



# *The Military Spouse JD Network*

*A Bar Association for Military Spouse Attorneys*

[www.MSJDN.org](http://www.MSJDN.org)

## **MSJDN supports military spouses by:**

- Advocating for licensing accommodations, including bar membership without additional examination;
- Educating the public about the challenges facing military families;
- Encouraging employers to hire military spouses; and
- Providing a support network.

## **Who we are:**

- An international network of military spouse attorneys, including spouses of active duty and retired Air Force, Army, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, and Navy servicemembers, as well as Reserve and National Guard spouses
- Over **1000** members and supporters, connected in person and virtually through MSJDN
- **96%** of our members are women
- **87%** maintain an active law license
- **67%** volunteer in their local communities
- **61%** have been asked about their status as a military spouse by a prospective employer
- **64%** have children
- **43%** have a current student loan balance of more than \$80,000

## ***The Problem:***

### ***Military Lifestyle***

- Military families are geographically insecure, moving every two to three years, often with tours overseas.
- Moves are based on the needs of the military service and are mandatory for the servicemember. Although the spouse and children may technically refuse to move, this causes obvious hardships on families already often separated by deployments.

### ***Legal Profession***

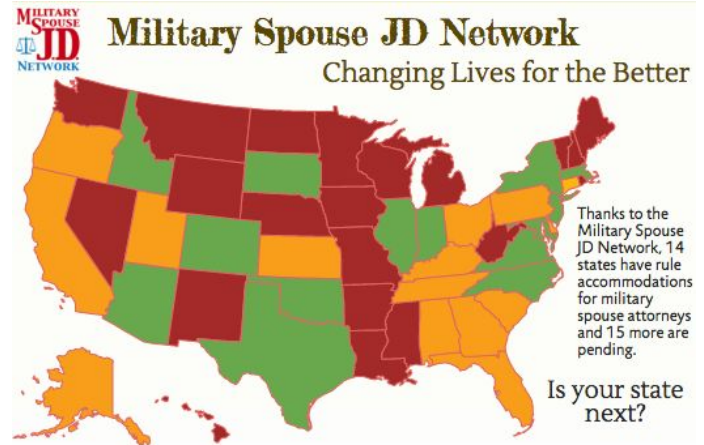
- Attorneys are required to be licensed in each state where they practice.
- Licensing can take up to a year for the application, character and fitness review, bar examination, and processing.
- Licensing can cost \$4,000 to \$5,000 each time due to exam fees and preparation materials.

## **What This Means for Our Members:**

- MSJDN members report that the biggest challenges to finding and keeping employment are **frequent moves** and **lack of portable employment opportunities**.
- 86%** report their spouse's military service negatively affected their legal career.
- One out of every two** have lived apart from their spouse in order to maintain a legal career.
- One in three** have taken two or more bar exams.
- One in three** say their student debt load impacts their spouse's decision to stay in the military.
- Two in five** have moved three or more times.

## Current Status of State Licensing Efforts

- 17 jurisdictions have military spouse attorney rules or policies: **Arizona, Colorado, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Virginia.**
- MSJDN is working on licensing accommodations in: Alabama, Alaska, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Ohio, Oregon, South Carolina, Utah, and Washington.
- If adopted by state licensing authorities, the proposed MSJDN rule would allow military spouse attorneys to practice on a temporary basis in the jurisdiction if they are in the state due to military orders and in good standing in another jurisdiction.



## How Can You Support Military Spouse Attorneys?

- Join us! Visit [www.msjdn.org](http://www.msjdn.org) to register as a member or supporter. Members receive access to the MSJDN jobs board, member directory, private forums, and other resources, plus our bi-monthly newsletter with the inside scoop on all things MSJDN.
- **Volunteer with Justice for Military Families.** Our pro bono program provides military spouse attorneys a way to build their résumé and keep current on the law in service to their community. JMF connects military families with legal needs with pro bono legal help from MSJDN's network of military spouse attorneys. Email [jmf@msjdn.org](mailto:jmf@msjdn.org).
- **Join Homefront to Hired**, an initiative that partners MSJDN with law firms and organizations committed to hiring military spouse attorneys. Partners like Prudential, the U.S. Army JAG Office, and Attorneys in Motion commit to placing MSJDN members in available positions and supporting military spouse attorneys with their hiring practices. Email [homefronttohire@msjdn.org](mailto:homefronttohire@msjdn.org).
- **Donate.** Donate to support military spouse attorneys and their families. Funds support programs including *Justice for Military Families* and *Making the Right Moves*, an educational and networking event where members connect with each other and the local community. Go to [www.msjdn.org](http://www.msjdn.org) to donate.
- **Connect with MSJDN online!** Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [LinkedIn](#). Check out our [blog](#) and [event calendar](#) on [www.msjdn.org](http://www.msjdn.org).

**HOMEFRONT**  
*to* **H I R E D**

