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2 93rd General Assembly
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4

A Bill

SENATE BILL 78

5 By: Senators Hill, D. Wallace, T. Garner, Irvin, J. Hendren, J. English, Flippo
6 By: Representatives Lynch, Cozart, Brown, Evans
7

For An Act To Be Entitled

9 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE ARKANSAS OCCUPATIONAL
10 LICENSING OF UNIFORMED SERVICE MEMBERS, VETERANS, AND
11 SPOUSES ACT OF 2021; TO MODIFY THE AUTOMATIC
12 OCCUPATIONAL LICENSURE REQUIREMENTS FOR UNIFORMED
13 SERVICES MEMBERS, RETURNING UNIFORMED SERVICES
14 VETERANS, AND THEIR SPOUSES; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY;
15 AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.
16
17

Subtitle

19 TO ESTABLISH ARKANSAS OCCUPATIONAL
20 LICENSING OF UNIFORMED SERVICE MEMBERS,
21 VETERANS, AND SPOUSES ACT OF 2021; AND TO
22 DECLARE AN EMERGENCY.
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24

25 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:
26

27 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 17-1-106 is repealed.

28 ~~17-1-106. Automatic licensure for active duty service members,~~
29 ~~returning military veterans, and spouses—Definitions.~~

30 ~~(a) As used in this section:~~

31 ~~(1) “Automatic licensure” means the granting of occupational~~
32 ~~licensure without an individual’s having met occupational licensure~~
33 ~~requirements provided under this title or by the rules of the occupational~~
34 ~~licensing entity;~~

35 ~~(2) “Occupational licensing entity” means an office, board,~~
36 ~~commission, department, council, bureau, or other agency of state government~~



1 ~~having authority to license, certify, register, permit, or otherwise~~
2 ~~authorize an individual to engage in a particular occupation or profession;~~

3 ~~(3) "Occupational licensure" means a license, certificate,~~
4 ~~registration, permit, or other form of authorization required by law or rule~~
5 ~~that is required for an individual to engage in a particular occupation or~~
6 ~~profession; and~~

7 ~~(4) "Returning military veteran" means a former member of the~~
8 ~~United States Armed Forces who was discharged from active duty under~~
9 ~~circumstances other than dishonorable.~~

10 ~~(b)(1) An occupational licensing entity shall grant automatic~~
11 ~~licensure to engage in an occupation or profession to an individual who is~~
12 ~~the holder in good standing of a substantially equivalent occupational~~
13 ~~license issued by another state, territory, or district of the United States~~
14 ~~and is:~~

15 ~~(A) An active duty military service member stationed in~~
16 ~~the State of Arkansas;~~

17 ~~(B) A returning military veteran applying for licensure~~
18 ~~within one (1) year of his or her discharge from active duty; or~~

19 ~~(C) The spouse of a person under subdivisions (b)(1)(A)~~
20 ~~and (b)(1)(B) of this section.~~

21 ~~(2) However, an occupational licensing entity shall be required~~
22 ~~to provide automatic licensure if the proposed rules are not approved as~~
23 ~~required under subdivision (d)(2) of this section.~~

24 ~~(c) An occupational licensing entity may submit proposed rules~~
25 ~~recommending an expedited process and procedure for occupational licensure~~
26 ~~instead of automatic licensure as provided under subsection (b) of this~~
27 ~~section to the Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the Legislative Council.~~

28 ~~(d) The Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the Legislative Council~~
29 ~~shall:~~

30 ~~(1) Review the proposed rules of an occupational licensing~~
31 ~~entity as submitted for public comment and at least thirty (30) days before~~
32 ~~the public comment period ends under the Arkansas Administrative Procedure~~
33 ~~Act, § 25-15-201 et seq.; and~~

34 ~~(2) Approve the proposed rules submitted under subsection (c) of~~
35 ~~this section based on:~~

36 ~~(A) A determination of whether the expedited process and~~

1 procedure provide the least restrictive means of accomplishing occupational
2 licensure; and

3 (B) Any other criteria the Administrative Rules
4 Subcommittee of the Legislative Council determines necessary to achieve the
5 objectives of this section.

