

17-1-106. Licensure, certification, or permitting of active duty service members, returning military veterans, and spouses -- Definition.

(a) As used in this section, "returning military veteran" means a former member of the United States Armed Forces who was discharged from active duty under circumstances other than dishonorable.

(b) A state board or commission that issues licenses, certificates, or permits required to enable the holder to lawfully engage in a profession, trade, or employment in this state shall allow the following individuals to secure employment with a temporary license, certificate, or permit while completing the application process for full licensure or certification or permitting if the individual is the holder in good standing of a substantially equivalent license, certificate, or permit issued by another state:

- (1)** An active duty military service member stationed in the State of Arkansas;
- (2)** A returning military veteran applying within one (1) year of his or her discharge from active duty; or
- (3)** The spouse of a person under subdivisions (b)(1) and (2) of this section.

(c) A state board or commission shall expedite the process and procedures for full licensure, certification, or permitting for the following individuals:

- (1)** An active duty military service member stationed in the State of Arkansas;
- (2)** A returning military veteran applying within one (1) year of his or her discharge from active duty; or
- (3)** The spouse of a person under subdivisions (c)(1) and (2) of this section.

(d) When considering an application for full licensure, certification, or permitting for an active duty military service member stationed in the State of Arkansas or a returning military veteran applying within one (1) year of his or her discharge from active duty, a state board or commission:

- (1)** Shall consider whether or not the applicant's military training and experience in the area of licensure, certification, or permitting is substantially similar to experience or education required for licensure, certification, or permitting; and
- (2)** Shall accept the applicant's military training and experience in the area of licensure, certification, or permitting in lieu of experience or education required for licensure, certification, or permitting if the state board or commission determines the military training and experience is a satisfactory substitute for the experience or education required for licensure, certification, or permitting.

(e) A license, certificate, or permit required to enable the holder to lawfully engage in a profession, trade, or employment in this state held by an active duty military service member deployed outside the State of Arkansas or his or her spouse shall not expire until one hundred eighty (180) days following the active duty military service member's or spouse's return from active deployment.

(f) (1) A state board or commission shall allow a full or partial exemption from continuing education required as part of licensure, certification, or permitting for a profession, trade, or employment in this state for the following individuals:

- (A)** An active duty military service member deployed outside of the State of Arkansas;
- (B)** A returning military veteran within one (1) year of his or her discharge from active duty; or
- (C)** The spouse of a person under subdivisions (f)(1) and (2) of this section.

(2) A state board or commission allowing a full or partial exemption from continuing education required under subdivision (f)(1) of this section may require evidence of completion of continuing education before issuing the individual a subsequent license, certificate, or permit or authorizing the renewal of a license, certificate, or permit.

(g) All state boards and commissions shall promulgate rules necessary to carry out the provisions of this section.