

Background:

The 2018 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) authorizes the Services to reimburse Service members for occupational State relicensing and recertification costs their spouses incur due to a Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or Permanent Change of Assignment (PCA). The Office of the Secretary of Defense directed each Service to determine if they wanted to participate in the program and, if so, to establish implementation policies and procedures. The Air Force implemented the authorization on 13 May 2019 reimbursement up to \$500

**Effective 2 March 2020, the 2020 NDAA was modified to increase reimbursement amount from \$500 to \$1,000

Goal of the Policy:

Multiple PCS's throughout Airmen & Guardian's careers can make it difficult for their spouses to establish and maintain employment and careers. While some States authorize reciprocity for certain types of occupational licenses, not all States do; this requires the spouse to update a license or certification according to the new State's requirements. These re-licensing updates can include exams, registration fees, etc., and the costs can add up quickly. This new program eases some of the financial burden of up to \$1000 for each qualifying PCS or PCA, and helps spouses continue their careers.

So...What Does This Mean?

When an Airman or Guardian PCSs/PCAs from a PDS in one State to a PDS in another State, or when returning from overseas to the U.S. and his/her spouse has to reapply for the qualifying occupational State license in the new State, the Department of the Air Force will reimburse the cost of relicensing fees up to \$1000. Reimbursement for each qualifying PCS or PCA will not exceed \$500 for PCS/PCA orders authenticated between 12 December 2017 and 19 December 2019, or \$1,000 for PCS/PCA orders authenticated on or after 20 December 2019.

For example: SSgt McDaniel is stationed at Eglin AFB, Florida, and her spouse is a real estate agent in the State of Florida. SSgt McDaniel receives orders to Peterson AFB, Colorado and her spouse wants to continue his real estate career in Colorado. Mr. McDaniel can take the steps necessary to reapply for his real estate license so he can work as a real estate agent in Colorado. SSgt and Mr. McDaniel can then seek reimbursement of qualifying relicensing costs up to \$1,000.

Spouse

Reimbursement for Re-licensure / Re-certification



▪ Reimbursement up to \$1,000 for occupational state re-licensing / recertification cost due to PCS/PCA

Reimbursement issued through Finance

▪ Reimbursement for each qualifying PCS or PCA will not exceed \$500 for PCS/PCA orders authenticated between 12 December 2017 and 19 December 2019, or \$1,000 for PCS/PCA orders authenticated on or after 20 December 2019.

Program Eligibility

- File within 24 months of the date that PCS/PCA orders were authenticated
- PCS/PCA from a Permanent Duty Station (PDS) in one state to a PDS in another state (including Hawaii; Alaska; Washington, DC; and U.S. Territories); or upon returning to the United States from an overseas assignment
- Movement of dependents is authorized at the government's expense
- Demonstrate actual costs incurred for licensing/certification
- State of the new duty station requires license/certification for the same profession as previous state

Program Exclusions

- Reimbursement is not to exceed \$1,000
- Cost must be incurred and paid after the date the PCS/PCA orders were authenticated
- Not authorized for moves upon accession, Career Intermission Program, retirement or separation
- Not authorized for obtaining an occupational license or certification for a new profession

Required Documentation for Reimbursement

- Copy of PCS/PCA orders
- Copy of spouse's valid state occupational license
- Paid receipts for items required to obtain licensing from new state



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Spouse Reimbursement for Re-licensure/Re-certification

Questions and Answers

Q1: Who is eligible for this program?

A1: This is a Total Force program, so any Regular Air Force, Air Force Reserve, or Air National Guard Airmen on Title 10 orders, and Space Force Guardians may be eligible, providing the situation meets the criteria established in the policy.

Q2: What is the eligibility criteria for a qualifying PCS or PCA?

A2: The following criteria must be met to be considered a qualifying PCS/PCA:

- The Airman or Guardian's Permanent Change of Station (PCS) or Permanent Change of Assignment (PCA) authenticated orders must authorize movement of the Airman/Guardian's dependents at government's expense.
- The Airman or Guardian is reassigned, as either a PCS or PCA from a previous duty station to a location where the spouse must secure a license or certification for the same profession in a different location with different licensing authority and requirements. (including Hawaii; Alaska; Washington, DC; and the U.S. territories); or upon returning to the United States from an overseas assignment (see Question 11 for information on overseas assignments).
- Reimbursement is not authorized for moves upon accession, Career Intermission Program, retirement, or separation from the armed forces.
- Qualifying relicensing costs must be incurred and paid after the date the member's PCS/PCA orders are authenticated and within 24 months of the date the member's PCS/PCA orders are authenticated.
- Reimbursement for each qualifying PCS/PCA will not exceed \$500 for PCS/PCA orders authenticated between 12 December 2017 and 19 December 2019, or \$1,000 for PCS/PCA orders authenticated on or after 20 December 2019.

Q3: Which licenses/certifications qualify for this program?

A3: License/certification requirements vary by State; however, some examples include but are not limited to teaching, cosmetology, real estate, or nursing. Learn more about licensing and certifications from the Installation Airman & Family Readiness Center, the Department of Labor website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/veterans/military-spouses> and the DoD Spouse Education and Career Opportunities Program at <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil>.

Q4: What is a "Qualified" relicensing cost?

A4: For the purposes of this policy, "qualified relicensing costs" mean costs including exam, continuing education courses, and registration fees imposed by the state of the new duty station to secure a license or certification to engage in the same profession in which the spouse engaged while in the previous duty station.

