



## WEST VIRGINIA

### Summary of Legislation

Enacted in 2014, House Bill 4151 requires occupational boards in West Virginia to issue either a full license or a six-month temporary license within 30 days of a military spouse submitting an application. The bill also requires boards to waive the application fee for military spouses' temporary licenses if they paid another licensing fee within the previous six months. Despite this legislation, several boards do not have unique procedures for processing military spouse applications.

Location of Bill:

*Bill 4151* - [http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill\\_Status/bills\\_text.cfm?billdoc=hb4151%20intr.htm&yr=2014&sess type=RS&i=4151](http://www.legis.state.wv.us/Bill_Status/bills_text.cfm?billdoc=hb4151%20intr.htm&yr=2014&sess type=RS&i=4151)

#### Legislation Meets Best Practices Guidelines for Military Spouse Licensure Portability by:

|   |                                    |
|---|------------------------------------|
| <input type="radio"/>   | Licensure by endorsement           |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/>  | Temporary or provisional licensing |
| <input checked="" type="radio"/>  | Expedited application process      |
| <input type="radio"/> Not addressed in legislation<br><input checked="" type="radio"/> Addressed in legislation |                                    |

### Results from Data Collection

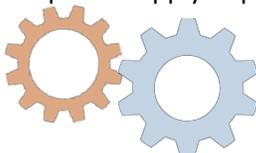
General Findings

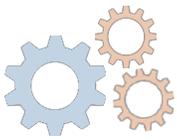
- All boards, except the Board of Dentistry, have procedures for licensure by endorsement.
- Only the boards of Cosmetology, Mental Health Counseling, and Occupational Therapy issue temporary licenses for spouses completing state-specific requirements.
- The Boards of Dentistry and Massage Therapy expedite military spouse licenses, while the Boards of Cosmetology, Mental Health Counseling, and Occupational Therapy, and the Real Estate Commission do not.
- Spouses applying for dental hygienist licenses have their application fee waived. No other boards reported waiving application fees.
- The Board of Mental Health Counseling transferred one military spouse license during the past year. No information was available from any other board about the number of military spouses who transferred their licenses.

Findings Specific to Each Board

*Cosmetology*

- There are no unique application procedures for military spouses.
- Licensure by endorsement requires a license from another state with similar requirements (e.g., 1,800 hours training experience, board-approved degree) and successful completion of the West Virginia State Law Exam.
- Spouses can apply for a temporary work permit to practice under a licensed supervisor until they complete state-specific exams. The permit is valid until the month after the next exam date and can be renewed once.
- The process to transfer a cosmetology license can be completed at the time of application if spouses apply in-person or take about one week if spouses apply by mail.





## Military Spouse Licensure Portability Examination State Report

### Results from Data Collection (continued)

#### *Dental Hygiene*

- Spouses of Active Duty Service members have their application fee waived and their application prioritized in order to expedite processing.
- Licensure by endorsement is not available, and all spouses must complete licensing exams.
- Temporary licenses are for volunteers only, not for spouses transferring a license.
- The process to transfer a dental hygienist license takes approximately one week from the time of application.

#### *Massage Therapy*

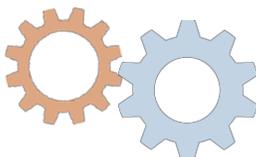
- Applications of military spouses are expedited by processing them first.
- For licensure by endorsement, spouses do not have to take an exam if their state of licensure has similar requirements (e.g., certified by the National Certification Board for Therapeutic Massage & Bodywork, degree from an approved massage school, 500 hours of education).
- The process to transfer a massage therapy license takes five to seven days following application.

#### *Mental Health Counseling*

- For licensure by endorsement, spouses must submit a licensure packet, graduate transcripts, license verification, two professional recommendations from licensed mental health workers, and proof of successful completion of either the National Counselor Examination (NCE) or the National Clinical Mental Health Counseling Examination (NCMHCE). Some of these requirements may be waived if the spouse has actively practiced five of the past seven years.
- Spouses of Active Duty Service members can obtain a six-month, non-renewable temporary license to practice under a licensed supervisor while they are completing requirements.
- The process to transfer a license after application can take anywhere from two weeks to two months depending upon when the next board meeting is scheduled to review applications.
- West Virginia's Board of Counseling has received one military spouse application during the past year; however, the spouse qualified for licensure by endorsement and did not need to utilize any unique processes in the legislation related to military spouse license transfers.

#### *Occupational Therapy*

- Military spouses' applications are processed the same as any other applicant.
- Requirements for licensure by endorsement include licensure in a state with similar requirements and successful completion of the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy (NBCOT) exam.
- A 30-day, non-renewable temporary license can be utilized if spouses are waiting for documentation to process their application, but this is rarely necessary.
- The process to transfer an occupational therapy license takes two to three days following the completion of an application.





# Military Spouse Licensure Portability Examination State Report

## Results from Data Collection (continued)

### *Real Estate Commission*

- The board does not currently have any unique procedures for military spouse applications.
- Spouses can transfer a license by endorsement until February 2018, at which time the board will no longer offer licensure by endorsement and spouses will need to pass exams for licensure.
- The process to transfer a license takes approximately two to three weeks after application, including the time needed to schedule and take the jurisprudence exam.

## Recommendations

### Future efforts could:

- Educate occupational board staff regarding temporary licenses and fee waivers required by the legislation and ensure that those procedures are in place for all boards.
- Collaborate with each occupational board to ensure information about the unique procedures for military spouse licensure is provided on their website.

### **For additional information, please contact:**

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Developed in collaboration with the Department of Defense's Office of Family Policy, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture under The University of Minnesota Award No. 2016-48788-25895.

