

TRAINING AND EMPLOYMENT NOTICE	NO. 2-16
	DATE July 11, 2016

TO: AMERICAN JOB CENTER DIRECTORS
 DEPARTMENT OF LABOR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING REGIONAL
 ADMINISTRATORS
 DEPARTMENT OF LABOR VETERANS EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING
 SERVICE REGIONAL ADMINISTRATORS
 STATE WORKFORCE AGENCY ADMINISTRATORS
 STATE WORKFORCE INNOVATION AND OPPORTUNITY ACT LIAISONS
 AND ADMINISTRATORS
 STATE WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD (WDB) CHAIRS
 LOCAL WDB CHAIRS
 STATE WDB EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS
 LOCAL WDB EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

FROM: PORTIA WU /s/
 Assistant Secretary
 Employment and Training Administration

TERESA W. GERTON for MICHAEL MICHAUD /s/
 Assistant Secretary
 Veterans' Employment and Training Service

Subject: Release and Availability of a Final Report, *Veterans' Licensing and Certification Demonstration – A Summary of State Experiences, Preliminary Findings, and Cost Estimates: Final Report; September 2015*

1. Purpose. To announce the release and availability of a final report, *Veterans' Licensing and Certification Demonstration – A Summary of State Experiences, Preliminary Findings, and Cost Estimates: Final Report; September 2015*; and to provide an overview of a framework to help states accelerate licensing and certification into civilian occupations by veterans preliminary findings and relevant cost estimates.

2. References.

- 38 U.S.C. 4114, as amended by the VOW to Hire Heroes Act of 2011 (VOW Act), Section 237; Public Law (P.L.) 112-56
- Consolidated Appropriations 2012, P.L. 112-74, Division F, Title I, Department of Labor
- Training and Employment Notice No. 06-15; Release and Availability of an Interim Report, "Veterans' Licensing and Certification Demonstration"; August 18, 2015
- The Veterans' Licensing and Certification Demonstration, Interim Report, March 2015

3. **Background.** Section 237 of the VOW Act required the U. S. Department of Labor (DOL) to carry out a demonstration project on credentialing “for the purpose of facilitating the seamless transition of members of the Armed Forces from service on active duty to civilian employment,” (38 U.S.C. 4114(a), as amended by the VOW Act, Section 237, P.L. 112-56). Pursuant to the authorizing statute, VETS was required to cooperate with other Federal, State, and industry officials to reduce or eliminate any barriers to providing credentials, certifications, or licenses to veterans who acquire any skill, training, or experience within a select number of military occupational specialties that satisfied the Federal and State credential, certification, or license requirements.

In August 2015, the Employment and Training Administration (ETA) released an [interim report](http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_resultDetails&pub_id=2566&mp=y) (http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm?fuseaction=dsp_resultDetails&pub_id=2566&mp=y) that described a plan for the three distinct phases and activities of the demonstration project. The final report that accompanies this TEN describes the experiences of six states, includes preliminary findings that support a blueprint to inform other state-led efforts to accelerate veterans’ licensing and certification, and provides estimates of potential cost savings for veterans participating in accelerated licensure pathways. The accelerated licensure pathways in the demonstration examined three military occupational specialties:

- Medic (Army 68W, Navy Hospital Corpsman, Air Force 4N0X1)
- Police (Army 31B, Navy Master-At-Arms, Air Force 3P0X1, Marine Corps 5811)
- Truck Driver (Army 88M, Marine Corps 3531)

To identify gaps and state strategies, the selected military occupational specialties were aligned to six relevant high-demand civilian occupations: emergency medical technicians /paramedics, licensed practical nurses (LPNs), police patrol officers, bus and truck drivers, registered nurses, and physical therapy assistants.

The final report, *Veterans’ Licensing and Certification Demonstration – A Summary of State Experiences, Preliminary Findings, and Cost Estimates* provides a summary of state experience and preliminary findings. The findings emerged from the policy academies¹, research and analysis, and technical assistance provided the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices. The report presents the context for the demonstration project and describes the intergovernmental efforts across Federal agencies to identify equivalencies between military and civilian occupations. Through these efforts, opportunities for service members to earn civilian credentials and licenses were identified that included military specialties that readily transferred to high-demand jobs. Funding this demonstration allowed six states to work with Federal partners and national associations to address the gaps between the military occupations identified and civilian occupational requirements selected for this project.

