



Key Message

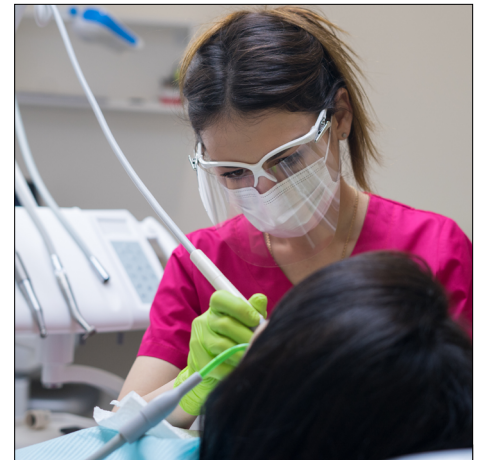
Licensure compacts create seamless licensure portability for all members of a profession, including military spouses and service members. Compacts are state-to-state agreements that establish uniform standards to multistate practice while preserving a state's practice act and initial licensure process. By adopting licensure compacts, states can improve military spouse employment and military family financial readiness.

Discussion Points

Military families are highly mobile and are reassigned to a new duty station every two to three years on average. This level of mobility creates barriers to employment and career development for military spouses in licensed professions. There are about 600,000 active-duty spouses in the military, and supporting them is vital to the recruitment and retention of military personnel.

The Defense Department believes interstate compacts are the best solution for occupational license portability and is committed to supporting military spouse employment by easing licensure burdens.

1. Most compacts allow military spouses to designate a home state for their license, ensuring that they do not have to transfer a license with each military move.
2. Licensure compacts are developed through an extensive stakeholder-informed and consensus-based process from the existing policies across states. Compacts are specific to the needs of each profession.
3. Compacts preserve state sovereignty by establishing a framework for state-to-state cooperation. States determine and enforce the scope of practice and state regulations.
4. Interstate compacts are the most powerful, durable and adaptive tools for ensuring cooperative action among the states. Unlike federally imposed mandates, interstate compacts provide a state-developed structure for collaborative and dynamic action, while building consensus among the states.
5. Compacts are a proven means of collective governance by the states that is recognized under the U.S. Constitution.
6. Occupational licensure compacts take precedence over federal licensure portability provisions. The Defense-State Liaison Office assists national organizations, state boards and member associations in educating legislators on the benefits of compacts to the military community.



According to the Office of People Analytics 2021 survey of active-duty spouses, 36% of military spouses require a state-issued occupational license to practice their chosen profession. And of the spouses who experienced a PCS move, 31% needed to acquire new licensure/certification at the new location, increasing their odds of low financial well-being: <https://download.militaryonesource.mil/12038/MOS/Presentations/2021-active-duty-spouse-overview-briefing.pdf>