



REPORT PURSUANT TO PUBLIC ACT NO. 14-131

CONNECTICUT DEPARTMENT OF LABOR REPORT ON RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING RECOGNITION OF RELEVANT MILITARY EDUCATION, SKILLS AND TRAINING IN THE OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATION AND LICENSING PROCESS

Submitted by
Commissioner Kurt Westby
Connecticut Department of Labor

To the Joint Standing Committee on
Veterans' Affairs

JANUARY, 2020

LEGISLATIVE CHARGE

Section 15 of Public Act No. 14-131, An Act Concerning the Findings of the Military Occupational Specialty Task Force, required the Labor Commissioner, after consultation with the Commissioner of Veterans Affairs, the Adjutant General, the Executive Director of the Office of Military Affairs, the Commissioner of Public Health and the Commissioner of Consumer Protection, to issue a report of recommendations for amending statutes and regulations and revising policies and procedures to ensure that relevant military education, skills and training are given appropriate recognition in the occupational certification and licensing process.

Each consulting agency was to issue formal, written recommendations to the Labor Commissioner, relevant to the professional or occupational licenses within such agency's purview.

REPORT

Department of Veterans Affairs:

While the Department of Veterans Affairs is not an occupational certifying or licensing authority, it strongly supports efforts to update state laws, regulations and occupational licensing procedures to effectuate the maximum recognition of military education, skills, and training in occupational certification and licensing within the state.

The recognition of military training and related certifications is an important part of supporting our veterans and military personnel currently serving in the Armed Forces Reserve Components and the National Guard. This is an efficient and fiscally sustainable means to improve workforce development within the state.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is actively engaged with multiple state agencies on the issues and will continue to advocate for our veterans and military personnel on this important topic.

Adjutant General/Military Department:

The Military Department is not an occupational certifying or licensing authority. However, the Military Department retains a vested interest in ensuring the maximum recognition of military education, skills, and training in occupational certification and licensing within the state.

Recognition of such training in occupational licensing supports the recruiting and retention initiatives of the Connecticut National Guard and our sister services while simultaneously providing a cost-efficient means of workforce development within the state.

The Military Department is committed to supporting the Department of Labor's (CTDOL) effort to identify and apply military education, skills, and training to occupational licensing requirements.

Office of Military Affairs (OMA):

Connecticut General Statute 32-58b, Sec 1 (b) (8) charges the OMA Executive Director to serve as an advocate for service members and their families to other state agencies.

In this role, OMA concurs that current agency regulations are adequate. However, the review of state efforts to recognize occupational skills, training and licensure must be an ongoing effort.

The OMA also recommends that a review of military spouse licensure reciprocity be included in ongoing efforts to streamline licensing and employment for service members and their families residing in or deploying from Connecticut.

Department of Public Health (DPH):

As most health care provider members of the Armed Forces are appropriately educated, trained and licensed prior to entering military service, DPH does not have any recommendations regarding changes to the existing statutory and regulatory structure.

The Connecticut General Statutes and Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies already provide the statutory and regulatory authority to allow DPH to issue nurse aide and EMS personnel certification to Armed Forces trained medics and corpsman.

DPH recommends that the Committee consider defining an appropriate length of time after an applicant's separation from military service for the purposes enumerated in the Public Act. Applicants who have been separated from service for a significant period of time may need to complete a period of refresher training prior to resuming professional practice.

Department of Consumer Protection (DCP):

DCP does not have any recommendations for statutory or regulatory changes to "ensure that relevant military education, skills and training are given appropriate recognition in the occupational certification and licensing process."

In terms of policies and procedures, DCP recommends that a process be established whereby CTDOL submits a list to DCP at the end of each calendar year of service members who applied for and were granted a recommendation for review.

DCP also recommends that CTDOL provide a certificate verifying a recommendation for review to service members whom the Commissioner determines to have military training equivalent to the training required for completion of an apprenticeship program.

Department of Labor (CTDOL):

Existing law appears to be largely effective in addressing the challenges that service members face when applying for an occupational or professional license, a certificate, a registration or an educational credit upon discharge from military service or relocating to the state.

The agency's Office of Apprenticeship Training has been reviewing veterans' requests for 16 years pursuant to section 31-22u, which provides for a recommendation for review or a deduction from the hours of apprenticeship training. CTDOL also has maintained effective collaborations with the U.S. Navy Sub Base, the U.S. Coast Guard Academy, the state Department of Veterans Affairs and other partners.

CTDOL recognizes the growing need for improved employment services for military spouses, including professional license reciprocity, and plans to join with other agencies in that effort, similar to the current review process established for veterans.