6 (e) The Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the Legislative Council
7 may:

8 (1) Establish a subcommittee to assist in the duties assigned
9 under this section;

10 (2) Assign information filed with the Administrative Rules
11 Subcommittee of the Legislative Council under this section to one (1) or more
12 subcommittees of the Legislative Council, including without limitation a
13 subcommittee created under subdivision (e)(1) of this section; or

14 (3) Delegate its duties under this section to one (1) or more
15 subcommittees of the Legislative Council, subject to final review and
16 approval of the Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the Legislative Council.

17 (f) An occupational licensing entity shall:

18 (1) Submit proposed rules authorized under subsection (e) of
19 this section to the Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the Legislative
20 Council for review and approval before the proposed rules are promulgated
21 under the Arkansas Administrative Procedure Act, § 25-15-201 et seq.; and

22 (2) Provide to the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth,
23 Legislative and Military Affairs an annual report stating the number of
24 automatic licenses and expedited occupational licenses granted under this
25 section to:

26 (A) Active duty military service members stationed in the
27 State of Arkansas;

28 (B) Returning military veterans applying within one (1)
29 year of their discharge from active duty; or

30 (C) The spouse of a person under subdivisions (f)(2)(A)
31 and (f)(2)(B) of this section.

32
33 SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 17, Chapter 1, is amended to add an
34 additional chapter to read as follows:

35 Chapter 4 – Arkansas Occupational Licensing of Uniformed Service Members,
36 Veterans, and Spouses Act of 2021

1
2 17-4-101. Title.

3 This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Arkansas
4 Occupational Licensing of Uniformed Service Members, Veterans, and Spouses
5 Act of 2021".

6
7 17-4-102. Legislative findings and intent.

8 (a) The General Assembly finds that:

9 (1) Arkansas sets the bar as a national leader in addressing
10 employment barriers faced by uniformed service members, uniformed service
11 veterans, and their spouses in attaining occupational licensure;

12 (2) Arkansas is one (1) of only four (4) states to successfully
13 address eight (8) or more of the ten (10) issues affecting uniformed service
14 families identified by the United States Department of Defense;

15 (3) Of the United States Department of Defense's ten (10) issues
16 in fiscal year 2020, four (4) of the issues concern occupational licensure of
17 spouses of uniformed service members;

18 (4) Annually, fourteen and a half percent (14.5%) of spouses of
19 uniformed service members move across state lines as opposed to one and one-
20 tenth percent (1.1%) of civilians;

21 (5) States can continue to improve the attainment of
22 occupational licensure and to eliminate barriers impeding employment of
23 spouses of uniformed service members following a move across state lines;

24 (6) Acts 2019, No. 820, established provisions for the granting
25 of automatic occupational licensure or expedited occupational licensure to
26 active-duty service members, recently separated veterans, and their spouses
27 who hold occupational licensure in good standing in another jurisdiction; and

28 (7) Additional steps need to be taken to clarify, simplify, and
29 elevate the occupational licensure process for uniformed service members,
30 uniformed service veterans, and their spouses.

31 (b) It is the intent of the General Assembly to address occupational
32 licensure barriers that impede the launch and sustainability of civilian
33 occupational careers and employment faced by uniformed service members,
34 uniformed service veterans, and their spouses due to frequent uniformed
35 service assignment by:

36 (1) Providing:

1 (A) Automatic occupational licensure or expedited
 2 occupational licensure to current license holders to expedite their entry
 3 into the workforce of this state;

4 (B) Temporary or provisional licensure to initial
 5 licensure candidates while expediting full licensure;

6 (C) Legislative oversight of rulemaking by occupational
 7 licensing entities to ensure removal of occupational licensure barriers faced
 8 by uniformed service members, uniformed service veterans, and their spouses;
 9 and

10 (D) Guidance to assure effective rulemaking and clear
 11 license application instructions to uniformed service members, uniformed
 12 service veterans, and their spouses;

13 (2) Recognizing uniformed service education, training,
 14 experience, and credentials of uniformed service members and uniformed
 15 service veterans applying for initial occupational licensure; and

16 (3) Extending licensure expiration and any continuing education
 17 required for occupational licensure renewal when a uniformed service member
 18 is deployed.