Q5: What if my spouse's qualifying relicensing fees only add up to \$300? Will we receive the full \$1,000?

A5: You can be reimbursed up to \$1,000 for qualifying relicensing costs; in this scenario, you can be reimbursed \$300.

Q6: How many times can we apply for this program?

A6: This is not a one-time program. Airmen may seek reimbursement for each qualifying PCS/PCA, providing the circumstances meet the criteria specified in the policy.

Q7: When can I apply for this increased reimbursement?

A7: Any PCS/PCA order authenticated on or after 20 December 2019 qualifies for reimbursement re-licensure/re-certification up to \$1,000 threshold. Airman who meet the rest of the eligibility criteria during this timeframe may apply for reimbursement.

Q8: How do I apply for reimbursement?

A8: Your servicing finance office will process your reimbursement application. The Claimant (Airman) files an *OF 1164 Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business*, with a copy of the applicable permanent change of station (PCS) or permanent change of assignment (PCA) orders, a copy of the spouse's state occupational license or certificate from the previous duty station, a copy of the license or certificate from the new duty station, and the paid receipts for items required to obtain re-licensing or re-certification from the new duty station to their servicing finance office.

Q9: I'm retiring soon and will be relocating to my hometown of Ruthville, North Dakota which is 5 miles from Minot AFB, North Dakota. My spouse wants to update his accountant certification – do I qualify for this program?

A9: This program is not authorized for moves upon accession, the Career Intermission Program (CIP), separation or retirement.

Q10: I'm PCSing from Aviano AB, Italy to Joint Base San Antonio-Randolph, TX. My spouse recently completed nursing school and wants to obtain a nursing license in Texas – do I qualify for this program?

A10: This program does not reimburse costs for obtaining licenses for a new profession, it provides reimbursement costs associated with relicensing. However, there are other programs that may assist in your situation. Learn more about licensing and certifications from your installation Airman & Family Readiness Center, the Department of Labor website at <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/vets/veterans/military-spouses>, and the DoD Spouse Education and Career Opportunities (SECO) Program. The SECO Program also provides a variety of free, industry-specific career coaching packages for military spouses through <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil> and also available by calling 1-800-342-9647.

Q11: I'm PCSing from Ramstein AB, Germany to Cannon AFB, New Mexico. Before Ramstein, we were stationed at Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, where my spouse was a teacher. My spouse wants to update her Louisiana teaching certificate to New Mexico – do I qualify for this program?

A11: A PCS returning from an overseas assignment is eligible for reimbursement provided your spouse has a license/certificate from a previous duty location held prior to the overseas assignment.

Q12: I'm PCSing to Kunsan for a 1-year unaccompanied (dependent-restricted) assignment. While I'm gone, my spouse is going to move to our hometown in Tennessee – do I qualify for this program?

A12: This program is not intended for PCSs in which movement of dependents at government expense is not authorized. However, if you receive an approved accompanied follow-on assignment, you may be eligible for this program at the follow-on location after your PCS orders are issued.

Q13: I'm PCSing from Wright-Patterson AFB, OH to Air Command and Staff College (ACSC) at Maxwell AFB, Alabama, and movement of dependents at government expense is authorized. My spouse, who is a teacher, is going to move to her parents' home in Kentucky and teach there while I'm at ACSC. Since movement of dependents at government expense is authorized, do I qualify for this program?

A13: Reimbursement of qualifying relicensing/re-certification costs apply to those costs imposed by the State of the *new duty station*, which in your situation is Alabama. You would qualify for this program only if your spouse reapplied for her teaching license/certificate to the State of Alabama.

Q14: I'm stationed at Offutt AFB, Nebraska, and deploying on a 365-day extended deployment to Afghanistan. My spouse is a social worker, and wants to move to Texas with her sister while I'm deployed. While she is in Texas, my spouse wants to continue her career in social work, which would require her to update her social work license to the State of Texas – do I qualify for this program?

A14: This program is intended for PCSs or PCAs in which movement of dependents at government expense is authorized. A 365-day deployment is considered a Temporary Duty (TDY); as such, you do not qualify for this program in this situation.

Q15: I am PCSing from the Hickam AFB, Hawaii to Little Rock AFB, Arkansas. My spouse is a member of the Air Force Reserve, and is an architect in the civilian sector. He wants to update his license in Arkansas – do I qualify for this program, even though he is in the military?

A15: This program is intended to reimburse qualified relicensing costs of the spouse of a member of the armed forces to include eligible Air Force Reserve, or Air National Guard Airmen on Title 10 orders providing the situation meets the criteria established in the policy. In the situation described above, you are eligible for this program.

Q16: Where can I find the policy for this program?

A16: The policy for this program can be found in AFMAN 36-2102, 16 Dec 2020 which supersedes AFI 36-2102.

Q17: What if I have other questions?

A17: The following Points of Contact can help answer additional questions:

Regular Air Force: Program/Policy: Installation Military Personnel Flight. Claim submission: Installation Finance Office.

Air Force Reserve: Program/Policy: Air Force Directorate of Personnel, Force Support Division (AF/REPP). Claim submission: Installation Finance Office.

Air National Guard: Program/Policy: Military Personnel Flight or Airman & Family Readiness Program Manager. Claim submission: Installation Finance Office.

Resources and Referral: Learn more about licensing and certifications from your installation Airman and Family Readiness Center, the Department of Labor website at: <https://www.veterans.gov/milspouses>, or the SECO website at: <https://myseco.militaryonesource.mil>