

SLPAHAD Practices Board,

As a military spouse and licensed speech-language pathologist (SLP) in the state of New Mexico, I would like to present comments on the proposed amendment *16.26.11 NMAC-Licensure for Military Service Members, Spouses and Veterans*.

The proposed changes to this amendment define those eligible for expedited licensure as "service member." New Mexico has a strong military presence and the 5 following military bases are located in the state:

- Kirtland Air Force Base ( Albuquerque, NM)
- Cannon Air Force Base (Clovis, NM)
- Holloman Air Force Base (Otero, NM)
- White Sands Missile Range Army Base (Otero, NM)
- Los Alamos Demolition Army Base (Los Alamos, NM)

These are Air Force and Army bases, and neither of these military branches offer career opportunities to active duty service members as SLPs. Thus, eliminating speech-language pathologists from being eligible for expedited licensure under this proposed amendment.

However, there are a number of military spouses that are SLPs. From my graduate school cohort alone at New Mexico State University, I am 1 of 3 military spouse SLPs from a class of 25. As military spouses, we must move frequently with limited knowledge as to where we will be moving and when we will be moving. Therefore, limited time is permitted to secure state licensure and begin a job. This past summer, I accepted a job working as an SLP in Albuquerque Public Schools after leaving my job in Texas due to military relocation. The SLPAHAD Practices Board showed consideration for my unique circumstances as a military spouse, and I am glad to be serving as an SLP in New Mexico. I would like to ask the board to continue to extend consideration to other military spouse SLPs. In doing so, New Mexico will increase the number of SLPs servicing the state. In my personal experience serving as an SLP in the Land of Enchantment, I understand the strong need for SLPs in New Mexico, especially in the rural areas and among the diverse populations.

From my personal experience and research, I have encountered a few models other states are using to support expedited SLP state licensure for military spouses. Additionally, these models may attract more non-military affiliated SLPs to service the state overall. These models include 1) Military Spouse Expedited Licensure, 2) Licensure by Reciprocity, and 3) the Audiology & Speech-Language Pathology Interstate Compact (ASLP-IC). I would like to invite the SLPAHAD Practices Board to explore these options.

Military Spouse Expedited Licensure Form in Alabama requires:

- Application Form
- Information regarding the service member spouse of the applicant's duty status

- Information regarding active licensure in other states
- Department of Defense dependent ID (or proof of marriage)
- Copy of the permanent change of station military orders

Licensure by Reciprocity in Alabama requires:

- Personal identifying information
- Current state license/ license number
- Verification from the state of current licensure or ASHA that the individual is in good standing to practice
- Copy of the current licensed state's laws and rules on speech-language pathology/audiology

The ASLP-IC is an interstate compact promoting the practice of audiology and speech-language pathology while sustaining public protection. Benefits of the ASLP-IC listed are as follows:

- Improves continuity of care
- Improves portability for military spouses
- Improves access to audiology and speech-language pathology providers
- Increases choice of audiology and speech-language pathology providers
- Facilitates alternate delivery methods (Telehealth)
- Simplifies/speeds up the current process
- Addresses portability & barriers to access
- Practice of audiology and speech-language pathology occurs in the state where the patient/client is located at the time of the patient/client encounter MaG

I appreciate the SLPAHAD Practices Board's consideration to facilitate smooth, timely, and quality SLP licensure to military spouses in New Mexico. In doing so, a greater number of SLPs will be available to provide speech-language services to high-need areas and populations throughout the state.

Thank you,



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