



**KEY MESSAGE:** State governments have passed laws to support military spouses being able to transfer a license and transitioning service members to use their military record to obtain a license. Licensing boards may or may not have implemented these laws and many of the boards have not made the revised practices readily available to military spouses.

**PRINCIPLES:** The Department of Defense is asking state policymakers to assess the actions of licensing boards to encourage implementation of changes to laws and regulatory policy. **The desired outcome is that licensing agencies and/or boards train staff, revise forms, and post information on websites.**

As an indicator of board implementation of licensing policies modified to support military spouses, DSLO contracted with the University of Minnesota (UoM) during 2017 to review the outcome of state policy changes at the board level ([www.reachfamilies.umn.edu/research/document/13865](http://www.reachfamilies.umn.edu/research/document/13865)). University of Minnesota evaluated the actions taken by six boards in each of the 50 states to indicate the level of implementation of the revised laws by occupational boards.

- 44% of boards were not accessible on the first attempt. Customer service representatives were most often not aware of the legislation specific to military spouses.
- Only about 40% of boards had information on websites specific to military spouse license and credential portability.

### FOR POLICYMAKERS

The Department of Defense is asking state policymakers to **assess the actions of licensing boards** to encourage implementation of changes to laws and regulatory policy. Efforts to improve programs and policies could include:

- Collaborate with occupational boards to prominently display information on websites about accommodations for military spouses who are transferring their licenses and credentials due to relocations.
- Encourage occupational board executive directors to include questions that inquire about military spouse status on all licensure applications, electronic or paper, especially for applications to transfer licenses and credentials from another jurisdiction.
- Collaborate with occupational licensing boards to collect annual data regarding the number of military spouses that utilize different processes of transfer (endorsement, temporary licenses, and expedited licenses).

### FOR AGENCIES/REGULATORS and BOARDS:

- Include a question about military spouse status on all licensure applications, in order for all applications to be provided proper routing.
- Clearly identify military spouse licensing information on licensing board and/or state agency website menus. Ensure that information is searchable from the main search box.
- Help staff understand state legislation regarding portability of military spouse licensure and train staff on their ability to support military spouses during the process.
- Identify a specific staff member, with training and expertise, to serve as a point of contact for military spouses.
- Ensure professionals who work with military families are trained on the best practice guideline for military spouse licensure portability, the relevant legislation that has been enacted, and ways to support spouses that are transferring their licenses and credentials.



### FOR AGENCIES/REGULATORS and BOARDS (Continued):

- Use the phrase “military spouse” in menu language and links to ensure spouse find information relevant to their situation and providing clear links to the application process for military spouses.
- Using plain language to describe the process for accessing license recognition options.
- Creating a simple application process ensuring spouses can self-identify.
- Use supplemental forms for military spouses which define the step-by-step process.
- Provide comprehensive, frequently asked questions (FAQ) section, fact sheets and scenarios for military spouses.

### BEST PRACTICES EXAMPLES

California Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) <https://www.dca.ca.gov/licensees/index.shtml> features an easy link to information for “Military Personnel and their Spouses/Domestic Partners” on their Licensees page. This page is easily accessible from the homepage.

Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies’ Division of Professions and Occupations features a link on the homepage of their website for “Career Transition for Military and Spouse” <https://www.colorado.gov/dora>

Florida Department of Health Veterans Application for Licensure Online Response (VALOR) website, provides a tab specifically for military spouses: <http://www.flhealthsource.gov/valor>

Texas Department of Licensing and Regulation provides FAQs and supplemental forms at <https://www.tdlr.texas.gov/military.htm>

Washington State Department of Health has a military liaison who provides individualized support to veterans, members of the military, and military spouses regarding licensing requirements for health professions.

### Washington: Laws of 2017, Chapter 184 (SB5359)

<http://lawfilesexet.leg.wa.gov/biennium/2017-18/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/Senate/5359.SL.pdf#page=1>

“AN ACT Relating to requiring annual reporting on the implementation of laws to streamline licensing processes for military service members and their spouses; and amending RCW 73.04.150.3

Sec. 1. RCW 73.04.150 and 2005 c 141 s 1 are each amended to read as follows:

(1) There is hereby created a joint committee on veterans' and military affairs. The committee shall consist of:

(a) Eight members of the senate appointed by the president of the senate, four of whom shall be members of the majority party and four of whom shall be members of the minority party; and (b) eight members of the house of representatives appointed by the speaker, four of whom shall be members of the majority party and four of whom shall be members of the minority party. Members of the committee shall be appointed before the close of the 2005 legislative session, and before the close of each regular session during an odd-numbered year thereafter.

(2) Each member's term of office shall run from the close of the session in which he or she was appointed until the close of the next regular session held in an odd-numbered year. If a successor is not appointed during a session, the member's term shall continue until the member is reappointed or a successor is appointed. The term of office for a committee member who does not continue as a member of the senate or House of Representatives shall cease upon the convening of the next session of the legislature during an odd-numbered year after the member's appointment, or upon the member's resignation, whichever is earlier.



## BEST PRACTICES EXAMPLES (Continued)

### Washington: Laws of 2017, Chapter 184 (SB5359)

<http://lawfilesexternal.wa.gov/biennium/2017-18/Pdf/Bills/Session%20Laws/Senate/5359.SL.pdf#page=1>

Vacancies on the committee shall be filled by appointment in the same manner as described in subsection (1) of this section. All such vacancies shall be filled from the same political party and from the same house as the member whose seat was vacated.

