



# ENHANCING POLICIES FOR MILITARY SPOUSE LICENSE PORTABILITY

States can continue to improve licensing to eliminate barriers, which impede military spouses from becoming employed following a military move.

**KEY MESSAGE:** States have established various policies to improve license portability for military spouses; however, many of these revised policies do too little to address career turmoil experienced by military spouses. Interstate compacts for occupations and a new round of state licensure policies seek to alleviate the core impediments for military spouses.



### DISCUSSION POINTS:

- From 2011 – 2016, States enacted legislation to modify licensing for military spouses; however, many of these new laws did not reduce the burden of relicensing experienced by military spouses. Many provisions included “substantial equivalency” evaluations that require military spouses to continue to submit transcripts, test scores and practicum hours along with previous licenses and work experience.
- States are continuing to make improvements to achieve “reciprocity,” using a variety of approaches, which can be considered on a continuum. The graphic below illustrates the relative degree of reciprocity, from full reciprocity through compacts in dark green, to no portability in red:

No portability	Weak language and disqualifying provisions	Endorsement, temporary license and expedited applications	Fully implement existing military spouse laws	Expedited: endorsement or temporary license with affidavit, and endorsement researched by State (TX and PA)	Expedited: exemption from State requirements (AZ, FL, and UT)	Occupational interstate compacts
----------------	--	---	---	---	---	----------------------------------

As baseline: license in 30 days without submitting verifying documents

- The Department encourages States to approve compacts, but also understands that compacts take time to achieve coverage for each occupation.
- Providing alternatives through State-specific laws is an important option that can reduce the burden associated with relicensing if the spouse is not covered by a compact, or when covered by a compact and coming from a non-compact State. State-specific options can include:
  - o Exempting the military spouse from State-specific requirements (as in Arizona, Florida and Utah).
  - o Providing a temporary or permanent license based on an application and an affidavit that attests that the application is true and that the required verifying documents would be submitted by a specific date.
  - o The board researches and adjudicates a licensing request based simply on the application (as in Texas and Pennsylvania)
- **The base-line desired outcome is to provide the military spouse with a license (temporary or permanent) within 30 days of application, based on an application and affidavit stating that verifying documents will be submitted by a specific date.**

Sixty-eight percent of married Service members reported their spouse’s ability to maintain a career impacts their decision to remain in the military by a large or moderate extent.

The annual percent of the military spouse population that moves across state lines is 14.5 percent – compared to 1.1 percent for civilian spouses.

As much as 34 percent of military spouses in the labor force are required to be fully licensed. Nineteen percent of employed spouses experience challenges maintaining their licenses.