

Section 31-1-6

Professional licenses and certificates for spouses of active duty military personnel.

(a) This section shall be known and may be cited as the **Military Family Jobs Opportunity Act.**

(b) Except as provided in subsection (h), and notwithstanding other provisions of law, this section shall apply to any board, agency, commission, or other entity providing professional licenses or certificates, or both, for the purpose of employment in the State of Alabama. On or before January 1, 2019, each board, commission, or agency providing professional licenses or certificates, or both, shall promulgate rules in conformity with this section for the purpose of implementing its requirements. The rules shall provide a method of accomplishing both of the following:

(1) The issuance of a license or certificate to an eligible individual if the requirements for certification or licensure of the original issuing state or governing body are substantially equivalent to that required in the state, as provided in subsection (d).

(2) A procedure for authorizing an eligible individual to perform professional services regulated by the board, agency, or commission in this state pursuant to a temporary permit, effective for at least 180 days, while the eligible individual completes the specific requirements of the board, agency, or commission to obtain a license or certificate in this state that were not required in the original issuing state.

(c) For the purposes of this section, an **eligible individual** is any individual who satisfies all of the following:

(1) Is the spouse of an active duty, reserve, or transitioning member of the United States Armed Forces, including the National Guard, or a surviving spouse of a service member who, at the time of his or her death, was serving on active duty, who is relocated to and stationed in the State of Alabama under official military orders. For the purposes of this section, a transitioning service member is a member of the United States Armed Forces, including the National Guard, on active duty status or on separation leave who is within 24 months of retirement.

(2) Has not committed or participated in an act that would constitute grounds for refusal, suspension, or revocation of a professional license or certificate.

(3) Has not been disciplined by an authorized entity or under investigation, in any jurisdiction, in relation to a professional license or certificate.

(d) Any eligible individual under subsection (c) who possesses a valid license or certificate in another state, district, or territory of the United States, or in any branch of the United States Armed Forces, including the National Guard, with licensing or certification requirements greater than or substantially similar to the licensing or certification requirements of the appropriate board, commission, or agency in the State of Alabama shall be approved to continue work in his or her profession upon relocation to the State of Alabama for such time as normally allotted with receipt of a license or certificate from the appropriate board, commission, or agency. Upon completion of an application that documents compliance with the receiving agency's requirements for a certificate or license, an authorized board, commission, or agency shall expedite the application according to statute, promulgated rules, or if applicable, at the next scheduled licensure proceeding for an eligible individual under subsection (c).

(e) Any board, commission, or agency in the State of Alabama may establish reciprocity with other states for military spouse professional licensing and certification.

(f) Any board, agency, commission, or other entity providing professional licenses or certificates, or both, for the purpose of employment in this state, that is created after April 6, 2018, shall adopt the rules required by this section within one year after the date of its initial organizational meeting.

(g) Any board, agency, commission, or other entity providing professional licenses or certificates, or both, for the purpose of employment in the state, shall waive the initial licensing fee for the eligible individual upon application by the eligible individual in a manner prescribed by the board, agency, commission, or other entity. The board, agency, commission, or other entity shall process an application for a fee waiver within 30 days after receiving the application.

(h) This section does not apply to the practice of law or the regulation of attorneys, any license or registration issued by the Securities Commission under the Alabama Securities Act, any certification issued by the Alabama Peace Officers' Standards and Training Commission, or the practice of any profession regulated by the Alabama State Board of Pharmacy, Board of Dental Examiners, State Board of Chiropractic Examiners, Alabama Liquefied Petroleum Gas Board, or State Board of Medical Examiners.

(Act 2012-521, p. 1546, §§1-5; Act 2018-540, §1.)