
Consumer Protection & Business Committee

HB 1401

Brief Description: Expediting professional licenses for new Washington residents.

Sponsors: Representatives Vick, Kirby, Dufault and Dolan.

<p style="text-align: center;">Brief Summary of Bill</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Requires the Department of Licensing to expedite the professional license of any person licensed and in good standing in another state.

Hearing Date: 2/8/21

Staff: Serena Dolly (786-7150).

Background:

The Department of Licensing (DOL) regulates a number of businesses and professions. For regulated professions, the DOL issues licenses and ensures compliance with professional standards and laws.

Examples of professions regulated directly by the DOL, or in coordination with a board or commission, include:

- architects;
- cosmetologists;
- funeral directors;
- real estate brokers; and
- security guards.

Requirements for a professional license, certificate, registration, or permit vary considerably.

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Some professions may require:

- college-level coursework;
- experience;
- an examination;
- some type of background check;
- a surety bond, insurance, or other minimum financial standards;
- minimum safety standards;
- continuing education for licensees; or
- duties of care for clients.

Many professions have provisions for some form of reciprocity or consideration of experience from other states or military service. In addition, the DOL and other licensing authorities must expedite the issuance of a broad range of professional licenses, certificates, registrations, or permits for qualified military spouses.

Summary of Bill:

The DOL must establish procedures to expedite the issuance of a license, certificate, or permit to perform professional services (professional license) to a person who is certified or licensed to perform professional services in another state. The procedures must include a process for issuing the person a professional license, if the DOL determines the requirements for professional licensure are substantially equivalent to the requirements of this state.

The DOL must adopt rules authorizing a qualified person to perform the regulated services by issuing the person a temporary professional license unless the DOL finds that the requirements for licensure in the other state are substantially unequal to the standards of this state. A temporary professional license allows a qualified person to perform the regulated services while completing any specific requirements required in this state that were not required in the other state or states.

An applicant must state in the application that the applicant:

- has requested verification of the professional license from the other state or states; and
- is not the subject of a pending investigation, charges, or disciplinary action by the regulatory body of the other state or states.

If the DOL has reasonable cause to believe that an applicant made a false assertion concerning one of the required application statements, the DOL may suspend the professional license pending an investigation or further disciplinary action or revocation.

Any license in which an agreement exists with a national organization to facilitate reciprocal licensing of an individual licensed in another state is excluded from the expedited licensing requirements.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on February 1, 2021.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.