

BILL ANALYSIS

Senate Research Center
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S.B. 162
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Veterans Affairs & Military Installations
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As Filed

AUTHOR'S / SPONSOR'S STATEMENT OF INTENT

Employment challenges for spouses of active duty service members and recently separated veterans remain an ongoing priority for the state. Passage of S.B. 162 seeks to ease the transition of service members and their families to civilian life by recognizing professional occupational licenses issued by other jurisdictions.

S.B. 162 requires state agencies that issue occupational licenses to provide an expedited licensure for military service members, military spouses, and military veterans within one year of separation from the military. Licensing agencies will be required to issue an occupational license to a qualified applicant who holds a current license issued by another jurisdiction, including a branch of the armed forces, as long as that license is substantially equivalent to licensing requirements in Texas. Licenses issued under this law expire 12 months after being issued. By the end of the 12 months, individuals are expected to meet Texas's requirements for the appropriate occupational license.

As proposed, S.B. 162 amends current law relating to the occupational licensing of members of the military and spouses of members of the military.

RULEMAKING AUTHORITY

Rulemaking authority is expressly granted to a state agency as defined in Section 55.001 (Definitions), Occupations Code, in SECTION 6 of this bill.

Rulemaking authority previously granted to a state agency as defined in Section 55.001 (Definitions), Occupations Code, is rescinded in SECTION 4 (Section 55.004, Occupations Code) of this bill.

SECTION BY SECTION ANALYSIS

SECTION 1. Amends the heading to Chapter 55, Occupations Code, to read as follows:

CHAPTER 55. LICENSING OF MILITARY SERVICE MEMBERS, RECENT VETERANS,
AND MILITARY SPOUSES

SECTION 2. Amends Section 55.001, Occupations Code, by adding Subdivisions (1-a), (1-b), and (1-c) to define "military service member," "military spouse," and "recent veteran."

SECTION 3. Amends Chapter 55, Occupations Code, by adding Sections 55.005 and 55.006, as follows:

Sec. 55.005. EXPEDITED LICENSE PROCEDURE. (a) Requires a state agency that issues a license to, as soon as practicable after a military service member, recent veteran, or military spouse files an application for a license process the application and issue a license to a qualified applicant who holds a current license issued by another jurisdiction, including a branch of the armed forces of the United States, that has licensing requirements that are substantially equivalent to the licensing requirements in this state.

(b) Provides that a license issued under this section may not be a provisional license and must confer the same rights, privileges, and responsibilities as a license not issued under this section.

Sec. 55.006. RENEWAL OF EXPEDITED LICENSE. (a) Requires, as soon as practicable after a state agency issues a license under Section 55.005, the state agency to determine the requirements for the license holder to renew the license. Requires the renewal requirements to be designed so that the license holder must, in order to renew the license, satisfy the requirements for the issuance of an original license in this state and the requirements to renew the license in this state.

(b) Requires the agency to notify the license holder of the requirements for renewing the license in writing.

(c) Provides that a license issued under Section 55.005 expires on the first anniversary of the date the state agency provides notice of the renewal requirements under Subsection (b). Prohibits the license holder from renewing the license unless the license holder complies with the renewal requirements described in Subsection (a).

SECTION 4. Repealer: Section 55.004 (Alternative Licensing Procedure for Military Spouse), Occupations Code.

SECTION 5. Makes application of this Act prospective.

SECTION 6. Requires a state agency that issues an occupational license to adopt any rules necessary to implement Sections 55.005 and 55.006, Occupations Code, as added by this Act, not later than January 1, 2014.

SECTION 7. Effective date: September 1, 2013.