
Wisconsin Legislative Council

ACT MEMO



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2019 Wisconsin Act 143 [2019 Assembly Bill 731]

Reciprocal Credentials for Service Members and Spouses

2019 Wisconsin Act 143 specifies standards for issuing reciprocal credentials to service members, former service members, and their spouses. The reciprocity provisions apply to any occupational credential issued by the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS), one of the credentialing boards housed by DSPS, or the Veterinary Examining Board.

BACKGROUND

Prior to the enactment of the act, the statutes provided that a spouse of a service member was entitled to receive a reciprocal credential if all of the following criteria applied:

- The person temporarily resided in Wisconsin as a result of the spouse's service in the U.S. armed forces, a reserve unit of the armed forces, or the national guard of any state.
- The person held a license, certification, registration, or permit granted by a different jurisdiction that qualifies the person to perform the acts that are authorized under the credential for which he or she is applying.
- The person satisfied any other requirements established by rule for the particular profession.

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The act expands the authorization for reciprocal credentials to include service members, former service members, and spouses of service members or former service members. An applicant may submit an affidavit stating that he or she is a service member, former service member, or spouse of a service member or former service member, if no other documentation is available.

Additionally, the act provides that DSPS or the appropriate credentialing board must grant a reciprocal credential if the person pays a fee and satisfies all of the following requirements:

- Resides in Wisconsin.
- Holds a license, certification, registration, or permit granted by a different jurisdiction that qualifies the person to perform the acts authorized under the credential for which he or she is applying.
- Is in good standing in every other jurisdiction in which he or she holds the license, certification, registration, or permit upon which reciprocity is based.

The act requires DSPS or the applicable credentialing board to expedite the issuance of reciprocal credentials, and it provides that such credentials may be renewed indefinitely. If a reciprocal credential is granted within 180 days of the next renewal date, the credential holder is exempt from the first renewal period and the credential does not expire until the following renewal date.

Under the act, “service member” means a member of the U.S. armed forces, a reserve unit of the U.S. armed forces, or the national guard of any state. “Former service member” means a person who was discharged from the U.S. armed forces under conditions other than dishonorable within four years of the date on which the service member or spouse of the service member applies for a reciprocal credential. The term “spouse” includes the spouse of a person who died while in service in the U.S. armed forces or in forces incorporated as part of the U.S. armed forces.

The act authorizes DSPS or any applicable credentialing board to promulgate rules to implement the issuance of reciprocal credentials.

Effective date: The act took effect on March 5, 2020, and initially applied to any application for a reciprocal credential received on that date. With regard to the expiration and renewal of reciprocal credentials, the act initially applied to any reciprocal credential that was valid on March 5, 2020.

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