Wisconsin’s Proposal to Streamline Veterans’ Licensing and Certification

Policy Academy Meeting
November 20, 2013
Washington, D.C.
Recap: Occupations

1. Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)
2. Commercial Drivers License (CDL)
3. Police Officer
Deliverables: Outputs Produced Through the Policy Academy

- Equivalency standards broadened beyond the Army Medic 68W & include Navy & Air Force medical staff;
- New data collection processes to integrate multiple databases maintained by separate State departments into one database which also captures timeliness, success rate, & long-term outcomes;
- Develop “feeder” systems of large employers who commit to interview/hire and/or help veterans in these occupations. “Help” can be a trucking company that lets veterans use their trucks for the skills test;

(continued)
Deliverables: Outputs Produced Through the Policy Academy

- Develop bridge programs, as needed, to supplement military training to meet civilian workplace needs & pass credentialing exams such as:
  - Pediatrics, geriatrics and domestic, child & elderly abuse & neglect;
  - Knowledge of civilian rules/laws pertaining to police officers & truckers.

- Gap assessments to ID obstacles to obtaining civilian credentials:
  - Knowledge of the credentials waiver program—Add a web link on WI Tax Form 1 for military personnel who plan to separate or deploy home soon. The link will give the waiver information & forms needed for the CO, physician & training program staff to complete & sign;
  (continued)
Deliverables: Outputs Produced Through the Policy Academy

- **Gap assessments (continued):**
  - Knowledge of the military training & experience of separating veterans & who may need employment help and/or the knowledge of VA education benefits. There is currently no link between separation date, military training, employment status & employment objectives;
  - Identify where we can inform veterans of the credentialing program—WI tax form, discharge debriefing, receive the 214, if/when apply for unemployment, or while applying to schools for these programs. Ideally we will reach & inform all military personnel of these programs if they had the military training and experience.

- **Enhanced Baseline Data**
  - The core team will discuss the data held by State departments & what is needed to measure our effectiveness. We will retrieve data manually to establish some baseline data.
Current CDL Process for Nonveterans with Regular Drivers License:

1. Study for the knowledge exams with the free on-line CDL manual or obtain manual at DMV Service Center;
2. Take the knowledge exam (free), complete MV3001 (DL Application) & obtain Commercial Instruction Permit ($30) at a DMV Service Center;
3. The Permit allows the person to practice (with a licensed CDL driver in the vehicle). The Permit is required for the skills test;
4. Take and Pass the skills exam (up to $150, more if need to rent a vehicle) with a WI Examiner;
5. Submit MV3230 (Tier Certification) and a Federal Medical Card (if Tier 1 or 3 certified);
6. Pay $74 for CDL product.
Current CDL Process for Veterans with Military Truck Driving Experience:

1. Study for the knowledge exam with the free on-line CDL manual or obtain manual at DMV Service Center;
2. Take the knowledge exam (free), complete MV3001 (DL Application), MV3230 (Tier Certification), and MV3588 (Military CDL Exam Waiver – signed by commanding/training officer);
3. Submit Federal Medical Card, if Tier 1 or 3 certified;
4. Pay $74 and obtain CDL Product within 90 days of discharge.
Current LPN Process for Nonveterans:

1. Applicant enrolls in and completes a one or two year vocational or associate degree LPN program;
2. Applicant completes licensure request form #738 & submits with $90 fee to WI DSPS;
3. Applicant may complete a temporary work permit, form #2433, with a fee of $10, which allows limited work while awaiting the NCLEX results;
4. Applicant completes the top of form #259, Statement of Graduation or Completion & sends to his/her school of nursing to verify graduation. The school returns the completed form to the WI Board of Nursing (BON);
5. DSPS reviews documentation & informs applicant he/she can register for the NCLEX exam;
6. Applicant prepares for & registers for the NCLEX exam (cost $200);
7. DSPS informs applicant they have passed the test;
8. DSPS issues the license to the successful applicant on behalf of BON.
Current LPN Process for Medically Trained Veterans:

1. Veteran completes licensure request form #738, education equivalency & fee waiver request form #2996 & submits to DSPS with:
   - Military School Academic Reports with dates & grades;
   - Certificates of training for special programs;
   - Training documentation signed by your Unit’s NCO;
   - A written personal narrative about why the military education/training/experience has prepared you to be an LPN;
   - Other documents if any arrests/convictions (Form #2252) &/or copies of lawsuits/claims against them.

2. Veteran may complete a temporary work permit, form #2433, with a fee of $10, which allows limited work while awaiting the NCLEX results;

3. DSPS staff process the documents and create an application checklist in the ICE database. DSPS reviews documentation & informs applicant he/she can register for the NCLEX exam;

4. Applicant prepares for & registers for the NCLEX exam (cost $200);

5. DSPS informs applicant they have passed the test;

6. DSPS issues the license to the successful applicant on behalf of BON.
Current Process for Nonveterans to Become a Police Officer:

- Meet minimum employment standards set by the Board.
- Be employed as an officer with an agency. Employing agencies submit form DJ-LE-303, the Verification of Employment Standards and Application for Certification form, electronically to the Bureau along with applicant fingerprints immediately upon hiring a new officer, and prior to that officer’s first date of employment.
- Successfully complete the required preparatory training (520 hours) for certification;
- Employed passing applicants will have their name presented for certification at the quarterly Law Enforcement Standards Board meeting.

