



Your offer comparison brief

Should you take it?

Offer A: Colorado · 12 weeks from December 1, 2026 vs Offer B: Arizona · 16 weeks from November 15, 2026

Offer A wins by \$485/week

Offer A is the recommended offer

Offer A leads in estimated take-home, mostly because of a higher housing stipend. The weekly winner changes over the full term: Offer B has the higher contract take-home.

Which matters more to you?

- Highest weekly take-home: Offer A (\$2,113/week vs \$1,629/week)
- Highest contract total: Offer B (\$26,057 vs \$25,361)

Deciding numbers

Offer A

\$2,113/week take-home

\$25,361 contract · \$59/hr true hourly

\$144/week above the Colorado average of \$2,156/week ·
\$1,733 above over 12 weeks.

Offer B

\$1,629/week take-home

\$26,057 contract · \$45/hr true hourly

\$38/week below the Arizona average of \$2,188/week ·
\$602 below over 16 weeks.

Bill rates

- Neither offer included a bill rate. Ask each recruiter after the offer lands. If they won't share it, that's normal. Shop the same job with other recruiters and compare packages. Experienced travelers aim for 70–75% of the bill rate.

Offer A · Derived insights

- Your \$850/week housing and \$500/week meals lines are within the applicable GSA limits for 80202, and your qualifying tax home keeps them tax-free.
- Your \$1,350/week in tax-free stipends is worth about \$1,777/week in taxable wages.
- Every extra \$100/week you negotiate puts about \$76 in your pocket.
- One cancelled shift could cost you roughly \$704, assuming 12-hour shifts.
- There's \$484/week of tax-advantaged room under the federal cap your recruiter could shift pay into.

Offer A · Your ranked asks

- 1

Get the bill rate before you negotiate dollars.
- 2

Protect your \$144/week edge: negotiate guaranteed hours, not rate.

Package anatomy · reference

Offer A			Offer B		
Pay line	Basis	Amount	Pay line	Basis	Amount
Taxable base	Weekly amount	\$950/wk	Taxable base	Weekly amount	\$900/wk
Housing stipend	Weekly line	\$850/wk	Housing stipend	Weekly line	\$750/wk
M&IE stipend	Weekly line	\$500/wk	M&IE stipend	Weekly line	\$500/wk
Total	Weekly cash before deductions	\$2,300/wk	Total	Weekly cash before deductions	\$2,150/wk

Offer A deductions · weekly estimate

Federal	2026 single filer	\$72
Social Security	6.2% to wage cap	\$59
Medicare	1.45% of wages	\$14
State	Colorado estimate	\$42
Total deductions	Per week	\$187

Stipends modeled untaxed, subject to tax-home and locality rules.

Next: your negotiation battle plan →

Private call prep

Your negotiation battle plan

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Your number · Offer A

Your first move isn't dollars, it's information: get the bill rate. Once you have it, multiply it by your weekly hours and by 0.72. That's your weekly target, and every dollar you negotiate anchors to it.

Know your walk-away before the call. The state average for this role and state is \$2,156/week.

Say it out loud

"What's the bill rate on this contract?"

"I have another offer I'm seriously considering."

"The pay works. I want guaranteed hours and cancellation terms in the contract."

Your game plan

1 Get the bill rate first

Call after the offer lands, not before. If they share the rate: multiply it by your weekly hours, then by 0.72. That number is your weekly target for the rest of the call. Experienced travelers aim for 70–75% of the bill rate as their package. If they refuse: that is normal, do not push it. Shop the same job with two other recruiters and compare packages. The gap between packages reveals the rate. Meanwhile, negotiate what you can see: stipends, bonus, guaranteed hours.

2 Your package is already \$144/week above the Colorado average. Protect that value by negotiating guaranteed hours and tighter cancellation terms instead of chasing rate alone.

Ask for the guaranteed-hours number and the cancellation notice period, both written into the contract. Ask how a missed shift changes your stipends: do they shrink, or stay whole? Get the answers as contract language, not recruiter promises.

When to use your leverage

Your leverage is highest after the facility makes an offer and before you accept. Once you're submitted, you lose most of your power. Don't negotiate before you've seen the pay package.

Confirmation checklist

- ✓ **Guaranteed hours** in writing
- ✓ **Cancellation clause** both ways
- ✓ **Stipend tax treatment**
- ✓ **Every verbal promise** in the contract

Confirmation template

Send this only after you agree verbally.

Here's what we agreed. Please confirm in writing: \$2,300/week package, guaranteed hours: 36/week, bonus terms: no bonus in this offer, cancellation terms: [fill in], start/end dates: Dec 1, 2026–Feb 22, 2027.

2026 federal/FICA · Sep. 2026 pay benchmarks · FY2027 per diem **This is an estimate, not tax advice.**

Sample brief

SAMPLE