



OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING: ASSESSING STATE POLICY AND PRACTICE


VETERANS & MILITARY SPOUSES POPULATION OVERVIEW

Special concerns with veterans and military spouses in occupational licensing.



DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION: VETERANS

- 18.5 million veterans = 7.4% of US population
- 1/3 served in first Gulf War era or post-9/11
- 67% are age 55 or older – older than nonveterans
- Nearly all age 25+ completed high school
- More than 1/3 at least some college or associate's
- Post-9/11 veteran unemployment: 4.5%
- Veteran unemployment varies widely by state
- Among employed veterans:
 - 22% work for government
 - Management, transportation, sales common for men
 - Office & admin support, healthcare, and management common for women



DEMOGRAPHIC
INFORMATION:
MILITARY
SPOUSES

- 478,963 people married to active duty personnel
- Over 50% are 30 or younger
- 66% are in the labor force
 - 41% in the civilian labor force
 - 13% in the armed services
 - 12% unemployed
- 84% have completed some college or associate's
- 25% have completed bachelor's
- Among employed military spouses:
 - 1/3 are underemployed
 - 38% earn less than their civilian counterparts
 - Education and healthcare are common occupations

HOW CAN OCCUPATIONAL LICENSING IMPACT VETERANS & MILITARY SPOUSES?

- **Veterans: skills, training, and experience aren't always recognized**
 - Thousands receive training each year for military occupations that are similar to common, in-demand civilian occupations
 - 37% of employed veterans report underemployment, despite training
- **Military spouses: difficult to maintain employment with frequent moves**
 - Up to 35% are employed in licensed occupations
 - 22% of military spouses say inability to transfer licenses is their biggest challenge for employment when they have to move

POLICY BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT

- **Veterans**
 - Cost
 - Applicability of training
 - Less than honorable discharge
- **Military spouses**
 - Cost
 - Interstate variation
 - Vague language

POLICY OPTIONS

- **Veterans:**
 - Recognition of military education, training, experience
 - Alternative paths to licensure in certain occupations
 - Licensure by exam
 - Expedited application review
 - Reduction of limitations based on discharge status
- **Military spouses:**
 - Licensure by endorsement
 - Expansion of temporary licensure
 - Fee waivers
 - Expedited application review
 - Clarification of existing policies and procedures

STATE EXAMPLES

- **Licensure by exam:** The Wisconsin Law Enforcement Accelerated Development Program allows veterans separated from the military within the last three years and with at least one year of experience as a military police officer to take a certification exam with no additional civilian training.
- **Expedited application review:** Maryland law requires each health occupation board to issue a license to a qualified veteran within 15 days of receiving the application.
- **Expansion of temporary licensure:** Montana's licensing boards are authorized to approve an application for an endorsement or temporary license based on an affidavit stating that the information is accurate and the necessary documentation is forthcoming.

CONCLUSION

- Governors and state legislatures have taken a lot of action in recent years
- Strong bipartisan support for most actions
- There is still more to be done to alleviate barriers to licensure and improve employment opportunities for veterans and military spouses
- Lessons learned can improve regulations and processes for other populations

RESOURCES AND CONTACT INFO

Read our report:

http://www.ncsl.org/Portals/1/Documents/Labor/Licensing/vetsFamilies_v03_web.pdf

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