

## **Licensing, Certification and Apprenticeship Information**

Credentialing is the “umbrella term” for licenses and certifications. Some federal, state or local laws may require specific credentials to legally perform some jobs. Employers also may choose to hire only employees who have certain credentials, or offer to pay those employees more. Having those credentials may improve your prospects for promotion. Credentialed service members demonstrate to prospective civilian employers that their skills are on par with their civilian peers.

There are two primary types of credentialing, licenses and certifications.

### **Licenses**

Governmental agencies (federal, state, or local) grant licenses to individuals to practice a specific occupation, such as a medical license for doctors. State or federal laws or regulations define the standards that individuals must meet to become licensed. For these types of professions, licenses are typically mandatory.

### **Certifications**

Certifications are different. Non-governmental agencies, associations, and even private sector companies may grant certificates to individuals who meet predetermined qualifications. These qualifications are generally set by professional associations (for example, National Commission for Certification of Crane Operators) or by industry and product-related organizations (for example, Novell Certified Engineer). Certification is typically an optional credential; although some state licensure boards and some employers may require certification. For many occupations, more than one organization may offer certifications.

Be aware that licenses and certifications can be expensive. You may be able to use your GI Bill to help with the cost of credentialing. The VA’s Website <http://www.gibill.va.gov/> includes information on eligibility for these benefit programs, as well as documents and forms which will aid veterans, family members, and school officials. Tests must be specifically approved for the G.I. Bill. VA can pay only for the cost of the tests and not other fees connected with obtaining a license or certification.

Many veterans leave the military with a lot of skills and experience qualifying them for comparable civilian occupations, sometimes with little or no additional training. You will find that there will be positions at companies that require a license or certification. However, it is important to check with the state in which you’ll reside for the required credential needed. Or you may check with the particular occupation’s professional organization to learn about the credentialing requisites. You’ll have a clear advantage by having your licenses and certifications in order when applying for jobs.

If you don’t need any further information on licensing and certification, mark “no” in the box provided.

If you would like more information and assistance, mark “yes” and in the referred to column you might want to write one of the resources I want to share with you.

TurboTAP is a web portal for military transitioners. It is a fairly comprehensive overview of transition and benefits, including licensing and certification information. You can log onto [www.TurboTAP.org](http://www.TurboTAP.org) to visit the site. You will find extensive information relating to this topic in both the interactive Career Decision Toolkit and the Pre-Separation Guide.

I would recommend that you visit the Base Educational Office or DANTES representative. DANTES also has a website at: <http://www.dantes.doded.mil/>.

In the past, the financial resources available to help become credentialed after leaving the military were limited primarily to assist with the cost of additional training and/or education that might be required. Legislation has allowed for payment of exam fees through the Montgomery GI Bill. Application and renewal fees are not typically covered.

You are encouraged to explore the robust collection of information contained in the Career Decision Toolkit located at [www.TurboTAP.org](http://www.TurboTAP.org).