19
 20 17-4-103. Definitions.

21 As used in this chapter:

22 (1) "Automatic occupational licensure" means the granting of
 23 occupational licensure without an individual's having met occupational
 24 licensure requirements provided under this title or by the rules of the
 25 relevant occupational licensing entity;

26 (2) "Occupational licensing entity" means an office, board,
 27 commission, department, council, bureau, or other agency of state government
 28 having authority to license, certify, register, permit, or otherwise
 29 authorize an individual to engage in a particular occupation or profession;

30 (3) "Occupational licensure" means a license, certificate,
 31 registration, permit, or other form of authorization required by law or rule
 32 that is required for an individual to engage in a particular occupation or
 33 profession;

34 (4) "Uniformed service member" means:

35 (A) An active or reserve component member of the United
 36 States Air Force, United States Army, United States Coast Guard, United

1 States Marine Corps, United States Navy, United States Space Force, or
 2 National Guard;

3 (B) An active component member of the National Oceanic and
 4 Atmospheric Administration Commissioned Officer Corps; or

5 (C) An active or reserve component member of the United
 6 States Commissioned Corps of the Public Health Service; and

7 (5) "Uniformed service veteran" means a former member of the
 8 United States uniformed services discharged under conditions other than
 9 dishonorable.

10
 11 17-4-104. Applicability.

12 Unless otherwise stated in this chapter, this chapter applies to:

13 (1) A uniformed service member stationed in the State of
 14 Arkansas;

15 (2) A uniformed service veteran who resides in or establishes
 16 residency in the State of Arkansas; and

17 (3) The spouse of:

18 (A) A person listed in subdivision (1) or (2) of this
 19 section;

20 (B) A uniformed service member who is assigned a tour of
 21 duty that excludes the uniformed service member's spouse from accompanying
 22 the uniformed service member and the spouse relocates to this state; and

23 (C) A uniformed service member who is killed or succumbs
 24 to his or her injuries or illness in the line of duty if the spouse
 25 establishes residency in the state.

26
 27 17-4-105. Automatic occupational licensure.

28 An occupational licensing entity shall grant automatic occupational
 29 licensure to engage in an occupation or profession to an individual who is:

30 (1) Listed in § 17-4-104; and

31 (2) The holder in good standing of occupational licensure with
 32 similar scope of practice issued by another state, territory, or district of
 33 the United States.

34
 35 17-4-106. Expedited occupational licensure.

36 (a)(1) An occupational licensing entity may submit proposed rules

1 recommending an expedited process for the attainment of occupational
2 licensure instead of automatic occupational licensure as provided under § 17-
3 4-105 to the Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the Legislative Council.

4 (2) The proposed rules described in subdivision (a)(1) of this
5 section shall include temporary or provisional occupational licensure
6 provisions with a term of ninety (90) days or more.

7 (3) The occupational licensing entity shall provide automatic
8 occupational licensure if the proposed expedited occupational licensure rules
9 are not approved as required by § 17-4-109.

10 (b)(1) An occupational licensing entity shall expedite the process for
11 initial occupational licensure for an individual who is listed in § 17-4-104.

12 (2) An occupational licensing entity shall provide the applicant
13 under subdivision (b)(1) of this section with a temporary or provisional
14 license upon receipt of required documentation or the successful completion
15 of any examination required by the relevant occupational licensing entity to
16 enable the applicant to secure employment in his or her occupation or
17 profession.

18
19 17-4-107. Acceptance of uniformed service education, training,
20 experience, or service-issued credential.

21 An occupational licensing entity shall accept relevant and applicable
22 uniformed service education, training, or service-issued credential toward
23 occupational licensure qualifications or requirements when considering an
24 application for initial licensure of an individual who is:

25 (1) A uniformed service member; or

26 (2) A uniformed service veteran who makes an application within
27 one (1) year of his or her discharge from uniformed service.

28
29 17-4-108. Extension of license expiration and continuing education
30 requirements.

