



## **How Alaska is Meeting the Department of Defense's *Three Best Practice Guidelines for Military Spouse Licensure***

### **Licensure by Endorsement or Credentials**

Licensure by endorsement refers to occupational boards not requiring an examination for military spouses to transfer their licenses. Spouses are eligible for licensure by endorsement if they currently possess a license from a previous jurisdiction with similar requirements as the board's requirements in the current jurisdiction.

### **Alaska's Action:**

*Except as noted below, all 100+ licenses issued by this division offer a version of licensure by endorsement, credentials, or reciprocity.* These terms all recognize the existing licensure of an individual in another jurisdiction in lieu of requiring a national examination to complete licensure. They are each slightly different and include minimal requirements for receiving an Alaska license, including:

- verification of substantially similar or equal requirements in the other jurisdiction
- successful passage of any statutorily-required Alaska-specific exam requirements or criminal history background check
- completion of an application for licensure
- proof of bonding if required, and
- payment of fees

Occupations *without* licensure by endorsement or similar either do not have an exam requirement (therefore, no meaningful difference between applicant types) or they are professions that require extensive knowledge of Alaska's unique terrain:

- Construction Contractor
- Home Inspector
- Registered or Assistant Guide-Outfitter (requires Alaska experience and examination)
- Big Game Transporter
- Marine Pilot (recognizes federal credentials; requires Alaska experience and examination)
- Pawnbroker
- Athletic Trainer
- Collection Agency
- Professional Guardian or Conservator
- Concert Promoter
- Hearing Aid Dealer

**Temporary Licensure** Guidelines on temporary or provisional licensure are to grant spouses permission to practice in the current jurisdiction while they submit supplemental application materials and/or meet additional requirements.

**Alaska's Action:**

The temporary license under AS 08.01.063 requires the spouse applicant to hold a license in another state, and it provides up to 360 days coverage so the spouse can practice while completing any state-specific requirements, if any. Given the many existing opportunities for spouses to attain full licensure by endorsement, this is the fastest method of obtaining licensure.

**Expedited Application** Expedited application processes allow spouses' applications to be prioritized so that they may begin employment as soon as possible after they submit their completed applications.

**Alaska's Action:**

Any license application moves to the front of the line when its first page is the military spouse Request for Expedited Application. It's that simple.

*(Supporting our Military Families: Best Practices for Streamlining Occupational Licensing Across State Lines, Department of Defense, 2012)*

## Online Professional Licensing Resources for Military Licensure

In 2011, the division launched its Military Licensing web page (<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/cbpl/ProfessionalLicensing/MilitaryLicensing.aspx>) to help prospective applicants learn more about the process, including introducing three forms to help military applicants identify and utilize the benefits that best apply to their situation:

Request for Expedited Application Process for Spouses of Active-Duty Military  
<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/5/pub/mil4580.pdf>

Request for Temporary Professional Licensure for Military Personnel  
<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/5/pub/mil4633.pdf>

Request for Exemption from Professional Licensing Requirements for Military Personnel  
<https://www.commerce.alaska.gov/web/Portals/5/pub/mil4581.pdf>

## 2017 Professional Licensing of Military Applicants—By the Numbers

- **Total number of ALL new licenses issued across all programs: 13,396**
- **Military spouse licensing applications received: (< 35 across all programs)**
  - Fewer than five applications: Massage Therapy, Pharmacy, Psychology, Social Work; Barbers and Hairdressers
  - Approx. ten applications: Professional Counseling

- **Active duty military licensing applications received: (< 20 across all programs)**  
Fewer than five applications: Pharmacy; Social Work; Optometry; Architecture, Engineering, and Land Surveying
- **Applications received requesting review of military training, education, or experience: (< 15 across all programs)**  
Fewer than five applications: Architecture, Engineering, and Land Surveying; Professional Counseling; Medical

## **Challenges Facing Military Licensure in Alaska**

### **Lack of a military “crosswalk”**

Licensing boards and staff have no access to a “crosswalk” of military education and training with license experience. The Department of Defense committed to provide this resource as part of the 2011 legislative testimony on HB 28—and it still has not materialized. A group of stakeholders working on a national clearinghouse for credentialing information (Credential Engine) and crosswalks for each military branch (DoD contractor SOLID) presented this September at an international regulatory conference. By their own admission, they are moving at a glacial pace in providing licensing boards with the military information they need to determine equivalency. Without this type of tool, there is no foundation to adopt regulations to determine equivalency.

Existing Alaska Statutes 08.01.063 and 08.01.064 pertain to all professional licensing programs regulated under Title 08. In the meantime, a few boards have adopted regulations specifically addressing certain military training and education or spouse licensure: Medical, Optometry, Marine Pilotage, Big Game Commercial Services, Nursing, and Physical Therapy

### **Problems with Blanket Reciprocity**

There is concern about creating a separate standard for spouse licensure beyond AS 08.01.063 and current laws authorizing licensure by credentials. Setting a lower standard of education and experience for licensees because they are married to military service members will meet with significant opposition from licensing boards, could deceive the public, and may even be found to be in violation of state and federal equal protection laws.

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