsory medical insurance
* SEVIS Fee of $100 payable directly to Federal Government (ask us about procedure)
* We are proud to partner with:
  + IEE (International Education Exchange)
  + MAST (Minnesota Agricultural Student Trainee)
  + InterExchange (Career Training USA)

**3. How can I be sure I’ll get what I paid for?**

As a reputable business, **Work Abroad Network** operates on full disclosure. We understand the implications of this life-changing decision & the related financial commitment.

Before you depart, you will have an employment contract that fully stipulates your employment conditions.

**4. What types of jobs can I expect?**

* Landscaping
* Custom application
* Custom harvesting
* Crop farming
* Feedlots
* Working with pigs, horses, poultry, dairy
* Bee keeping
* Ranching
* Mechanics
* Machine maintenance
* Electrical
* Steel construction
* Truckers
* Hotel work
* Life guards
* Please ask about jobs you may be qualified for, that are not listed

If permanent employment is offered while you’re employed by your US Company, we can assist you in obtaining the necessary documentation, however, our primary service is placing seasonal, non-immigrant workers. Expressing desire to immigrate to the US may disqualify you for these programs.

**5. Do I have a choice in where I go?**

Yes, although we cannot guarantee to place you near a specific location, as the placement depends of the needs of the labor market.

**6. How soon can I go?**

Upon receipt of job offer from labor certified Employer. Job availability depend greatly on the time of year.

Agricultural intake period: February – April (lower in October – December)

We pursue contracts throughout the year in different sectors to ensure a wide range of opportunities in the US.

**7. How long may I work in the USA?**

* H2A & H2B visas - Maximum of ten (10) months
* Period of placement can also depend on seasonal demand
* You can extend (or roll over from summer season to a winter season placement) and remain in the US for up to 3 years whereafter you have to return home for a period of six months minimum before you can return on another H visa.

**8.** **How soon after my Visa expires do I have to return to South Africa, without violating immigration laws?**

Within 10 days of contract completion.

Your I94 must be valid at all times.

**9. What will happen if I don’t return to South Africa after my visa expired?**

You will be deported.

You will be “out of status”. This will influence your chances of being accepted into the USA in future.

You will be reported immediately if leave your employment.

**10. May I stay longer if my Employer wants me to?**

You must first return to South Africa, from where you can pursue placement for a following season.

**11. Will my Employer provide accommodation?**

* H2A visa – Free housing
* H2B visa – Employer is not obliged to offer accommodation; we recommend our clients to assist you in finding accommodation that you will be responsible for.
* In either case, it is your responsibility to maintain your accommodation. When accommodation is supplied by the Employer, they have the right to charge you when you don’t look after it. Some Employers demand a deposit.

**12. What type of housing can I expect?**

* Trailer home
* Rental apartment
* Motel
* Room in farmer’s house
* Job dependant
* Living standards have to meet the strict minimum requirements of the State Labor Departments.
* If living conditions are substandard you need to notify the US agents at once.

**13. What will I get paid per hour & overtime?**

* Wages differ from state to state & job to job
* Salaries start from $8/hour to $12 or more, as per qualification
* H2A visa – no overtime for over 40 hours, only flat hourly wage – no taxes withheld
* H2B visa – time & a half after 40 hours – visa taxes are withheld to be claimed back at the end of the season
* No Social Security of Medical taxes to be withheld or claimed back

**14. Will I get a Social Security Number?**

Yes. When you get to the US with your valid visa & passport, you can apply for a Social Security Number.

Your Social Security Card will indicate that you can only work as indicated by the USCIS authority.

**15. Who will apply for the work permit?**

Our USA branch will see to all legalities & paperwork.

**16. Will I have the visa before leaving South Africa?**

Yes. We will not allow you any travel to the USA without a valid visa.

**17. Who will organise my travel plans?**

We have good relationships with various reputable travel agents. Your agent will assist you with all your travel requirements, but you are free to arrange your own. You must however supply your agent with the full itinerary and your travel have to be pre-approved by your Employer.

**18. Will my airfare be reimbursed?**

* H2A visa - Yes - 50% reimbursed after 50% of your contract, the remainder upon completion of the contract
* Dismissal: if you are dismissed on a H2A visa, NO TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT
* If you quit your job for no legal reason, NO TRANSPORTATION REIMBURSEMENT
* Total reimbursement will be equivalent to lowest fair in the season your travel

**19. When will I know when I will start to work in the USA?**

Your agent will supply you with this information.

We usually only must wait on USCIS approval, as we will already have certification.

Please indicate your notice period, as you may only have a few weeks to prepare before departure.

**20. Who will meet me when I arrive there?**

Your Employer will meet you at a place of their convenience, which means you’ll need to arrange transport to the address. We strongly advise that you confirm your arrangements with your Employer prior to departure.

**21. What if I’m not happy at the place of employment?**

Inform us immediately when you feel something isn’t as you were leading to believe, or you are unhappy, so we can manage what may follow, especially if it is an unsurmountable problem.

If there is no possible solution, we will accommodate you & the Employer. We will urge you to take a month to consider your situation & decision. Remember that you are expected to settle into a different culture, but your main focus is work.

**22. What if I’ve done my best, but my Employer is still not happy with me?**

As the Employer invested a lot of time & money in you, they will not have an issue with you if you deliver on your promise.

**23. Are there jobs for women?**

Yes, but job dependent, although women do all sorts of work in the USA.

If your requirement is to be placed as a couple, you need to state it; it may limit your options.

**24. Do you have jobs for couples?**

As mentioned in question 23, but the visa is dependent of the American Consulate.

This is a risk you take, even if you already have work authorisation. We have no control over this process.

**25. What about my children?**

Again, it depends on your visa type.

* H1B – valid for 3 years, extendable for an extra 3 – yes, you can bring you children if they have visas
* Seasonal visa – no visas for spouse & children unless you can prove they have strong ties remaining in South Africa.
* In rare cases you can obtain a H4 for children when you are on an H2B, but you have to prove to the consulate that your ties to South Africa is very strong to secure such an approval (and this can only happen if Employer approves this arrangement)

**26. What if I have family living in the USA?**

Mention this in your visa application. You will need to supply the Consulate with a copy of their visas & any in-country-transfer documentation, along with your application.

**27. Will I have my own medical aid?**

You are recommended to take out insurance for non-work-related injuries/illnesses. Your Employer will have workmans’ compensation to cover work related injuries only.

**28. Any other tips / advise that’ll help me?**

* Applicants should be well prepared & able to demonstrate their strong social, economic and/or family ties to South Africa, as well as their purpose & duration of travel.
* Plane Tickets: Applicants should obtain a visa BEFORE purchasing tickets or making irrevocable travel plans.
* Visa Interviews are by appointment only. **Work Abroad Network** suggest that appointments be scheduled at least sixty (60) days before the travel date, wherever possible.
* Appointments are available Monday – Thursday.
* Wait times: You may get an indication of how long you will need to wait for an appointment and how long it will take for the visa to be processed.
* Closures: All USA Consulates in South Africa are closed on Fridays, South African holidays and USA holidays.