

Date of Hearing: May 12, 2021

ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
Lorena Gonzalez, Chair
AB 225 (Gray) – As Amended April 20, 2021

Policy Committee:	Business and Professions	Vote:	18 - 0
	Military and Veterans Affairs		11 - 0

Urgency: No State Mandated Local Program: Yes Reimbursable: No

SUMMARY:

This bill expands eligibility for a temporary professional license issued by the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) to an active-duty member of the military with official orders for separation within 90 days and to a veteran within six months of separation from active duty, and requires a temporary license to expire 18 months after issuance, rather than the current 12 months. Specifically, this bill:

- 1) Expands eligibility for the issuance of a temporary professional license issued by DCA to:
 - a) A veteran of the Armed Forces of the United States within six months of separation from active duty under other-than-dishonorable conditions
 - b) An active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States with official orders for separation within 90 days under other-than-dishonorable conditions.
- 2) Requires a temporary license issued to a spouse or domestic partner of an active-duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States officially stationed in California or to those listed in 1) above, to expire 18 months after issuance, upon issuance of a standard license, a license by endorsement or an expedited license, whichever occurs first.

FISCAL EFFECT:

Estimated information technology (IT) costs of approximately \$150,000 (special funds) to DCA for IT updates across multiple IT platforms. An expiration date change from 12 months to 18 months would be necessary on specified temporary license types. DCA notes contractor resources will be required and IT implementation is projected to take 12 months.

COMMENTS:

- 1) **Purpose.** This bill seeks to improve opportunities for professional licensure for military spouses and veterans of the Armed Forces of the United States to better support military families.
- 2) **Background.** DCA consists of 37 boards and bureaus that regulate over 3.9 million licensees across 250 professions and occupations. Each regulatory board is responsible for the licensing and enforcement processes of the professions under its respective jurisdiction. As part of the licensing process, boards determine the competency of each applicant by

reviewing educational transcripts, administering examinations and facilitating federal background checks.

- 3) **Veterans, Active-duty Personnel and Military Spouses.** The state has enacted several measures to assist with the licensure and renewal process for active-duty military personnel, military spouses and veterans. For veterans, existing law requires boards to expedite the licensing process for any application received from a veteran. Existing law also allows an individual licensed in California who leaves for active duty to reinstate their license upon discharge without examination or penalty, and waives all renewal fees, education requirements and other renewal requirements.

For military spouses of active-duty members of the military stationed in California, existing law requires boards to expedite the licensure process, under the condition the spouse is currently licensed outside of the state and is seeking an equivalent license in California. In addition, specific regulatory boards are required, after appropriate investigation, to issue a temporary license to a spouse or domestic partner of an active duty member of the military stationed in California who holds an active license in another state and who has not faced disciplinary issues. The following licenses may be granted temporarily:

- a) Registered nurses licenses by the Board of Registered Nursing.
- b) Vocational nurse licenses issued by the Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians of the State of California.
- c) Psychiatric technician licenses issued by the Board of Vocational Nursing and Psychiatric Technicians of the State of California.
- d) Speech-language pathologist licenses issued by the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensers Board.
- e) Audiologist licenses issued by the Speech-Language Pathology and Audiology and Hearing Aid Dispensers Board.
- f) Veterinarian licenses issued by the Veterinary Medical Board.
- g) All licenses issued by the Board for Professional Engineers, Land Surveyors, and Geologists.
- h) All licenses issued by the Medical Board of California.
- i) All licenses issued by the Podiatric Medical Board of California.

Currently, these temporary licenses are valid for 12 months. This bill would expand that to 18 months and extend eligibility to certain veterans and active-duty members of the armed forces.

- 4) **Related Legislation.**

AB 107 (Salas), of this legislative session, would require all DCA licensing boards to issue temporary licenses within 30 days to the spouses of active-duty members of the military who meet certain requirements, and would require specified state departments to annually report to the Legislature licensing information relating to service members, spouses and veterans. AB 107 is pending in this committee.

AB 1026 (Smith), of this legislative session, would require every licensing board and bureau under DCA to grant a 50% fee reduction for an initial license to an honorably discharged veteran. AB 1026 is pending in this committee.

AB 1386 (Cunningham), of this legislative session, prohibits a licensing board or bureau under the Department of Consumer Affairs (DCA) from charging an initial or original license fee to an applicant who holds a current similar license in another state and is the spouse of an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States stationed in California. AB 1386 is pending in this committee.

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