



2024 DoD Quality of Life State Policy Priorities  
New Mexico Joint Interim Military and Veterans Committee  
September 6, 2023



U.S. Department of Defense

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STATE POLICY

# Defense-State Liaison Office Mission

- The Defense-State Liaison Office (DSLO) was established by the Office of the Undersecretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness in 2004.
- DSLO is charged to address designated Personnel and Readiness with state policymakers to change laws and policies to improve military family life.
- In the past decade, we have helped to enact over 1,000 bills covering a wide range of quality of life issues to include:
  - Family law, education, occupational licensure and employment support, consumer protection, voting, health policy, & National Guard support

**U.S. Department of Defense**

## Working With State Policymakers to Support Military Families

**Background**

The Defense-State Liaison Office works with state policymakers to change laws and policies to improve military family well-being. Each year, the DSLO focuses on 10 key priorities. For each priority, the Military State Policy Source website provides background information, official Defense Department data and status updates on relevant information across states.

**Purpose**

Many priorities impacting the well-being of service members and their families are best addressed by state governments. In 2004, the undersecretary of defense for Personnel and Readiness established an outreach program through the DSLO to educate state policymakers on unintended barriers created by state policies and other priorities important to military families.

**What We Do**

The DSLO has eight regional liaisons who live and work in regions of the United States. The liaisons assist state policymakers by providing educational information, identifying "best practice" legislation, and presenting testimony when requested.

**Track Record**

DSLO has assisted state policymakers in enacting more than 1,150 bills since 2008 covering occupational licensure, employment protection, consumer protection, family law, child care, child protection, voting, education, health care and state judicial systems.

**Explore Military State Policy Source**

Visit our website to access information on state policy priorities, track the status of legislation on these priorities across states and connect to official data from the Defense Department. Learn more at [statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil](https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil).

**MILITARY STATE POLICY SOURCE** Defense-State Liaison Office  
<https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil>



# DoD Focus on Quality of Life – Taking Care of Our Military Families

## September 2022 DOD Memo: Taking Care of Our Service Members and Their Families

“The Department of Defense has a sacred obligation to take care of our service members and families. Doing so is a national security imperative. Our military families provide the strong foundation for our force, and we owe them our full support.”  
– Lloyd J. Austin, secretary of defense

## September 2021 Joining Forces Report: Strengthening America’s Military Families

“The families of our service members and veterans, caregivers, and survivors ... may not wear a uniform ... but they sacrifice for us all. They give their best to the United States, and we owe them nothing but our best in return.”  
– Dr. Jill Biden, first lady



# 2024 Priorities – Military Spouse Employment and Economic Opportunities

- Many military spouse professionals must relicense each time they transfer with their active-duty spouse.
- As states implement the provision of the Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act, they can help military spouses maintain professional and financial stability by **enacting licensing compacts** and ensuring that licensing agencies **make their application processes accessible** to military spouses.
- New Mexico enacted HB 191 in 2022; Recommend substantiating and memorializing that this legislation meets the requirement of the federal law and ensure information on the law is clearly displayed on board websites.



On Jan. 5, 2023, President Joe Biden signed into law the Veterans Auto and Education Improvement Act of 2022 (H.R. 7939). Section 19 contains the Military Spouse Licensing Relief Act, which intends to provide for licensure portability among all 50 states for all service members and military spouse licensed professionals, except the practice of law.

# Interstate Occupational Licensure Compacts

The Department's optimum standard for licensure portability is allowing professionals to seamlessly practice across state lines.

