



Key Message

Accessing applications for military spouses is often a barrier to making use of the state laws that are designed to ease license transfer. States can reduce obstacles spouses experience when applying under state laws 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 a lack of visibility of military spouse policies on state websites.
 - Only about 40% of the boards had information on websites specific to military spouse licensure and credential portability.
 - Almost half of the 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 about how to apply for a license and 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 that staff is knowledgeable about the laws and policies that impact military spouses.
 - Applications that identify military connections 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 transfer process specific to military spouses. Further, most applications for those transfers did not include a way for spouses to indicate their military status.¹

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