

Occupational Licenses for Veterans and Service Members

2026 GENERAL SESSION

STATE OF UTAH

Chief Sponsor: Heidi Balderree

House Sponsor: Val L. Peterson

LONG TITLE**General Description:**

This bill addresses provisions related to veterans and service members obtaining an occupational license.

Highlighted Provisions:

This bill:

- requires the Division of Professional Licensing, in consultation with the Department of Veterans and Military Affairs, to:

- prepare a document, spreadsheet, or other resource available to the public that details when a veteran or service member's past skills, experience, credentials, training, or education obtained in the military are substantially equivalent to current required training or education requirements for a license and can substitute for unfulfilled licensure requirements; and

- accept a veteran or service member's past substantially equivalent skills, experience, credentials, training, or education obtained while in the military when granting a license; and

- includes a sunset provision for a report by the Division of Professional Licensing.

Money Appropriated in this Bill:

None

Other Special Clauses:

None

Utah Code Sections Affected:

AMENDS:

63I-2-258, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, Chapter 277

71A-1-201, as last amended by Laws of Utah 2025, First Special Session, Chapter 15

ENACTS:

58-1-313, Utah Code Annotated 1953

31 *Be it enacted by the Legislature of the state of Utah:*

32 Section 1. Section **58-1-313** is enacted to read:

33 **58-1-313 . Veteran licensing.**

34 (1) As used in this section:

35 (a) "License" means an authorization that permits the holder to engage in the practice of
36 a profession regulated under this title.

37 (b) "Service member" means the same as that term is defined in Section 71A-1-101.

38 (2) The division shall, in consultation with the Department of Veterans and Military Affairs:

39 (a) identify skills, experience, credentials, training, and education that an individual can
40 obtain in the armed forces;

41 (b) determine to what level the skills, experience, credentials, training, and education
42 described in Subsection (2)(a) are substantially equivalent to current requirements in
43 statute or administrative rule for a license and can substitute for the requirements; and

44 (c) prepare and update as necessary a document, spreadsheet, or other resource
45 accessible by the public on the division's website detailing the information described
46 in Subsection (2)(a) and (b).

47 (3) If a veteran or service member applies for a license and does not meet the current
48 required training or education requirements established in statute or administrative rule
49 for the license, the division shall give credit to the veteran or service member for
50 relevant skills, experience, credentials, training, or education obtained while in the
51 armed forces based on the determination described in Subsection (2)(b).

52 (4) On or before November 1, 2028, the division shall provide a report the Business and
53 Labor Interim Committee regarding:

54 (a) the number of applicants for a license who are veterans or service members that have
55 successfully been granted a license under this section; and

56 (b) any legislative recommendations for changes to this section.

57 Section 2. Section **63I-2-258** is amended to read:

58 **63I-2-258 . Repeal dates: Title 58.**

59 [Reserved.] Subsection 58-1-313(4), regarding a report by the Division of Professional
60 Licensing, is repealed January 1, 2029.

61 Section 3. Section **71A-1-201** is amended to read:

62 **71A-1-201 . Department of Veterans and Military Affairs -- Creation --**
63 **Appointment of executive director -- Department responsibilities.**

64 (1) There is created the Department of Veterans and Military Affairs.

- (2) The governor shall appoint an executive director for the department who is subject to Senate confirmation.
- (3) The executive director shall be a veteran.
- (4) The department shall:
- (a) conduct and supervise all veteran and military affairs activities as provided in this title;
 - (b) adopt rules in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, to carry out the provisions of this title;
 - (c) in accordance with Section 41-1a-418:
 - (i) determine which campaign or combat theater awards are eligible for a special group license plate;
 - (ii) verify that an applicant for a campaign or combat theater award special group license plate is qualified to receive it; and
 - (iii) provide an applicant that qualifies a form indicating the campaign or combat theater award special group license plate for which the applicant qualifies;
 - (d) maintain liaison with local, state, and federal veterans agencies and with Utah veterans organizations;
 - (e) provide current information to veterans, service members, their surviving spouses and family members, and Utah veterans and military organizations on benefits they are entitled to;
 - (f) assist veterans, service members, and their families in applying for benefits and services;
 - (g) cooperate with other state entities in the receipt of information to create and maintain a record of veterans in Utah;
 - (h) create and administer a veterans assistance registry in accordance with Chapter 5, Veterans Assistance Registry, with recommendations from the council, that provides contact information to the qualified donors of materials and labor for certain qualified recipients;
 - (i) identify military-related issues, challenges, and opportunities, and develop plans for addressing them;
 - (j) develop, coordinate, and maintain relationships with military leaders of Utah military installations, including the National Guard;
 - (k) develop and maintain relationships with military-related organizations in Utah;
 - (l) consult with municipalities and counties regarding compatible use plans as described

in Sections 10-20-620 and 17-79-616;

(m) enforce a food delivery dead zone as described in Section 13-80-201;

(n) work in conjunction with the Utah Homeless Services Board to create best practices for helping veterans, as that term is defined in Section 68-3-12.5, avoid homelessness;

(o) provide services and benefits directly or indirectly to service members, veterans, and families of service members and veterans, including services and benefits related to claims, health care, employment, education, mental wellness, counseling, business, housing, recognition, camaraderie, and other functions;[~~and~~]

(p) serve as the State Approving Agency under United States Code, Title 38, Veterans Benefits[~~;~~] ; and

(q) consult with the Division of Professional Licensing regarding licensing for veterans and service members as described in Section 58-1-313.

(5)(a) The department may award grants for the purpose of supporting veteran and military outreach, employment, education, healthcare, homelessness prevention, and recognition events.

(b) The department may award a grant described in Subsection (5)(a) to:

(i) an institution of higher education listed in Section 53H-1-102;

(ii) a nonprofit organization involved in veterans or military-related activities; or

(iii) a political subdivision of the state.

(c) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the department shall make rules for the administration of grants, including establishing:

(i) the form and process for submitting an application to the department;

(ii) the method and criteria for selecting a grant recipient;

(iii) the method and formula for determining a grant amount; and

(iv) the reporting requirements of a grant recipient.

(6)(a) The department may:

(i) receive gifts, contributions, and donations to support service members, veterans, families of service members and veterans, and military missions, including tangible objects and real property, if the department uses the gifts, contributions, and donations for the benefit of, or in connection with, service members, veterans, families of service members and veterans, or military missions; and

(ii) in accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, make rules related to the administration of gifts, contributions, and donations described in Subsection (6)(a).

133 (b) A gift, contribution, or donation received by the department as described in
134 Subsection (6)(a), does not revert to the General Fund and is considered non-lapsing
135 funds.

136 (7) In accordance with Title 63G, Chapter 3, Utah Administrative Rulemaking Act, the
137 department may make rules related to:

138 (a) the consultation with municipalities and counties regarding compatible use plans as
139 required in Subsection (4)(l); and

140 (b) criteria to evaluate whether a proposed land use is compatible with military
141 operations.

142 (8) Nothing in this chapter alters or preempts any provisions of Title 39A, National Guard
143 and Militia Act, as specifically related to the National Guard.

144 Section 4. **Effective Date.**

145 This bill takes effect on May 6, 2026.