

Report to the Washington State Legislature

Military and Military- Affiliated Licensure Streamlining

January 2024

RCW 73.04.150(6)

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Executive Summary

Introduction

[RCW 73.04.150](#) requires the Department of Health (department) to submit a biennial report to the legislature and an annual report to the Washington State Military Transition Council (WSMTC) to provide updates on progress implementing [chapter 18.340 RCW](#), [ESSB 5969 \(2011\)](#), and [ESSB 5307 \(2011\)](#). It also requires the department to appear annually before the Joint Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs ([JCVMA](#)) to provide updates. [2SHB 1009 \(2023\)](#) amended the reporting requirement to remove the annual report to the WSMTC, change the biennial report to the legislature to annual (while retaining the annual appearance before the JCVMA), and add a requirement to update on progress implementing 2SHB 1009.¹

Summary of Implementation

ESSB 5969 and ESSB 5307 have been fully implemented. These bills required the department to:

- Accept military education, training, and experience as meeting licensure requirements unless determined not substantially equivalent and
- Expedite licensing processes for military spouses.

The department is in the process of implementing 2SHB 1009. This bill requires each disciplining authority to:

- Issue health profession temporary licenses within 30 days to military spouse applicants meeting minimum equivalency requirements for up to 180 days while they complete Washington-specific application requirements. We are preparing to initiate rulemaking where needed to implement this task.
- Provide training for board and commission members on the culture, experience and issues related to military spouse career paths (training to be developed by the Department of Veteran Affairs). This [training](#) has been shared with all disciplining authorities for members to take.
- Create and maintain a military spouse assistance web page, linking directly from our agency's home page, that contains information on licensing rules and procedures, contact information for our military spouse coordinator, and links to other agencies' web pages. We have updated our [agency's home page](#) to include this link (under the drop-down for Licenses, Permits, and Certificates) and our [military spouse assistance web page](#) to reflect the new requirements.

Other legislation impacting licensing of military service members and spouses

- Federal legislation, [Title 50 U.S.C. Sec 705a \(a\) of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act \(2023\)](#), provides for portability of professional licenses of service members and their spouses who are relocated because of military orders. The department is implementing an abbreviated application process to implement this legislation.
- The department has implemented or is in the process of implementing several interstate licensure compacts that have passed the state legislature in recent sessions.

¹ Effective January 1, 2024.

Introduction

Washington state is home to 546,892 veterans, about 2,000,000 military family members, and 80,146 active duty, reserve, and national guard personnel.² The military and defense sectors employ approximately 39,000 Department of Defense (DoD) civilian personnel. Helping veterans and eligible family members receive health care credentials and gain meaningful employment remains a high priority for the department. We are committed to creating and sustaining processes to streamline the credentialing process for this population.

Reporting requirements

[RCW 73.04.150](#) requires the Department of Health (department) to submit a biennial report to the legislature, annual report to the Washington State Military Transition Council (WSMTC), and appear annually before the Joint Committee on Veterans and Military Affairs ([JCVMA](#)) to provide updates on progress implementing [chapter 18.340 RCW](#), [ESSB 5969 \(2011\)](#), and [ESSB 5307 \(2011\)](#).

[2SHB 1009 \(2023\)](#) amends the reporting requirements in chapter 18.340 RCW effective January 1, 2024 to require an annual report to the legislature, remove the annual report to the WSMTC (while retaining the annual appearance before the JCVMA), and add a requirement to provide updates on implementation of 2SHB 1009.

Summary of Implementation

ESSB 5969, and ESSB 5307

These bills required:

- ESSB 5969 – Military Spouse – Occupational Licensing. Created chapter 18.340 RCW to expedite licensing of military spouses and add a temporary practice permit to provide services while completing additional Washington requirements not related to training or standards of the profession.
- ESSB 5307 – Medical Professions — Licensing – Military Experience. Required the department to accept military training or experience as meeting credentialing requirements if determined substantially equivalent.

These bills have been fully implemented by:

- Adopting rules and procedures for all professions expediting the issuance of licenses for military spouses and creating a temporary license to allow an applicant to practice while completing additional requirements not related to practice or training.
- Evaluating military education, training, and experience for all professions and developing a [military-to-civilian crosswalk](#) that allows military-trained applicants to identify health professions in Washington with requirements for licensure that are substantially equivalent.

The department will continue working with DoD Defense Health Agency (DHA) under

² Citation - <https://www.dva.wa.gov/about-wdva>

the Department of Defense, the Medical Education and Training Campus (METC), and military medical leaders within each service component to stay abreast of ever-evolving military education, training and experience and update the crosswalk as needed.