31 (a) An occupational licensing entity shall extend the expiration date
32 of an occupational licensure for a deployed uniformed service member or his
33 or her spouse for one hundred eighty (180) days following the date of the
34 uniformed service member's return from deployment.

35 (b)(1) An occupational licensing entity shall allow a full or partial
36 exemption from a continuing education requirement that is required as a

1 component of occupational licensure for an individual who is listed in
2 subsection (a) of this section until one hundred eighty (180) days following
3 the date of the uniformed service member's return from deployment.

4 (2) An occupational licensing entity that allows full or partial
5 exemption from continuing education requirements may require evidence of
6 completion of continuing education before granting a subsequent occupational
7 licensure or authorizing the renewal of an occupational licensure.

8
9 17-4-109. Legislative oversight of rules.

10 (a) The Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the Legislative Council
11 shall:

12 (1) Review the proposed rules of an occupational licensing
13 entity as submitted for public comment at least thirty (30) days before the
14 public comment period ends under the Arkansas Administrative Procedure Act, §
15 25-15-201 et seq.; and

16 (2) Approve the proposed rules submitted under § 17-4-106 based
17 on:

18 (A) A determination of whether the expedited process
19 provides the least restrictive means of attaining occupational licensure; and

20 (B) Any other criteria the Administrative Rules
21 Subcommittee of the Legislative Council determines necessary to achieve the
22 objectives of this section.

23 (b) The Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the Legislative Council
24 may:

25 (1) Establish a further subcommittee to assist in the duties
26 assigned to the Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the Legislative Council
27 under this section;

28 (2) Assign information filed with the Administrative Rules
29 Subcommittee of the Legislative Council under this section to one (1) or more
30 subcommittees of the Legislative Council, including without limitation a
31 subcommittee created under subdivision (b)(1) of this section; or

32 (3) Delegate the duties of the Administrative Rules Subcommittee
33 of the Legislative Council under this section to one (1) or more
34 subcommittees of the Legislative Council, which shall be subject to the final
35 review and approval of the Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the
36 Legislative Council.

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2 17-4-110. Responsibilities of occupational licensing entities.

3 An occupational licensing entity shall:

4 (1) Submit proposed rules authorized under § 17-4-105 or § 17-4-
5 106 to the Administrative Rules Subcommittee of the Legislative Council for
6 review and approval before the proposed rules are promulgated under the
7 Arkansas Administrative Procedure Act, § 25-15-201 et seq.;

8 (2) If the proposed rules are not approved as required under §
9 17-4-109, provide automatic occupational licensure to an individual listed in
10 § 17-4-104;

11 (3) Post prominently on the occupational licensing entity's
12 website a link entitled "Military Member Licensure" that directly leads to
13 information applicable to an individual listed in § 17-4-104; and

14 (4) Provide to the House Committee on Aging, Children and Youth,
15 Legislative and Military Affairs an annual report stating the number of
16 individuals granted automatic occupational licensure and expedited
17 occupational licensure under this chapter.

18
19 SECTION 3. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the
20 General Assembly of the State of Arkansas that current laws and
21 administrative rules regarding the issuance of occupational licenses,
22 certificates, and permits are barriers and create a hardship for uniformed
23 service members, uniformed service veterans, and their spouses; that
24 additional expedited processes, automatic licensure, and extended expiration
25 dates of occupational licenses, certificates, and permits is needed to ensure
26 that uniformed service members, uniformed service veterans, and their spouses
27 may practice their chosen occupation or profession in the State of Arkansas;
28 and that this act is immediately necessary to remove barriers and hardships
29 in obtaining occupational licenses, certificates, and permits for uniformed
30 service members, uniformed service veterans, and their spouses. Therefore, an
31 emergency is declared to exist, and this act being immediately necessary for
32 the preservation of the public peace, health, and safety shall become
33 effective on:

34 (1) The date of its approval by the Governor;

35 (2) If the bill is neither approved nor vetoed by the Governor,
36 the expiration of the period of time during which the Governor may veto the

1 bill; or

2 (3) If the bill is vetoed by the Governor and the veto is
3 overridden, the date the last house overrides the veto.

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