
SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Senator Benjamin Allen, Chair

2017 - 2018 Regular

Bill No: AB 226
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Version: March 14, 2017
Urgency: No
Consultant: Ian Johnson

Hearing Date: June 7, 2017
Fiscal: Yes

Subject: Teacher credentialing: spouses of active-duty members of the Armed Forces: expedited application process

SUMMARY

This bill requires the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC) to expedite their review of applicants that have valid teaching credentials from other states and are married to, or in a legal union with, a member of the military on active duty in California.

BACKGROUND

Existing law:

- 1) Requires the CTC to process credential applications within 50 business days of receipt.
- 2) Specifies that the CTC may transmit, electronically or by printed copy, application information from the school district, county office of education, or institution of higher education that submitted the application to expedite the review process.
- 3) Requires the CTC to waive all application and processing fees for the initial issuance of a teaching credential to an out-of-state prepared applicant who relocates to California due to orders received by the applicant's spouse from a branch of the military.
- 4) Requires the CTC to issue a variety of five-year preliminary teaching credentials and clear multiple subject, single subject, or education specialist teaching credentials to out-of-state prepared teachers who meet the state's basic skills proficiency requirements within one year and meet other various requirements.

ANALYSIS

This bill requires the CTC to grant or deny an application for a credential within seven days of receipt if the applicant does both of the following:

- 1) Supplies evidence that the applicant is married to, or in a domestic partnership or another legal union with, an active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States who is assigned to a duty station in this state under official active duty military orders.

- 2) Holds a valid teaching credential in another state, district, or territory of the United States.

STAFF COMMENTS

- 1) ***Need for the bill.*** According to the author, “state teacher certification is generally designed to credential a teacher to work within a school district over extended periods of time. Policies that allow a teacher certified in another state to become credentialed in a new state require extensive documentation and may require additional testing and course work. Military spouse teachers are expected to accomplish these credentialing requirements every two to three years due to military directed moves...Establishing a temporary certificate, or expediting application and adjudication processes for military spouses may alleviate the delays in garnering certification to teach in the state.”
- 2) ***Typical application review timeline by the Commission.*** According to the Commission on Teacher Credentialing, about 80 percent of all applications are submitted online, with the remaining 20 percent submitted on paper. Online renewals are typically processed within an average of three business days, and recommendations from approved programs are processed within an average of one business day. Paper applications submitted directly from an applicant are processed within an average of 42 business days. Overall, 96 percent of applications are typically processed within the statutory timeline of 50 days, with over 77 percent being processed within five business days.
- 3) ***Out-of-state prepared teacher reciprocity and benefits.*** California currently offers individuals who have completed a teacher preparation program and have been issued a teaching certification in another state the opportunity to apply for a California teaching certification through reciprocity agreements. The exact process for certification differs depending on the individual’s level of professional experience and type of certification. Further, testing fees are waived for the initial issuance of a teaching credential to an out-of-state prepared applicant who relocates to California due to orders received by the applicant’s spouse from a branch of the military.
- 4) ***Background checks and fitness reviews for out-of-state teachers.*** For purposes of background checks, out-of-state applicants must use fingerprint cards unless they can physically come to California and go to a scanning station. The Department of Justice quotes between eight and ten weeks for processing background checks based on fingerprint cards. This timeframe conflicts with the provisions of this bill and is out of the control of the Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CTC). In addition, under current law, the statutory clock for processing applications is paused, and due process commences if a fitness review must be performed over alleged misconduct. Lastly, incomplete application submittals can slow processing times for the CTC. If it is the desire of the committee to pass this measure, ***staff recommends*** that the bill be amended to specify that the seven-day review requirement: (1) only applies to completed applications that include all relevant records; and (2) does not apply to the process related to a professional fitness review, when required.

SUPPORT

United States Department of Defense

OPPOSITION

None received

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