## Current compacts being considered by states:

- ✓ Nurse Licensure Compact (NM Approved in 2018)
- Psychology Interjurisdictional Compact
- Physical Therapy Licensure Compact
- Emergency Medical Service Compact
- Audiology/Speech-Language Pathology – Interstate Compact
- Occupational Therapy Licensure Compact
- Licensed Professional Counselor Licensure Compact
- Advanced Practice Registered Nurse Licensure Compact
- Interstate Teacher Mobility Compact
- Physician's Associate Compact
- Massage Therapy Compact
- Cosmetology Compact
- Dentistry/Dental Hygiene Compact
- Social Work Compact



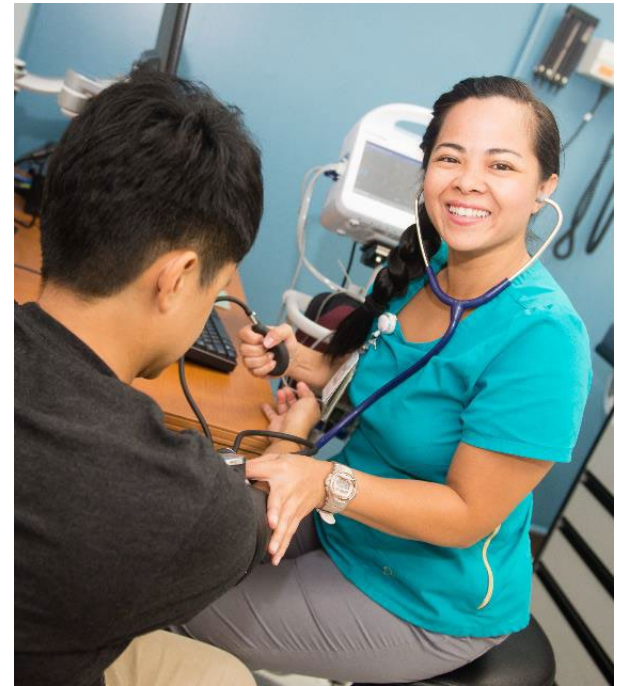
# 2024 Priorities – Military Child Care & Education

- ✓ **Open Enrollment Flexibility:** States can provide military families with increased flexibility through access to district open enrollment policies.
- ❑ **State Support for Military Families With Special Education Needs:** States can assist highly-mobile students with special education needs by streamlining processes to ensure timely establishment of comparable special education services upon relocation and reducing burdens associated with due process proceedings.
- ❑ **Military Access to Quality Family Child Care:** By recognizing military family child care certification, in lieu of requiring state licensing, states can enhance access to military child care and reduce the time on waitlists. States can also support Military Child Care in Your Neighborhood-PLUS, which increases access for active-duty, National Guard and reserve families.



# 2024 Priorities – Justice & Safety

- ✓ **Child Abuse Identification and Reporting:** States can assist military Family Advocacy Programs in providing needed support by requiring child protective services to report cases to the military at the onset of their investigations.
- ❑ **State Response to Military Interpersonal Violence:** While the DOD has led the implementation of enterprise-wide guidance on prevention, states can address harmful behaviors, such as sexual assault and domestic violence, by expanding protections for victims. Enacting state policy best practices can supplement federal program efforts and changes.
- ❑ **Concurrent Juvenile Jurisdiction:** On military installations subject to exclusive federal jurisdiction, investigation and adjudication of juvenile offenses is limited because cases may only be adjudicated in the federal system. States can adopt concurrent jurisdiction policies to ensure access to state resources and juvenile



# 2024 Priorities – Representation & Access

- ❑ **Defining Armed Forces in State Policy:** States can minimize disruptions in benefits and services for eligible service members and dependents by clearly defining “armed forces.”
- ❑ **Military Community Representation on State Boards and Councils:** By including members of the military community, states can ensure that unique operational requirements and military family priorities are considered across pertinent policy areas.
- ❑ **Military Family Anti-Discrimination Status:** To supplement employment protections under the Uniformed Services Employment and Reemployment Rights Act, states can add military family status as a class protected in state education, housing, public utilities and civil rights laws.





# Contact

Kelli May Douglas  
Pacific Southwest Regional Liaison  
[kelli.m.douglas.civ@mail.mil](mailto:kelli.m.douglas.civ@mail.mil)  
571-265-0075

See an overview of where your state stands on the DoD priorities for military families at [statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil](https://statepolicy.militaryonesource.mil).

