



Let us help you prepare for your trip to **Montana!**

Weather

Montana's weather patterns and climate vary widely depending on where you are going and what time of year it is.

- **Spring**

Spring in Montana can be both a delight and a curse, all at the same time. Snow can and does fall throughout the spring in most areas of Montana, with the snowfall probability lessening as spring wears on. While June snowstorms can and have happened virtually everywhere in Montana, it is rare for most valley locations to receive snow. Instead, the mountains will often receive snow while the valleys receive rain.

- **Summer**

In western Montana, typical summer days run from the mid-70's to around 90°F. Over in eastern Montana, highs will generally be a bit warmer overall, with highs in the 80's and low 90's. During periods of heat waves, though, temperatures throughout most of Montana can soar into the low 100's. Another thing that needs to be remembered during the summer is that although daytime temperatures can be a bit warm, night temperatures usually drop, especially in the higher elevation valleys. Summer months in Montana are July through September.

- **Fall**

Fall weather in Montana usually begins sometime in late September and will run into November. During this time, weather can be highly variable with weeks of summer weather, followed by cold rain, then possibly snow. During the fall, it's normal to see eastern Montana have colder weather than western Montana since the first cold air of the season usually arrives from Canada.

- **Winter**

Winter has some extremes in Montana. It is very common for the areas of the Continental Divide to be in the deep-freeze of below zero temperatures, while over in Missoula and Kalispell the temperature can be fifty degrees warmer and without a wind chill to boot. Though, eastern Montana can be much windier than western Montana.

For those of you that haven't had the pleasure of living where it snows, here are some tips for driving in the snow:

- Keep the windows and windshield clear.
- Obtain maximum visibility by turning on low-beam headlights and windshield wipers.
- Drive slowly and stay farther behind the vehicle ahead. Slow to a crawl on ice. Slow down as you approach curves and intersections.
- Avoid fast turns.
- Avoid quick stops.
- If you begin to skid, let up on the accelerator and turn the front wheels in the direction of the skid (depending on FWD or RWD). If you are in a rental that WMS set up, typically during winter months it will be AWD.

The best way to know what to expect is study the area before you pack for the trip. Go online and look up the weather forecasts and climate history of the specific location you will be working. Pay attention to precipitation, wind, and temperature ranges. If you want some more information or advice, we are always here to help.

Driving to an Assignment

Cell phone reception in rural parts of Montana can be spotty. If you haven't traveled to a specific location before, we recommend printing out directions before you start your travel via Google Maps, MapQuest, etc. You can also pull up directions on your smart phone before you go out of reception. Most phones will still show the directions in the details section, it just will not give you turn by turn notifications.

Tips:

Three tips from a frequent WMS Montana locum provider:

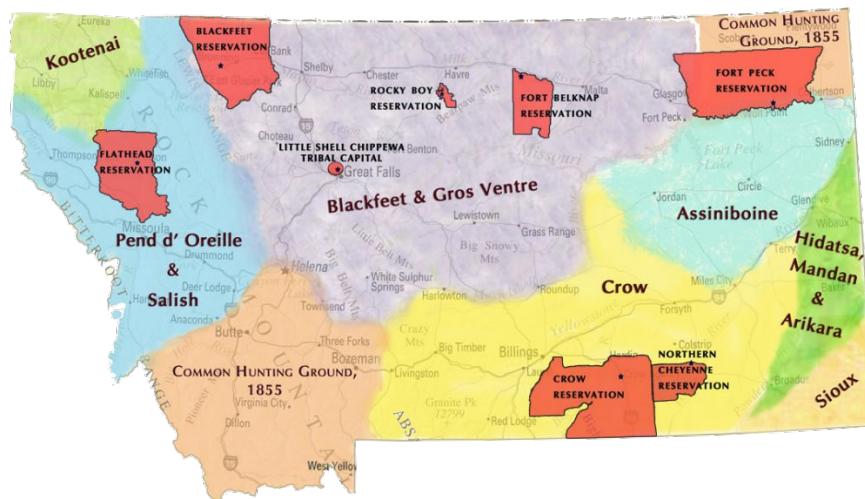
1. Keep your gas tank full as you travel, not letting it drop below half a tank, if possible. Gas up right when you get into the town for your new assignment. I was in one town a few years ago and the power lines burned down due to local forest fires. I couldn't get gas because of the lack of electricity. No one would take a credit card. Only cash would work to buy food.
2. Always have \$50-\$100 in small bills for an emergency.
3. Carry a flashlight, emergency water, emergency food, and a way to stay warm in your car (blankets, sleeping bag rated down to -40°F, etc.).