¹ Policy academies offer opportunities for state teams to learn about promising practices, gain insights from national subject matter experts, and provide other resources that guide the state teams in action planning to support existing or expand new initiatives.

4. Demonstration and Cost Study Approach.

The *Veterans' Licensing and Certification Demonstration* project was designed to engage states in a maximum of five military occupational specialties whose skill sets overlap with civilian occupations in industries with high demand or growth. Primary sources of information for this demonstration project included: Federal, state, and industry representatives; state quarterly progress reports and action plans; telephone interviews; and site visits to each of the six states. The six state teams from: Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Nevada, Virginia, and Wisconsin designed and implemented action plans that were also supported by technical assistance, peer learning opportunities, and access to national experts. The policy academy approach focused on building capacity within each state to implement and sustain strategies beyond the demonstration period.

The cost study defined and estimated potential federal cost savings for veterans' that participate in accelerated licensure or credential pathways from military to civilian occupations. To define the cost savings measures, the states agreed that accelerated training programs or activities reduce duplicative training, allow veterans to earn a credential in less time which may lead to less time spent in benefits claimed. To produce the most meaningful comparisons, the cost study focuses on two occupations where specific demonstration data was available – licensed practical nurse and paramedic. The data identified for this approach includes duration of programs, credit hours required, and program locations for both standard and accelerated pathways.

To support the research and analysis conducted for the demonstration and cost study, the National Governors' Association completed a national scan of state executive orders and legislation enacted between 2013 and 2015; identified demonstration-specific State Executive Orders and Legislation; provided a summary of state strategies and results by occupation; and collected a host of occupation-specific resources as part of their approach to share the blueprint with other states interested in replicating the framework described in the final report.

5. Report Findings. While the demonstration and cost study were limited to a set of specific high-demand occupations, the three types of barriers the demonstration and cost study identified are the same barriers commonly encountered by transitioning service members and veterans more generally:

- Veterans who have military training and experience that are equivalent to that of licensed civilians often find that civilian licensing boards are not accustomed to recognizing the military documentation of their training and experience.
- Veterans that experience gaps between their military training and experience and civilian requirements may have to participate in duplicative training to attain relevant licensure or certification.

- Administrative rules and processes within civilian licensing and credentialing systems may create hurdles for veterans to obtain licensure or certification unrelated to their ability to competently provide professional services to the public.

In turn, the demonstration identified several strategies for states to accelerate the licensing and certification of veterans based on the particular challenges. The strategies address:

- Equivalency challenges – states can assess the equivalency of military training courses and use official documentation to permit veterans with fully or partially equivalent training and experience to sit for civilian licensure examinations or license veterans by endorsement (officially recognize military training and experience to meet civilian requirements).
- Training gaps – states can work with education institutions to set up accelerated programs for veterans that bridge gaps, provide veterans advanced standing in existing programs, or offer bridge courses that prepare veterans to enter existing programs.
- Administrative or process challenges – states can assess any non-skill related requirements that might disadvantage veterans, such as fees or length of experience, or take steps to make civilian employment pathways friendlier to veterans through concerted outreach to both veterans and prospective employers.

The cost study focused on estimating potential federal cost savings as a result of state efforts to accelerate veterans’ licensure and certification, and potential savings were defined as:

- Less time spent in training can lead to potential deferred federal government costs in the form of fewer dollars expended by the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) under the Post-9/11 GI Bill for tuition and monthly housing allowance benefits;²
- Less time spent securing employment can lead to potential cost savings for the federal government in the form of fewer dollars expended by the Department of Defense (DOD) for Unemployment Compensation for Ex-Service members (UCX) benefits and by the DOL for the delivery of employment services.

The demonstration data restricted the scope of the cost study and analysis to the accelerated programs developed for LPNs and Paramedics. The final report examines: potential per participant reduction in time and potential reduction in combined GI Bill benefits deferred; potential savings to UCX benefits; and potential cost savings of delivering employment services to veterans through Wagner-Peyser and the Jobs for Veterans State Grants.

6. **Inquiries.** To view an abstract of this publication, as well as download the full report, visit the ETA Research Publication Database Website at:
<http://wdr.doleta.gov/research/keyword.cfm>.

² The Post 9/11 GI Bill provides up to 36 months of education benefits, generally available for up to 15 years after active duty service. Such benefits may include a monthly housing allowance, an annual books and supplies stipend, and a one-time rural benefit payment; Source: http://www.benefits.va.gov/gibill/post911_gibill.asp.