



# Military Spouse Occupational Licensure Access

Accessing applications and information is often a barrier for military spouses to utilizing state laws which are designed to ease license transfer. Many states have reduced this barrier by posting easily accessible website content specific to military spouses.

## Discussion Points:

1. The Defense-State Liaison Office contracted with the University of Minnesota in 2017 to review the outcome of state policy changes made from 2012-16. Findings included inconsistent implementation by state occupational licensing boards and lack of visibility of military spouse policies on state websites.
  - Only about 40% of boards had information on websites specific to military spouse licensure and credential portability.
  - Almost half of boards, 44%, were not accessible on the first attempt. And customer service representatives were most often not aware of the legislation specific to military spouses.
2. States can support military families by ensuring that information about licensure is easily accessible.
  - Posting information on how to apply for a license, using military spouse provisions, on an easy-to-find website is key to accessibility. This is often the first place a spouse will go for information.
  - State boards can provide information to spouses by ensuring staff are knowledgeable about laws and policies that impact military spouses.
  - Applications that identify military connection can help agencies and boards implement military spouse laws and policies.



**Interviews of occupational board staff revealed that most staff directed researchers to the website to find information about transfers of licenses/credentials. However, the majority of the websites did not contain information about the processes of transfer specific to military spouses. Further, most applications for those transfers did not contain questions for spouses to indicate their military status.<sup>1</sup>**

<sup>1</sup> UoM evaluated the actions taken by six boards in each of the 50 states to indicate the level of implementation of the revised laws (Occupational Therapy, Dental Hygiene, Massage Therapy, Mental Health Counseling, Cosmetology and Real Estate were reviewed).