I have learned all of these by experience! – Robert

American Indian Culture

There are seven Indian reservations in Montana: Crow, Northern Cheyenne, Fort Peck, Fort Belknap, Rocky Boy's, Blackfeet, and Flathead reservation. There are 12 Montana Tribes: Crow, Northern Cheyenne, Dakota, Gros Ventre, Assiniboine, Chippewa-Cree, Blackfeet, Salish, Kootenai, Pend d'Oreille, and Little Shell Chippewa (the Little Shell Chippewa do not have a reservation).

Each reservation has a government at the tribal capital which takes care of the business for the reservation. It is very important to Wilderness Medical Staffing and the tribal communities that when you work on or around the reservations, you treat the Native culture and land with value. It may not always be an easy job, but it will be rewarding.



Sightseeing

Montana has some of the best hunting, fishing, skiing, hiking, and biking, but sometimes the best thing to do is just look around at some of the most beautiful scenery in the world. Here are some gorgeous places we recommend providers check out:

- **Glacier National Park**
- **Yellowstone National Park**
- **Whitefish, MT**- Whitefish is a resort town in the Rocky Mountains of northwest Montana. It's a gateway to the jagged peaks, lakes and glacier-carved valleys of Glacier National Park. Ski and mountain-bike trails wind downhill at Whitefish Mountain Resort, just outside town. Whitefish Lake, City Beach, and Whitefish Lake State Park have boat launches and picnic areas. Downtown, shops and eateries line Central Avenue.
- **The Lewis & Clark Interpretive Center in Great Falls, MT**
- **Fort Peck** boasts one of the largest man-made lakes in the world, as well as the Historical Fort Peck Theater!
- **Flathead Lake in Missoula, MT** - the largest natural fresh-water lake west of the Mississippi and boasts 185 miles of shoreline to explore.
- **Hungry Horse Dam** – South fork of Flathead River. At 564 feet high, Hungry Horse is one of the largest concrete arch dams in the United States, and its morning-glory spillway, with water cascading over the rim and dropping 490 feet, is the highest in the world.
- **Beartooth Pass** – Beartooth highway is one of the most incredible scenic drives.

Did you know?

- No state has as many different species of mammals as Montana. Among the approximately 100 species of mammals in Montana are elk, black bears, grizzly bears, antelope, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, moose, mountain lions, and caribou. Yes, even caribou. There's a small bit of their habitat that dips down from Canada into northern Montana.
- The first territorial capital of Montana, Bannack, is still preserved as a ghost town.
- Giant Springs, Montana is home to the largest freshwater spring in the U.S.
- Montana has the largest migratory elk herd in the nation!
- "Big Sky Country" originated with a 1962 promotion of the Montana State Highway Department. It is a reference to the unobstructed skyline in the state that seems to overwhelm the landscape at times. The name came from a book by Alfred Bertram Guthrie Jr., Big Sky, recalled by a Highway Department employee. Mr. Guthrie gave the Highway Department permission to use the name and Montana has been "Big Sky Country" ever since.
- Montana is the only state in the US with a triple divide, which allows water to flow into the Pacific Ocean, Atlantic Ocean, and the Hudson Bay.
- Montana's name comes from the Spanish word for "mountain".