



Department of Defense Key Issues Supporting Service Members and Families 2021

Enhanced Military Spouse Licensure Portability: States can continue to improve licensing to eliminate barriers, which impede military spouses from becoming employed following a military move.

Military Spouse Teacher Certification: Since military families tend to move frequently, states can support spouses who are K-12 teachers by removing burdensome certification requirements that prevent them from finding teaching positions in their new state. Additionally, states can assist military spouses by accepting their credentials obtained through alternative training programs.

Licensing Compacts: States can support mobile Service members and their spouses by establishing licensure compacts, which allow people licensed in an occupation in one state to practice in other states.

Licensure Evaluation: State policymakers are encouraged to evaluate progress by licensing boards in making changes to licensing requirements that will benefit military spouses and veterans. Boards should fully implement license provisions and make them accessible through forms, websites and staff training.

Virtual School Enrollment: When children move midterm as a result of their parents' military Service, they are often disadvantaged due to missed deadlines for course completion or registration. A child could anticipate a midterm move and alleviate disruptions by registering for virtual classes in the receiving state for the transition semester.

Advance Enrollment: Military families being transferred on official orders are not allowed to register their children for school until they are physically located in the school district, putting them at a disadvantage.

Purple Star School Program: Establishes criteria for schools to follow to assist military children and their parents during school transitions. Once the schools meet the requirements, they are awarded Purple Star status and must reapply after 2 years to keep their designation.

In-State Tuition Continuity: In many states, a child or spouse of an active duty Service member can lose in-state tuition for higher education if the military sponsor is assigned out of state before their dependent starts classes.

Child Abuse Identification and Reporting: States can help prevent child abuse by requiring local jurisdictions to report child abuse in military families to Service officials, improving their ability to support military children and their families.

"Ask the Question" Campaign: Encourages states to engage all helping agencies (including healthcare, social services, education, and others) to ask the question, "Have you or a family member ever served in the military?" and have the question on all intake forms. Provide information and assistance to providers regarding what to do when the answer is "Yes."