A person can attend the Academy without employment at their expense ($2,950) & then meet the standards & seek employment. Few take this path.
Current Process for Military Police (MP) Veterans to Become a Police Officer:

1. Must have one year of FT MP experience & 60 college credits (30 waived for military);
2. MUST have FT/PT police position or conditional job offer & then apply to take Reciprocity Exam;
3. The applicant completes the Reciprocity Exam Application & sends to DOJ Training & Standards Bureau with the conditional job offer or place of employment. The 18-month clock starts with date of employment/conditional employment;
4. DOJ staff review application & checks for military police experience, job offer and verifies attendance & completion of military training program usually within 30 days;
5. DOJ staff sends the applicant an acceptance letter with web link to the study material. The Reciprocity Exam is offered six times a year & costs $245. (Because the Exam is a waiver of training, not reimbursed by VA);
6. The applicant must pass the exam within the 18-month window. If applicant fails the exam one re-test is allowed. If fail a 2nd time, must take the full Academy training;
7. Employed passing applicants will have their name presented for certification at the quarterly Law Enforcement Standards Board meeting. Applicants with conditional employment must gain employment within 3 years to be certified.
Wisconsin Provides Additional Educational Benefits & Job Supports:

1. The WI GI Bill provides a full waiver (remission) of tuition & fees for eligible veterans & dependents for up to 8 FT semesters or 128 credits (whichever is greatest) at any UW System or WI Technical College for undergraduate through doctoral level program;

2. The WI Board of Nursing (BON) delegated the approval process to a BON-liaison to waive Army medic’ military training & experience as equivalent to an LPN/VN associate degree training;

3. One initial professional/occupational license fee can be waived per qualified veteran;

4. 2011 Wisconsin Act 120 allows some service member’s military training to satisfy the training requirements for various licensed occupations such as Public Health Officer, Food Sanitation Manager, Poison Control Specialist, First Responder, etc.
Challenges:

- Building links between State databases. State Departments have pieces of the information needed;
- Getting the information to the military person BEFORE discharge;
- Educating prospective employers on how well military training & experiences translate to civilian work;
- Expediting the review & approval of military curriculum as equivalent to civilian training & credentials.
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Challenges Specific to CDL Credentials:

- To be eligible for a military CDL skills test waiver, military CDL holders must apply within 90 days of military operation;
- The pass rate for the CDL knowledge test (which cannot be waived) is 47%. CDL Driver Manual review classes could assist in getting more persons licensed with the 90 day timeline;
- Most CDL holders require a fed-med card. Separating veterans can save $$$ & time, if able to obtain a fed-med card via a military medical provider;
- Veterans ineligible for the military waiver, but interested in a career driving commercial motor vehicles should be directed to training programs that participate in GI education funding.
Challenges Specific to LPN Credentials:

- Too few military have taken the exam (that we know of). We need to capture pass rate & increase if <90%;
- May need a “LPN Refresher” or “Bridge” course frequently available for a short duration—6 weeks or less;
- The LPN applicants need training documentation NCO-signed, academic records & grades & a narrative of the value of LPN military experience. Separating veterans can save $$ & time, if obtain documents while in military;
- The BON-liaison can only waive Army medics training. We want to enlarge to include the other service branches.
Challenges Specific to Police Officers Obtaining Credentials:

- Misconceptions about the risk of employing combat veterans who could experience PTSD. A very few incidents have received a lot of publicity. We need to emphasize that combat veterans are low risk employees with greater benefit return because of their training and experience;

- Not enough veterans know that passing the Reciprocity Exam can waive the 520 hours of police training.
Technical Needs:

- Deliver a monthly electronic file of WI military people who plan to separate in the next 90 days. The file should contain the information on the 214.
Non-Technical Needs:

- Curriculum of medical military, truck drivers, & police personnel from all branches;
- Input & data from Veterans about their transition from the military into the civilian workforce & what services would have helped. How long do discharged veterans receive unemployment? What skill sets gain employment faster?
Meeting Objectives

- Establish military point(s) of contact & obtain resources & curriculum on military training & experience;
- Establish other contacts for assessing equivalency of military training;
- Establish contacts with other state’s licensure staff & compare processes, plans and challenges;
- Collect available information regarding Bridge programs, or pre-NCLEX practice tests or study courses;
- Determine what Federal data is available to States.
Next Steps

- Compile military point(s) of contact for the different occupations and data acquisition;
- Investigate what steps need to occur for WI to obtain information about WI military people who are separating or returning from deployment;
- Identify the strengths & processes used by other States to expedite the credentialing process for military personnel;
- Establish communication with the military discharge centers to learn what veterans are needing;
- Develop our home team (listed on the next slide).
Home Team Will Include a Representative from:

- Wisconsin Board of Nursing;
- Police academies and Technical Schools;
- Wisconsin Police Association;
- Wisconsin Veterans Nursing Homes;
- Employer Support of the Guard & Reserve (ESGR) organization;
- Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association;
- Schneider, Millis and/or Roehl Trucking Companies.