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MILITARY SPOUSE JD NETWORK

www.msjdn.org

info@msjdn.org

Texas Becomes First State to Initiate Recognition of Attorney Military Spouses and their Service

Texas Offers Military Spouse Attorneys Path to Law License

In an unprecedented move, Texas is now the first state to initiate a licensing accommodation policy for military spouse attorneys without a formal rule change so that it could begin consideration of military spouse applications immediately.

Following a Resolution signed by the Conference of Chief Justices, and MSJDN's tireless work advocating for the portability of legal careers, Texas has instituted its "License Portability for Military Spouses" ("LPMS") policy to allow for admission for qualified military spouse attorneys stationed in the state.

Citing their existing rule allowing admission for attorneys with five out of seven years of active practice, the Texas Board of Law Examiners (TxBLE) indicated the LPMS will allow it to consider formal requests for a waiver of the practice requirement for military spouses. These will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the TxBLE following the provision of specific information by the military spouse.

The LPMS also grants military spouse attorneys a significantly reduced application fee, and waives certain late fees typically required of applications not timely filed for both admission-on-motion and bar exam applications.

Houston-based litigator and MSJDN Texas Director Reda Hicks noted that MSJDN is thrilled at the initiative shown by the Texas Supreme Court and TxBLE in supporting military families. "The impact reduced licensing barriers will have on military families in Texas is profound," she said. "I've never been prouder to be an attorney in the Lone Star State."

"Our communities will only be made better by the contributions of these amazing men and women we support as military spouses, and now acknowledge as our peers."

Further polishing on the LPMS is likely, and the TxBLE will be working closely with MSJDN on its implementation and fine-tuning.

The LPMS is now in effect and available to military spouses currently stationed in the state. More information about the LPMS, including information about the items needed for a formal waiver, is available at http://www.ble.state.tx.us/applications/apps_other/Military_Spouse_info.pdf.

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The Military Spouse JD Network is an international network of legal professionals improving the lives of military families. We advocate for licensing accommodations for military spouses, including bar membership without additional examination. MSJDN has over 650 members all across the globe, and includes military spouses and partners from all branches of the United States Military: Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marines, and Navy as well as spouses of retired service members and legal and military organizations who support our mission.