Section 4 of 2SHB 1009 (amending RCW 18.340.020)

This section requires each disciplining authority to issue a temporary license within 30 days of receiving a completed application. The temporary license must be issued for no less than 180 days to allow the person to practice while completing additional Washington requirements not related to training or practice standards.

We have begun implementing this section and are preparing to initiate rulemaking to ensure all disciplining authorities' temporary licenses meet the updated requirements in the bill.

Section 5 of 2SHB 1009 (codified as RCW 18.340.030)

This section requires each disciplining authority to:

- Identify a contact or coordinator within the authority to assist military spouse applicants and licensees.
- Provide training to each board or commission member on the culture of military spouses, the military spouse experience, and issues related to military spouse career paths. Board or commission members appointed on or before October 1, 2023, must complete the training by January 1, 2024. Board or commission members appointed after October 1, 2023, must complete the training within 90 days after appointment. The Department of Veterans Affairs (DVA) is tasked with creating a web-based training that may be used by each authority to satisfy this requirement.

We have partially implemented the required tasks in this section by:

- Identifying our agency military liaison as our contact to assist military spouse applicants and licensees.
- Working with the DVA on their efforts to develop the required [training](#), which is now available and has been shared with all disciplining authorities for board and commission members to complete.

Section 6 of 2SHB 1009 (codified as RCW 18.340.040)

This section requires the department to maintain a military spouse assistance web page containing, at a minimum:

- Each disciplining authority's rules and procedures, including any required fees, related to the licensing of military spouses,
- Contact information for each authority's military spouse contact or coordinator,
- Links to the military spouse assistance web pages of other agencies, and
- A direct link to the agency's military spouse assistance web page on our agency home page.

We have fully implemented this section by creating a [military spouse assistance web page](#) that contains the required information and a direct link from our agency’s home page (under the drop-down “Licenses, Permits, & Certificates”), [Veterans, Service Members and their Families](#).

We will monitor and update this web page as needed.

Other legislation impacting military service members

- [Title 50 U.S.C. Sec 705a \(a\) of the Servicemembers Civil Relief Act](#) (2023), states that a covered license of a servicemember or spouse who relocates to a new jurisdiction because of military orders shall be considered valid at a similar scope of practice in the new jurisdiction if the servicemember or spouse submits certain documentation. The department is modifying applications for health care credentials to accommodate an abbreviated application process to implement this legislation.
- The department has implemented interstate licensure compacts for allopathic and osteopathic physicians, physical therapists, psychologists, and nurses.
- The department is implementing additional interstate licensure compacts that passed the legislature in 2022 and 2023. These include compacts for:
 - Audiologists and speech-language pathologists – [HB 1001](#) - anticipate being implemented by spring 2024
 - Dentists and dental hygienists – [ESHB 1576 \(2023\)](#) – comes into effect when enacted into law in the seventh participating state
 - Mental health counselors – [SHB 1069](#) – anticipate being implemented by August 2025
 - Occupational therapists – [2SSB 5518](#) - anticipate being implemented by spring 2025

Data Summary

This report covers the department’s work during the fiscal year 2023 (July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023).

Military-trained credentialing

- The department issued 162 credentials³ to military personnel, a slight increase from 140 in fiscal year 2022 (see Appendix 1, Table 1).
 - 149 were routine⁴ applications. Ninety-four percent of these credentials were issued in just under 6 days of receiving all required documents (see Appendix 1, Table 2).
 - 13 were non-routine and or exception⁵ applications. Seventy-seven percent of these

³ These numbers include only applicants who select on the application that they are military trained. Professionals who receive their medical training through traditional, civilian institutions of higher learning are not included.

⁴ Routine applications are approved by credentialing staff and do not need board or commission member review.

⁵ Non-routine and exception applications (those where an applicant answers yes to a personal data question on the application or where something is found on a background check) must be presented to the board or commission for approval.

credentials were issued in just over 10 business days (see Appendix 1, Table 3).

Military spouses credentialing

- The department issued 1,594 credentials to military spouses, a slight decrease from 1,705 in fiscal year 2021 (see Appendix 2, Table 1).
 - 1,495 were routine applications. Ninety-one percent of these credentials were issued in just under 7 days (see Appendix 2, Table 2).
 - 99 were non-routine and or exception applications. Seventy percent of these credentials were issued in 15 days (see Appendix 2, Table 3).

