

# Opportunities Exist to Further Ease Burdens on Military-Trained Applicants and Military Spouses in Obtaining Occupational Licensure

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A presentation to the  
Joint Legislative Program Evaluation Oversight Committee

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# Our Charge

Session Law 2019-201 directed PED, in consultation with DMVA, to study the extent to which G.S. 93B-15.1 (military licensure provisions) have improved the ability of military-trained applicants and military spouses to become licensed by occupational licensing boards in the State

Team included Jenny Hausman and Sidney Thomas

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# SL 2019-201 Directed PED to Consider Six Subtopics

- Expanding criteria to allow for more licensures
- Publishing licensure criteria for military spouses
- Including military/military spouse status
- Enhancing continuing education programs
- Providing training for DMVA employee(s)
- Reporting annually on the number of applicants licensed and denied

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# Overview: Three Findings

1. Occupational licensing boards are not currently required to implement an expedited application process for military spouses
2. No requirement exists for boards to make veterans and military spouses aware of the opportunities offered by GS 93B-15.1
3. Stakeholders in the military community feel the military licensure provisions are important and relevant licensure data should be tracked



# Overview: Three Recommendations

The General Assembly should require boards to

1. Offer an expedited application process for licensing military spouses
2. Publicize and promote military licensure provisions to increase awareness
3. Annually report (i) number of military-trained applicants and military spouses who were licensed and (ii) number who were denied



# Background



Photo Courtesy of US Air Force



# North Carolina Ranks 7<sup>th</sup> Among All States in Number of Veterans

Rank	State	Total Veterans
1	California	1,713,000
2	Texas	1,582,000
3	Florida	1,405,000
4	Pennsylvania	787,000
5	Ohio	764,000
6	New York	752,000
<b>7</b>	<b>North Carolina</b>	<b>707,000</b>
8	Virginia	699,000
9	Georgia	697,000
10	Michigan	577,000

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## Military Licensure Provisions Are Applicable to Occupational Licensing Boards as Defined in G.S. 93B-1

“Occupational licensing board” refers to any board, committee, commission, or other agency in North Carolina which is established for the primary purpose of regulating the entry of persons into, and the conduct of persons within, a particular profession or occupation, and which is authorized to issue licenses”

Does not include state agencies (staffed by full-time state employees) that as a part of their regular functions may issue licenses

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# N.C. Gen. Stat. § 93B-15.1

## Statutory Exceptions

- For purposes of the military licensure provisions, the State Board of Education is considered an occupational licensing board
- The military licensure provisions do not apply to
  - North Carolina Medical Board
  - State Bar

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# Standards for Issuance - Military Training

Military-trained applicant must satisfy the following:

1. Awarded a military occupational specialty and:
  - completed a military program of training
  - completed testing or has equivalent training and experience
  - performed in the occupational specialty
2. Actively practiced for at least two of the five years preceding application
3. Has not committed any discreditable act

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# Alternate Standards for Issuance- Military Training

- Presents official, notarized documentation such as a United States Department of Defense Form 214 attesting to applicant's military occupational specialty certification and experience; and
- Passes a proficiency examination in lieu of satisfying the conditions set forth in law

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# Standards for Issuance - Military Spouses

Allows a military spouse to lawfully practice occupation by satisfying the following conditions:

1. Holds a current license
2. Can demonstrate competency
3. Has not committed any discreditable act
4. Is in good standing

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# Other Provisions

- Boards shall not charge a military-trained applicant or spouse an initial application fee for license
- All relevant experience shall be credited
- Boards may issue a temporary practice permit
- Residency is not required
- Boards may adopt rules necessary to implement the military licensure provisions
- Boards shall notify military-trained applicants within 30 days if applicant's military experience does not satisfy requirements

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# Veterans

- In a recent survey of veterans, 37% considered themselves to be underemployed
- US Department of Labor estimates that the military trains servicemembers in skills applicable to at least 962 civilian occupations

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# Military Spouses

- There are more than 630,000 active duty military spouses in the United States; about 86,000 live in North Carolina
- Most military families move every two to three years, and some move even more frequently
- 35% work in a licensed occupation, 30% are unemployed, and 56% are underemployed

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# Federal Efforts to Assist Military Spouses

The 2018 National Defense Authorization Act allows each service branch to reimburse military spouses up to \$500 for re-licensure and re-certification costs resulting from a move to another state

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# Findings



# Finding 1

Although North Carolina has implemented two out of three best practices for licensure of military spouses, occupational licensing boards are not currently required to implement an expedited application process

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# Three Recommended Best Practices

1. Licensure by endorsement – more streamlined than licensure by examination
2. Temporary or provisional licensing – allows spouse to work while fulfilling requirements
3. Expedited application process – prioritizes spouse applications

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# What Do Other States Do?

