



# Key Quality of Life Issues Supporting Service Members and Families

- 1. Increase Key Support for Guard and Reserve Members and Their Families:** The high deployment levels of the Guard and Reserve necessitate a reciprocal level of support for the needs of our service members and their families. The desired outcome is that states provide important benefits perceived as 'best practices' by service members, which should be common throughout the states.
- 2. Ensure Deployment Separation Does Not Determine Child Custody Decisions:** Extended separations due to military service necessarily alter short-term custody/visitation arrangements and can have long-term consequences. The desired outcome is for states to appropriately balance the interests of service members who are absent due to military service while preserving the best interests of the child; address delegation of visitation rights; and consider expedited court dockets and the use of electronic communications systems to appropriately accommodate military demands.
- 3. Increase Access to Quality, Affordable Child Care for Military Families:** Demand for child care continues to out-pace capacity. The desired outcome is that states will integrate Department of Defense (DoD) effectiveness standards into their Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) for child care programs. Through statewide QRISs, DoD can identify providers eligible for 'approved' status (subsidized care) and partner with other providers to help them reach that status.
- 4. Minimize School Disruption for Military Children During Transition and Deployment:** The mobile military lifestyle creates challenges for children who attend eight schools in twelve years plus endure the anxiety of parental separation during deployments. The desired outcome is that states participate in an interstate compact providing a vehicle for establishing common guidelines for handling issues (class placement, records transfer, immunization requirements, course placement, graduation requirements, and extracurricular opportunities) that impact military children as they transition between schools.
- 5. Enhance Opportunities for Portable Careers for Military Spouses:** Frequent moves and cumbersome licensing and certification requirements limit career options for military spouses. The desired outcome is that states provide alternative certifications, expedite licensing procedures to support portable careers, and employ other considerations for the unique needs of working military spouses.
- 6. Provide Unemployment Compensation Eligibility for Military Spouses:** Frequent moves substantially impact the income of our service families. The desired outcome is that states recognize that, unlike the private sector, a move mandated by military orders is not 'voluntary' and, therefore, the trailing spouse should qualify for unemployment compensation if otherwise eligible.
- 7. Promote Enforcement of the Predatory Lending Regulation:** Some lending practices create a cycle of debt for service members and their families, thus impacting quality of life and military preparedness. The desired outcome is for states to fully enforce the DoD Regulation (32 CFR Part 232), which places a thirty-six percent APR limit on payday, vehicle title, and refund anticipation loans.
- 8. Improve Absentee Voting for Military Members and Their Families:** Citizens need assurance their vote will be counted. The desired outcome is that states authorize flexible processes for absentee voters in the areas recommended by the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) Office.
- 9. Comport State Laws with DoD Rules on Disposition:** Many states require disposition of remains be determined through state-specific documentation or by a priority sequence of next-of-kin. The desired outcome is for states to recognize the person authorized to direct disposition (PADD) selected by the service member on DD Form 93 (Record of Emergency Data), in accordance with federal law.
- 10. Satisfy Foreign Language Requirements:** Foreign language proficiency is critical to the United States' ability to meet its security and economic objectives. The desired outcome is for states to work with their business and education sectors to develop centers of influence to enhance language and culture education, which meet their requirements and assist with meeting national objectives.

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