Appendix 1

Table 1: Military Personnel Licenses Issued by Fiscal Year¹⁵

Profession	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Secretary									
Cardiovascular Invasive Specialist	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	4	6
Counselor, Agency Affiliated	15	32	18	6	3	12	2	1	89
Substance Use Disorder Professional Trainee	4	4	6	0	1	2	0	2	19
Dental Hygiene	0	0	0	1	1	1	3	0	6
Emergency Medical Technician	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	12
Hypnotherapist Registration	-	-	-	-	-	1	0	0	1
Medical Assistant Certification	7	1	9	54	43	30	60	69	273
Medical Assistant Registration	5	7	4	1	0	1	4	3	25
Nursing Assistant Certification	0	0	2	16	11	5	10	4	48
Nursing Assistant Registration	19	35	14	12	20	20	11	5	136
Radiological Technologist	0	0	1	1	3	2	10	20	37
Recreational Therapist	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Respiratory Care Practitioner	1	0	0	2	3	0	2	10	18
Surgical Technologist	17	12	9	4	6	14	9	2	73
X-Ray Technician	1	2	2	0	4	3	3	1	16
Secretary Total	69	93	66	98	95	91	115	133	760
Board									
Licensed Practical Nurse	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	4
Occupational Therapist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Occupational Therapy Assistant	0	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	4
Physical Therapist	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	3	5
Veterinary Technician	-	-	-	-	-	2	1	0	3

Physical Therapy Assistant	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	4
Commission									
Dentist	0	0	0	1	0	0	7	8	16
Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Dental Assistant	8	13	6	4	2	6	11	7	57
Pharmacy Assistant	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	4
Pharmacy Technician	1	2	5	9	1	2	2	1	23
Physician Assistant	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
Board/Commissions Total	10	16	12	18	6	10	22	29	123
Total - All Professions	79	109	78	116	101	101	137	162	883

¹⁵ These numbers include only applicants who select on the application that they are military trained. Current or retired military professionals who receive their training through traditional, civilian institutions of higher learning are not included.

Appendix 1

Table 2: Timeliness of military credential issuance – Routine¹⁶

Measures for Routine Applications	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Percent of military credentials issued within 14 days after receiving all required documents	99%	96%	89%	86%	58%	71%	87%	94%
Average days to issue credential	5.4	10.3	7.6	9.6	14.8	12.3	7.8	5.6
Number of applications	77	107	73	109	97	99	130	149

Appendix 1

Table 3: Timeliness of military credential issuance – Exception/Non-Routine¹⁷

Measures for Exception and Non- Routine Applications	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Percent of military credentials issued within 14 days after receiving all required documents	100%	50%	80%	71%	75%	100%	71%	77%
Average days to issue credential	6.3	14	8.6	16.4	9.8	9.5	9.9	10.3
Number of applications	3	2	5	7	4	2	7	13

¹⁶ Routine applications are approved by credentialing staff and do not need board or commission member review.

¹⁷ Exception/non-routine applications are those where an applicant answers yes to a personal data question or where something is found on a background check. Personal data questions focus on an applicant’s fitness to practice the essential skills of the profession. These applications must be presented to a board or commission for approval.

Appendix 2

Table 1a: Licenses Issued to Military Spouses/Domestic Partners by Fiscal Year (Secretary Professions)

Profession	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Secretary									
Advanced EMT	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Animal Massage Practitioner	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Athletic Trainer	2	0	2	1	4	0	3	4	16
Cardiovascular Invasive Specialist	2	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	7
Certified Behavior Technician	0	0	80	52	61	57	69	52	371
Counselor, Agency Affiliated	45	74	58	50	37	43	35	64	406
Counselor, Certified	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
Dental Hygienist	3	9	17	12	14	16	19	22	112
Dietitian/Nutritionist	4	5	7	7	15	8	12	12	70
Dispensing Optician	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	0	3
Dispensing Optician Apprentice	1	5	0	4	3	0	2	3	18
East Asian Medicine Practitioner	0	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	4
Emergency Medical Responder	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	3
Emergency Medical Technician	6	34	23	29	32	0	0	43	167
Genetic Counselor	1	1	1	0	0	1	4	2	10
Home Care Aide	2	36	49	42	34	15	21	29	228
Hypnotherapist	1	1	0	0	2	0	0	0	4
Licensed Assistant Behavior Analyst	0	0	2	6	2	9	8	4	31
Licensed Behavior Analyst	0	0	13	10	7	8	12	11	61
Marriage and Family Therapist	2	2	1	0	6	6	11	4	32
Marriage and Family Therapist Assoc.	2	4	7	9	6	3	8	6	45
Medical Assistant	100	211	159	177	137	160	169	181	1294
Medical Marijuana Consultant	0	11	0	2	0	2	0	3	18

