



Military Spouse Teacher Certification

Teacher certification is designed to credential an educator for an extended period. But policies can make transfers between states hard for military spouses, who must recredential every two to three years as they move.

Discussion Points:

1. States generally have provisional and standard certifications, with endorsements for specific subjects and specialties.
 - Provisional licenses are typically valid for six months to a year and give a certified teacher from another state the chance to find employment while working toward a standard certificate. Conditions often include submitting school transcripts, test scores and a background check.
 - Many states require additional testing and coursework, which can be time-consuming and costly, and can affect job opportunities.
2. States can help military spouses by:
 - Providing flexibility in terms of what is needed to obtain a standard license in their new state, to include treating licenses obtained through alternative licensure in another state as a license obtained through alternative licensure in the new state.
 - Establishing a special temporary license for military spouse teachers that lasts the duration of their military assignment (about three years). These are based on acceptance of an existing standard license and the prerequisite requirements fulfilled to have obtained one.
 - Expediting application and adjudication processes by flagging applications from military spouses and establishing deadlines for issuance. States may also include time-saving options such as:
 - Accepting photocopies of state certificates, test scores and student copies of official transcripts
 - Releasing the provisional license based on a document stating that the application is true and that the verifying materials will be submitted by a specific date



Teacher certification portability's impact on military families:

- Nearly 70% of married service members say their spouse's ability to maintain a career has a moderate-to-large impact on their decision to stay in the military.¹
- Nearly 90% of military spouses say they want or need to work.²
- The annual percentage of military spouses moving across state lines is 14.5%, compared to 1.1% for civilians.³
- The number one occupation for military spouses is preK-12 teacher (5.2% of military spouses in the workforce).⁴

¹ 2017 Status of Forces Survey of Active Duty Members, Tabulation of Responses, Office of People Analytics

² 2017 Survey of Active Duty (Regular) Spouses, Tabulations of Responses; Office of People Analytics Report No. 2018-006, May 2018) Q. 39

³ These data were compiled using pooled data from the 2007-2011 ASEC supplement to the CPS.

⁴ Ibid.