(3) The committee shall establish an executive committee of four members, two of whom are members of the senate and two of whom are members of the House of Representatives. The executive committee shall appoint one co-chair from the two executive committee members who are senators and one co-chair from the two executive committee members who are representatives. The two co-chairs shall be from different political parties and their terms of office shall run from the close of the session in which they are appointed until the close of the next regular session in an odd-numbered year. The executive committee is responsible for performing all general administrative and personnel duties assigned to it in the rules and procedures adopted by the joint committee, as well as other duties delegated to it by the joint committee.

(4) The joint committee on veterans' and military affairs has the following powers and duties:

(a) To study veterans' issues, active military forces issues, and national guard and reserve component issues, and make recommendations to the legislature; and

(b) To study structure and administration of the department of veterans affairs and the military department, and make recommendations to the legislature.

(5) The joint committee shall adopt rules and procedures for its orderly operation. The joint committee may create subcommittees to perform duties under this section.

(6) The regulating authorities for the department of licensing and the department of health shall file reports to the legislature biennially and the Washington state military transition council annually beginning January 1, 2018, and appear annually before the joint committee on veterans' and military affairs, to provide updates on progress in their efforts to implement the requirements of chapter 3818.340 RCW, chapter 32, Laws of 2011, and chapter 351, Laws of 2011. By January 1, 2018, the department of labor and industries and the professional educator standards board must each submit a report to the legislature, including an assessment on how its licensing, certification, and apprenticeship programs apply training and experience acquired by military members and their spouses outside of Washington, and recommendations about whether such programs should be included in the reporting schedule within this subsection."

### Connecticut: Public Act No. 14-131 of 2014 (HB5299)

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2014/ACT/PA/2014PA-00131-R00HB-05299-PA.htm>

"Sec. 14. (NEW) (Effective from passage) (a) For the purposes of this section, "licensing authority" means the Department of Consumer Protection, the Department of Emergency Services and Public Protection, the Labor Department, the Department of Motor Vehicles, the Department of Public Health, the Board of Regents for Higher Education, the Office of Higher Education, the Board of Trustees of The University of Connecticut or the Police Officer Standards and Training Council; "service member" means a member of the armed forces or the National Guard or a veteran; "armed forces" has the same meaning as set forth in section 27-103 of the general statutes; and "veteran" means any person who was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable from active service in the armed forces.

(b) Each licensing authority shall ask each applicant for a license, a certificate, a registration or an educational credit whether such applicant is a service member.



### BEST PRACTICES EXAMPLES (Continued)

#### Connecticut: Public Act No. 14-131 of 2014 (HB5299)

<https://www.cga.ct.gov/2014/ACT/PA/2014PA-00131-R00HB-05299-PA.htm>

(c) On or before January 1, 2015, and annually thereafter, each licensing authority shall submit a report to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to military and veterans' affairs, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, and the Labor Department that shall include the following: (1) The number of service members who applied for a military training evaluation pursuant to section 4 of this act, a license, a certificate, a registration or an educational credit; (2) the number of service members whose application for a license, a certificate, a registration or an educational credit was approved; (3) the number of service members whose application for a license, a certificate, a registration or an educational credit was denied, and data on the reasons for any such denial; (4) the licensing authority's processing time for applications submitted by service members and the average processing time for all applications; (5) information on the licensing authority's efforts to inform and assist service members in accessing programs that provide the education and training necessary for meeting the requirements for licensure, certification, registration or educational credit; (6) information on whether existing law effectively addresses the challenges that service members face when applying for an occupational or professional license, a certificate, a registration or an educational credit upon discharge from military service or relocating to the state; and (7) recommendations on improving the licensing authority's ability to meet the occupational needs of service members, including, but not limited to, the issuance of temporary or provisional licenses, certificates or registrations. The Labor Department shall also include in its report the number of service members who were issued or denied a recommendation for review or a deduction from the hours of apprenticeship training pursuant to section 4 of this act.

(d) On or before January 1, 2016, each licensing authority shall, within existing budgetary resources, publish on its Internet web site a link to the Department of Veterans' Affairs informational Internet web site established pursuant to section 27-100f of the general statutes and the Internet web site maintained by the executive branch listing resources and opportunities available to veterans.

(e) On or before January 1, 2016, the Labor Department shall post the reports submitted pursuant to subsection (c) of this section on its Internet web site.

Sec. 15. (Effective from passage) Not later than July 1, 2015, the Labor Commissioner, after consultation with the Commissioner of Veterans' Affairs, the Adjutant General, the Executive Director of the Office of Military Affairs, the Commissioner of Public Health and the Commissioner of Consumer Protection, shall issue a report, in accordance with the provisions of section 11-4a of the general statutes, to the joint standing committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to military and veterans' affairs. Such report shall include recommendations for amending statutes and regulations and revising policies and procedures to ensure that relevant military education, skills and training are given appropriate recognition in the occupational certification and licensing process. Each agency listed in this section shall issue formal written recommendations to the Labor Commissioner relevant to the professional or occupational licenses within such agency's purview. Such formal written recommendations shall be in a form and manner prescribed by the Labor Commissioner."