Medication Assistant Endorsement	0	2	0	2	1	0	0	1	6
Mental Health Counselor	6	8	13	22	13	23	27	20	132
Mental Health Counselor Associate	8	18	20	19	15	21	33	30	164
Midwife	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	0	7
Nursing Assistant	123	223	226	246	212	232	249	234	1745
Orthotics/ Prosthetics	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	1	4
Paramedic	1	2	4	2	1	0	0	7	17
Radiological Technologist	10	18	18	15	8	11	19	14	113
Recreational Therapist	0	0	2	2	0	1	1	1	7
Reflexologist	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Respiratory Care Practitioner	7	8	10	9	8	9	19	7	77
Social Worker (SW) Advanced	0	0	3	1	1	0	0	0	5
SW Associate Advanced	2	2	4	5	3	6	10	10	42
SW Associate Independent Clinical	10	14	18	19	32	26	27	25	171
SW Independent Clinical	3	7	5	9	10	8	17	13	72
Substance Use Disorder Professional	1	2	1	3	3	4	4	2	20
Substance Use Disorder Professional Trainee	9	10	11	12	7	10	10	6	75
Surgical Technologist	9	8	21	9	13	14	11	8	93
X-Ray Technician	3	0	9	4	1	9	8	6	40
Secretary Total	364	721	788	786	693	705	814	827	5698
Board									
Profession	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	Total
Audiologist	1	3	3	1	0	1	2	0	11
Hearing Aid Specialist	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Massage Practitioner	11	24	17	20	16	10	18	12	128
Naturopathic Physician	0	0	0	5	2	0	0	0	7

Nursing Home Administrator (NHA)	0	1	0	1	0	1	1	1	5
NHA Training Approval	1	0	1	0	0	1	2	0	5
Occupational Therapist	7	4	8	7	10	12	16	9	73
Occupational Therapy Assistant	1	6	6	10	7	5	5	7	47
Optometrist	2	2	3	1	4	1	2	2	17
Osteopathic Physician	2	5	5	13	8	5	9	3	50
Osteopathic Physician Assistant	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Physical Therapist	12	9	14	31	23	17	18	15	139
Physical Therapist Assistant	4	4	9	10	9	4	13	7	60
Podiatric Physician	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	3
Psychologist	1	1	5	6	5	5	3	7	33
Speech Language Pathologist	8	9	8	16	15	15	15	24	110
Speech Language Pathology Assistant	0	2	0	3	4	1	3	2	15
Veterinarian	1	8	2	2	6	3	6	7	35
Veterinary Medication Clerk	5	13	13	10	14	0	0	26	81
Veterinary Technician	1	3	6	4	13	12	6	12	57
Commission									
Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner	0	0	0	3	16	47	66	46	178
Registered Nurse	0	0	0	11	133	410	401	341	1296
Licensed Practical Nurse	0	0	0	1	43	55	46	41	186
Nursing Technician	0	0	0	0	8	0	0	17	25
Chiropractic X-Ray Technician	1	2	1	1	1	0	1	3	10
Chiropractor	1	2	0	0	1	1	1	2	8
Dental Anesthesia Assistant	0	1	0	1	0	2	1	1	6
Dental Assistant	46	58	62	71	71	75	90	70	543
Dentist	6	6	10	8	11	7	4	4	56
Expanded Function Dental Auxiliary	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	4
Pharmacist	2	3	7	8	6	8	17	9	60

Pharmacist Intern	1	4	8	7	7	7	3	1	38
Pharmacy Assistant	29	58	29	43	63	55	87	40	404
Pharmacy Technician	9	20	14	18	16	11	17	36	141
Physician	0	0	0	1	34	23	22	13	93
Physician Assistant	0	0	0	1	17	18	15	8	59
Board/ Commission Total	152	249	231	316	564	815	891	767	3,985
All Professions	516	970	1019	1102	1257	1520	1705	1594	9,683

Appendix 2

Table 2: Timeliness of Military Spouse credential issuance – Routine¹⁸

Measures for Routine Applications	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Percent of military spouse credentials issued within 14 days after receiving all documents	98%	92%	90%	86%	78%	75%	85%	91%
Average days to issue a credential	5.1	8.3	8.3	9.5	10.8	10.6	8.5	6.6
Number of applications	490	900	962	1,042	1,200	1,448	1,628	1,495

Appendix 2

Table 3: Timeliness of Military Spouse credential issuance -Exception/Non- Routine¹⁹

Measures for Exception and Non-Routine Applications	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Percent of military spouse credentials issued within 14 days after receiving all documents	100%	71%	72%	47%	63%	74%	70%	70%
Average days to issue a credential	3	13.4	13.1	18.9	14.5	11.7	14.8	15.2
Number of applications	26	70	57	60	57	72	77	99

¹⁸ Routine applications are approved by credentialing staff and do not need board or commission member review.

¹⁹ Exception/non-routine applications are those where an applicant answers yes to a personal data question or where something is found on a background check. Personal data questions focus on an applicant’s fitness to practice the essential skills of the profession. These applications must be presented to a board or commission for approval.