



## Part VII: Travel Day

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Travel day! You have found your next destination, culled through tens of potential assignments, agreed to a contract with your recruiter, and now it is time to begin your planning to spend the next 13 weeks or more in your new 'home'. Seasoned travelers have found just about every trick there is, and have made their traveling lifestyles into rewarding careers. For first-time travelers, however, this can be a nerve-racking part of your new adventures. In this article in the "Getting The Most From Your Rehab Travel Career" series, we will help you by sharing some of the best road-tested tips, tricks, and resources we could find.

Quite different from your average vacation, a travel assignment lasting 13 weeks or more introduces many new challenges for the traveler. Of course you have to pack, but can you really pack light for 13 weeks? What should you leave at home? How can you prepare in advance to carry on a normal life for an extended period of time away from wherever you call home? We will address these and many more questions so let us get started.

### Planning

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To get your assignment started on the right foot, it is important that you have a plan. Start with a list of all the major components of your assignment. Break your overall plan into categories and address them one at a time. For example, on your assignment you will need to:

- **Pack** - develop a system to pack what you need & leave room to bring some new things home
- **Travel** - arrangements to and from your assignment and in between your shifts
- **Sleep** - move in & out dates & procedures, utilities, contact info emergency numbers, etc.
- **Work** - map the location, determine travel time, your shifts, supervisor names, & contact information.
- **Eat & Play** - find the nearest supermarkets and restaurants you would like to try before you leave.
- **Stay Close to Home** - Take care of the things that you cannot ignore for 13 weeks - family, finances, pets, etc.

Let us go through each one, and we will share a few tips our travelers have picked up over the years.

### Pack

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Of course your destination is going to determine whether you will be getting by in a swimsuit and flip-flops or if you will need more weather-resilient clothing, but it is important to have a strategy for what you will pack. Make a list and follow some simple guidelines.

1. Plan what you would pack for a three-week trip. Pack items you can easily mix & match and you will be surprised how many different outfit's you are prepared with. Three weeks of clothing can easily spread into 13 weeks if you can find ways to get creative.
2. Take versatile shoes & accessories that you can wear with multiple outfits
3. Pack only travel size toiletries and leave the hangers at home. You will purchase what you need for the long haul shortly after you arrive.
4. Regardless of the expected weather, plan for cool nights and pack at least one sweater and jacket.

### Travel

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Not only will you need your travel arrangements to and from your destination, but also to and from work and any other areas you will want to visit.

1. Have a loose plan. Count on a delay or two - it is part of the traveling lifestyle.
2. Buy a map of the local area or use [Google Maps](#) or [MapQuest](#) and determine two routes to your assignment. Traffic or unexpected construction delays could throw a wrench into your ability to arrive on time.
3. Highlight local supermarkets, banks, pharmacies, barber shops or salons, and the nearest urgent care facility.
4. Consider purchasing a personal GPS device and pre-program the addresses of these important locations and the address where you will stay before you leave.
5. Get off the highway and explore the country roads.



## Settling Into Your Home Away From Home

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Everything else about your assignment can be perfect, but if the details of your housing arrangements go unchecked, even the most experienced traveler will be missing home in no time. Make sure you have documented your move-in and move-out dates and procedures. Also be sure you have saved your company's housing coordinator information in your cell will be turned on and off, and make sure you have phone numbers for after-hours support. Know when the utilities complete contact information for the property manager during and after-hours. Keep this information on your computer or mobile device and always bring a printed copy or two.

## Work

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Your first day on your new assignment can be a great experience if you spend the time to plan ahead. Find your facility on the map and get driving directions in advance. Call the local AAA office (even if you are not a member) and try to find out if there are any major construction delays along your route. Save your supervisor's name and contact information into your cell phone and bring a printed copy as well. Finally, document your shifts and pre-program your travel alarm clock with the necessary wake time.

## Eat & Play

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Working as a traveling nursing professional is a wonderful experience. One of the most rewarding aspects can be taking in all of the culinary delights of your travels. Visit the various city guide websites such as Citysearch.com or simply Google the city you are traveling to and read local reviews of area restaurants, must see landmarks, and other destinations. Plan to get out during your off time and explore local art fairs, parks, sporting, and other recreational events. There is no better way to learn about a city than to enjoy its cuisine and take in local events.

## Stay Close to Home

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The fact that you are traveling on assignment does not mean your life at home comes to a complete halt. Make sure your family has your contact information of your mobile, work, and your housing facility. If you are

traveling with a friend or co-worker, make sure your family has his or her contact information in case of an emergency. Setup online banking and schedule as many bill payments as you can in advance to avoid forgetting to pay something while on the road. This can also be an excellent time to schedule outside home repairs. Leave your trusted repairperson with a list when you leave, and everything can be taken care of when you return. Just make sure you both agree to inspect the work before the bill is paid. Are you traveling with a pet? Do not forget all of the things they will need as well. Make sure your pet has a good collar and a secure tag, and you might even consider a lost pet recovery service just in case.

Most importantly, try not to change your routine too much. Bring your favorite books with you, and if your kids are used to you reading a bedtime story for them, do it over the phone, or even better, on a webcam.

Just like life at home, your travel assignment can be easier and much more enjoyable with a well thought-out plan. Start this process in advance and talk with another experienced traveler. If you do not know any other travelers, just give us a call at 866-518-1750 and we will connect you with one of our travelers who would be happy to share his or her experiences.

## About Cirrus Medical Staffing

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Cirrus Medical Staffing is an award-winning Travel Nurse Company and provider of medical professionals to healthcare facilities across the nation. With offices in Charlotte, Atlanta and Houston, our firm specializes in placing [Nurses](#), [Nurse Practitioners](#), [Physician Assistants](#) and [Allied Health](#) professionals into travel, contract and permanent employment. Cirrus is ranked as one of the top 10 Travel Nurse Companies in the US. For our clients, our focus is providing a one-stop solution to their staffing and HR needs. Cirrus Medical Staffing is Joint Commission Certified.

Cirrus Medical Staffing is a member of the Cirrus Healthcare Group, an international healthcare group specializing in providing US healthcare companies with customized domestic and international staffing and HR solutions. The Group consists of [Cirrus Medical Staffing](#), [Cirrus Allied](#), and [Medtivia](#). Cirrus Allied is one of the nation's leading rehabilitation therapy staffing firms and specializes in placing rehabilitation therapists and assistants into travel, contract, and permanent employment. In addition, the Cirrus companies provide international Therapist and Nurse staffing augmentation through our recruitment organization, Medtivia, located in the Philippines. Medtivia is continuously ranked as one of the most outstanding international nurse and therapist recruitment organizations. The companies are all [A. Soriano Corporation](#) (ANSCOR) companies.



Cirrus Medical Staffing has earned the Joint Commission's Gold Seal of Approval™