

Independent Women's Voice® Occupational Licensing



What's at Stake

Across the states, occupational licensing:

- Prevents people from working because of unnecessary and arbitrary requirements.
- Creates costly hurdles for those who want to work in a licensed profession. The average license requires around **9 months of education and training**, a process that workers must often restart if they move to a new state.
- Reduces competition in a profession, protecting entrenched interests and increasing costs for consumers, while decreasing choice and quality.
- Applies to far too many jobs, beyond the scope of health and safety. The number of licensed professions has ballooned from **1 in 20 jobs in the early 1950s to one in four jobs today.**

Most occupational licensing is unnecessary: Consumers are perfectly capable of deciding who is capable of doing most services, especially in this age of online reviews.

Unnecessary occupational licenses hold back the entrepreneurial spirit of hard-working Americans.

Reducing Barriers to Work

Reviewing and Eliminating Unnecessary Licenses

State lawmakers should review their specific occupational license requirements. This review should result in repealing unnecessary licenses or replacing them with less burdensome alternatives. By identifying the overly burdensome licenses that do not protect public health and safety, lawmakers will help enterprising Americans find meaningful work and will provide better services to the public.

Universal License Recognition

Arizona, Montana and Pennsylvania have all passed laws that help people to move between states by recognizing out-of-state licenses, also known as “universal license recognition.” Other states have allowed for this for military members and spouses, who must move every couple years. This should be expanded to all Americans.

Easing the mobility of licensed professionals is a good start, but it does not address the fact that onerous regulations keep many out of stable jobs that could provide good incomes and careers.

Addressing Misperceptions

MISPERCEPTIONS	FACTS
<p>Licenses are necessary to protect public health and safety.</p>	<p>While some licenses are important, like those for doctors and nurses, most professions that require licenses do not pose any danger to the public. Licenses are required for a wide variety of occupations, from florists to music therapists, pest control workers, shoe shiners and more.</p>
<p>Licensing doesn't really pose a big hurdle.</p>	<p>On average it takes around 9 months of education/training to get an occupational license. Many workers can't afford to forgo income that long, so instead they go unemployed or get unlicensed jobs that often pay less.</p>
<p>Occupational licensing requirements are uniquely tailored to each specific profession.</p>	<p>This is proved untrue by the variability of requirements between states. While one state may require 200+ hours of training to obtain a license, another state may not even require a license for that occupation.</p>