- 24 states implement all three best practices
- 9 other states (including North Carolina) offer licensure by endorsement and temporary or provisional licensure but no expedited application process for military spouses

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# Alignment with Military-Trained Applicants

- In total, 31 other states have implemented an expedited application process
- Requiring boards to issue licenses to military spouse applicants within 30 days would align the requirements for military spouses with those already in place for military-trained applicants

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## Finding 2

No requirement exists for occupational licensing boards to make veterans and military spouses aware of the opportunities offered by G.S. 93B-15.1, which among other provisions directs the waiver of initial application fees

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# Use of the Provisions by Military Applicants and Military Spouses Has Increased

Study	Boards Reporting Military/Spouse Applicants	Total Military-Trained Applicants	Total Military Spouse Applicants
2014 LRC	3 of 63 (5%)	29	6
2020 PED	20 of 51 (39%)	399	537

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# Boards That Have Issued the Most Licenses to Military-Trained Applicants Since 2013

Occupational Licensing Board	Number of Military-Trained Applicants
State Board of Dental Examiners	209
Social Work Certification and Licensure Board	73
Board of Pharmacy	37
Board of Plumbing, Heating, and Fire Sprinkler Contractors	24
Psychology Board	10

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# Boards That Have Issued the Most Licenses to Military Spouse Applicants Since 2013

Occupational Licensing Board	Number of Military Spouse Applicants
Board of Nursing	104
Board of Examiners for Speech-Language Pathologists & Audiologists	102
Board of Pharmacy	95
Social Work Certification and Licensure Board	67
State Board of Dental Examiners	64

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# No Requirement Exists for Boards to Publicize Military Licensure Provisions on Websites

- Majority of boards reference military licensure provisions on their websites
- PED found links or references on 29 of 53 websites (55%) for applicable occupational licensing boards

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## Finding 3

Stakeholders in the military community feel the military licensure provisions are important and data should be tracked

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# Military Support Organizations Interviewed

- NC for Military Employment (NC4ME)
- NC National Guard
- NC Works
- Hiring Our Heroes
- American Legion

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# Sound Management Practices

Data collection and measurement are sound management practices

By tracking results, boards and the General Assembly can determine if statutory provisions are being utilized

Further, the General Assembly can determine the effectiveness of the statute by examining the reasons for the denials

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# Boards Are Not Required to Report Military Licensure Data

Currently, boards are not required to report on the number of persons, either veterans or military spouses, who apply for licensure using military licensure provisions and the number who are denied

Occupational licensing boards are already required by G.S. 93B-2 to report annually on 15 non-military items

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# State Board of Education Example

The State Board of Education issues teacher licenses to military-trained applicants and to military spouses but does not currently collect data on the number of teacher licenses issued for these categories

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# Recommendations



# Recommendation 1

The General Assembly should require occupational licensing boards to offer an expedited application process for licensing military spouses by December 1, 2020

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## Recommendation 2

- The General Assembly should require occupational licensing boards to publicize and promote N.C. Gen. Stat. § 93B-15.1 in order to increase awareness by December 1, 2020
- At a minimum, each board should be required to publish the military licensure provisions on its website

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## Recommendation 3

The General Assembly should require occupational licensing boards to annually report

(i) number of military-trained applicants and military spouses who were licensed pursuant to the military licensure provisions and

(ii) number who were denied licensure

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## Recommendation 3 (Cont'd.)

- Additional reporting requirements should be added to G.S. 93B-2
- First report with Fiscal Year 2019–20 data should be submitted to the Joint Legislative Administrative Procedure Oversight Committee by October 31, 2021

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# Summary: Findings

1. Occupational licensing boards are not currently required to implement an expedited application process for military spouses
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# Summary: Recommendations

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Report available online at  
[www.ncleg.net/PED/Reports/reports.html](http://www.ncleg.net/PED/Reports/reports.html)

