

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 13-18
	DATE January 23, 2019

TO: STATE WORKFORCE AGENCIES
STATE WORKFORCE LIAISONS
STATE AND LOCAL WORKFORCE BOARD EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS
AMERICAN JOB CENTER DIRECTORS

FROM: MOLLY E. CONWAY /s/
Acting Assistant Secretary

SUBJECT: State Occupational Licensing Review and Reform Grant Awards and Related Resources

1. **Purpose.** To notify the workforce system of recent State Occupational Licensing Review and Reform grant awards and related resources, including the National Conference of State Legislatures' (NCSL) licensing resources and database available at <http://www.ncsl.org/stateslicense>.
2. **Action Requested.** State and local workforce development boards, state workforce agencies, and other workforce partners are encouraged to gain familiarity with these resources and make use of them as applicable to assist workers and job seekers in licensed occupations.
3. **Summary and Background.** This grant program builds on work that the Department of Labor (the Department) began in fiscal year (FY) 2016 with an allocation of \$7.5 million. In FY 2017, the Department allocated the same amount "to address ways in which harmonizing licensing requirements across States can reduce barriers to labor market entry and mobility including for dislocated workers, transitioning service members, and veterans," as required by House Report 114-699 and similar language in Senate Report 114-274.

With the first grant in FY 2016, DOL awarded a three-year cooperative agreement to the NCSL and its partners, the National Governors Association (NGA) and the Council of State Governments (CSG). Through an application process, NCSL selected 11 states (Arkansas, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Nevada, Utah, and Wisconsin) to participate in a consortium to receive targeted technical assistance and begin work to review and streamline occupational licensing requirements for certain occupations. That Occupational Licensing Policy Learning Consortium ("the Consortium") will improve the understanding of occupational licensure issues among the participating states by: 1) providing a forum for the selected state team members and the expanded stakeholder group to learn about occupational licensing best practices; 2) becoming familiar with and discussing the existing licensing policies in their state; 3) identifying current policies that create unnecessary barriers to labor market entry; and 4) creating an action plan that focuses on removing barriers to labor market entry and improves portability and reciprocity for select occupations.

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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20210**

The FY 2017 grant program builds on the FY 2016 project described above. In June of 2018, the Department announced nine state occupational licensing grantees. Those grantees are Colorado, Nevada, Kentucky, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Kansas, Pennsylvania, Vermont, and New Hampshire, in addition to two grants to national associations including NCSL and the CSG. Each participating state will undertake activities to review and reform state licensing requirements, including:

- Streamlining licensing requirements;
- Revising or removing unjustified barriers to entry;
- Working with state lawmakers and policymakers to specifically remove unnecessary licensing barriers preventing former convicted offenders from gaining meaningful employment and reintegration to society. Where barriers are not eliminated, working to limit denials based on criminal history to those situations where the conviction is relevant to the occupational license sought, and public health and safety could be at risk were a license granted;
- Determining how best to regulate particular occupations so as to improve the fit between occupation and regulation, with special attention to alternatives to licensure, such as state or private industry-recognized certification, mandatory or voluntary bonding or insurance, and government registration;
- Identifying revisions needed to state licensure requirements to align with national industry-recognized certifications that would permit a certification to be adopted as a multi-state standard, either as part of state licensing requirements or in lieu of licensing;
- Implementing and publicizing the availability of military spouse licensing solutions that the states have already authorized; and/or
- Developing and implementing plans to join existing interstate licensing compacts.

(In the context of these grant awards and related programs, the Department understands the term “occupation” expansively, so as to include any trade or profession which is licensed by any state.)

4. **Available Resources for States.** The following resources have been developed by NCSL, CSG, and NGA and are available for public use:
- **The State of Occupational Licensing**
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/report-the-state-of-occupational-licensing.aspx>
 - **The National Occupational Licensing Database**
Compares the requirements for 35 sub-baccalaureate licensed opportunities.
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/occupational-licensing-statute-database.aspx>
 - **Occupational Licensing Legislation Database**
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/occupational-licensing636476435.aspx>

- **Occupational Licensing: Examining Challenges for Four Sub-populations**
A series of four publications focusing on the unique challenges and barriers specific to four population groups when they wish to enter a licensed occupation and practice a licensed occupation across state lines; each report outlines specific state policy options to address the unique challenges faced by the individual population.
 - **Low-Income, unemployed and dislocated workers**
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/barriers-to-work-low-income-unemployed-and-dislocated-workers.aspx>
 - **Veterans and military spouses**
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/barriers-to-work-veterans-and-military-spouses.aspx>
 - **People with criminal records**
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/barriers-to-work-individuals-with-criminal-records.aspx>
 - **Immigrants with work authorization**
<http://www.ncsl.org/research/labor-and-employment/barriers-to-work-immigrants-with-work-authorization.aspx>

In addition, the new webpage, <http://Veterans.gov/milspouses>, brings together occupational license portability resources from across the Federal Government in one place and provides a map to highlight the licensing recognition options that various states have provided for military spouses who must relocate frequently. This page is the result of collaborative work between the Department's Employment and Training Administration, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Veterans' Employment and Training Service, and Women's Bureau and the Department of Defense. Military spouses can search directly on the portal for summaries and full texts of state laws that control the interstate recognition of occupational licenses. The page provides access to the CareerOneStop License Finder tool so that a military spouse can research the licensing agency and its requirements in a state to which they are relocating and can find contact information as well to initiate the recognition process. In addition, information on various interstate licensing reciprocity compacts is provided at the bottom of the page.

5. **Inquiries.** Please direct questions concerning this information to Pam Frugoli, Workforce Analyst, by e-mail (frugoli.pam@dol.gov) or telephone (202-693-3643) or to the appropriate regional office.
6. **References.**
 - DOL News Release, June 25, 2018, U.S. Department of Labor Awards \$7 Million to States to Support Occupational Licensing Reform at: <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/eta/eta20180625>.
 - DOL News Release, June 28, 2018, U.S. Department of Labor's Veterans' Employment and Training Service Unveils Resource for Military Spouses, at: <https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/vets/vets20180628>.
7. **Attachments.** Not Applicable.