



Key Personnel and Readiness Issues Supporting Service Members and Families



(For 2014)

HIGH PRIORITY ISSUES:

Facilitate Service members receiving licensure and academic credit for military education, training and experience: Separating Service members may be held back from finding employment or finishing a degree. States can establish assist separating Service members not having to repeat requirements completed while in the military to obtain academic credit or an occupational license.

Facilitate military spouse transition through licensure portability and eligibility for unemployment compensation: Mandatory military moves require spouses to leave employment and start again in a state with new licensing requirements. States can help by expediting licensing through endorsement, temporary licensure and streamlined processes. States should also recognize that these mandatory job separations should afford military spouses eligibility for unemployment compensation.

Provide authority for establishing Veteran Treatment Courts (VTCs): One in five veterans suffer from behavioral health problems. These problems can result in homelessness, family stress and/or disintegration, and instances of criminal behavior. States can help by authorizing VTCs to facilitate rehabilitation (instead of incarceration) for veterans and service members experiencing problems.

Increase access to quality childcare for military families: Demand for child care continues to out-pace capacity. States can assist in enhancing available capacity by integrating DoD standards on inspections and background checks into their Quality Rating and Improvement Systems (QRIS) for child care programs.

Promote consumer protections and enforcement of the predatory lending regulation: Some lending practices create a cycle of debt, thus detracting from financial wellbeing and military readiness. States can help by working with the military community on consumer concerns and by fully enforcing the DoD Regulation on payday, vehicle title, and refund anticipation loans.

Waive required waiting time to establish residency for separating Service members so they can obtain in-state tuition rates: The Post 9/11 GI Bill covers only in-state tuition and eligible fees, which means that veterans who settle in a state as a nonresident pay the difference between the resident and non-resident charges. States can waive residency requirements to allow separating Service members to receive in-state tuition rates until they qualify for residency.

Assign an identifier for military children in education data systems: Military children may experience life challenges, but there is no method of tracking their attendance and academic progress in public schools. States can assist DoD in developing policy and military child education initiatives, by identifying military children and providing data on their educational outcomes.

ISSUES NEARING COMPLETION:

Improve absentee voting for military members and their families: Citizens need assurance their vote will be counted. States can approve the Uniform Military and Overseas Voter Act (UMOVA) which supports the flexible processes for absentee voters in the areas recommended by the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) Office.

Minimize School Disruption for Military Children During Transition and Deployment: Military life creates challenges for children who attend an average of 8 schools in 12 years, plus parental separation during deployments. States can help by participating in the Interstate Compact on Educational Opportunity for Military Children which establishes common guidelines for handling class and course placement, records transfer, immunizations, graduation, and extra-curricular opportunities.

Ensure Deployment Separation Does Not Determine Child Custody Decisions: Extended separations due to military service necessarily alter short-term custody/visitation arrangements and can have long-term consequences. State can appropriately balance the interests of service members while preserving the best interests of the child; address delegation of visitation rights; and expedite court dockets and use electronic communications to accommodate military demands.

Comport State Laws with DoD Rules on Disposition: Many states require disposition of remains be determined through state-specific documentation or by a priority sequence of next of kin. States can alleviate potential family disharmony during a time of bereavement by recognizing the person authorized to direct disposition (PADD) selected by the service member on DD Form 93 (Record of Emergency Data), in accordance with Federal law.

ISSUES UNDER DEVELOPMENT:

Allow Service members to retain their earned priority for receiving Medicaid home and community care waivers: Because states frequently have long waiting lists, members face large gaps in service every time they transfer across state lines. Allowing Service members to enroll their exceptional family member in the State they designate as their legal residence (i.e. where they pay taxes, vote, etc.) can stabilize their request for support.

Create state-wide MoUs between the DoD and the state child welfare agency to standardize relationships among local courts, agencies and military communities: DoD installations currently develop MoUs with counties which can leave gaps in coverage and inconsistencies in managing care for children in protective custody and foster care. Statewide MOUs between DoD (on behalf of the military communities) and the State child welfare agency (on behalf of local child protective services and other State and local agencies) can support improved continuity and child safety.

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