

GA WORKS Licensing Commission (GWLC)

(summary of the meeting)

Held first organizational meeting at the State Capitol on May 15, 2023.

Secretary of State (SOS): Brad Raffensperger Chaired the Meeting

Members – Yellow (in person attendance) Green (virtual attendance)

Secretary of State Brad Raffensperger

Gabriel Sterling, Interim Director of Professional Licensing Division

Representative Leesa Hagan

Representative Doug Stoner

Representative Steve Tarvin

Representative Brian Prince

Senator Mike Dugan

Senator Sheikh Rahman

Senator Sonya Halpern

Senator Larry Walker

Craig Knowles, Board of Massage Therapy

Tripp Mitchell, Board of Private Detectives

Chris Clark, Georgia Chamber of Commerce

Katie Kirkpatrick, Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce (Dave Williams for KK)

Bert Brantley, Savannah Chamber of Commerce

SOS Raffensperger introduced the members of the Committee and discussed the creation of this Licensing Commission by the SOS.

MEMBERS APPROVED:

MISSION STATEMENT :

The GA WORKS Licensing Commission is focused on meeting the needs of a growing state by reducing bureaucratic barriers to employment without reducing the protection of health, safety and general welfare

GOALS:

- To hear public input about licensing barriers to the workforce
- To learn about the growth of available jobs in the state of Georgia
- To find ways to streamline the process for licensing
- To get rid of unnecessary and redundant licensing requirements

Current Challenges - Presented

- War on talent
- Healthcare industry needs (registered 65,000 nurses)
- Dislocated workers
- Military barriers to work
- Limitations for people with criminal background
- Foreign trained professionals
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Committee member input/comments included:

- Cannot get human on phone with so many calls and licenses
- Reentry of those with criminal backgrounds – with prison population – look at ways to get out of prison and back to work
- Those with substance abuse – back to work
- Preparedness problem – many high school grads graduating and never worked – no professional skills
- Demographic cliff – boomers not working after 2030
- Have focused in past on emphasizing a 4 year college degree
- Make sure what being required for licensing – with the many changes – standards not changing with the times – barriers maintained to keep out competition
- Department of Defense – military licensing – difficulty to get spousal license in timely manner and recognize their license from other states
- Recognizing military certification and training – to current license
- Lot of increase in being entrepreneurs – start own business – barriers to employment cannot start own business
- What are the requirements of and the timing to get a license....example – CDL license
- Dealing with antiquated legislation in our statutes not allowing us to be progressive – not have proper conduit to update and streamline our process
- Spent many months to expedite/simplify military spouse license - state board cannot lobby – to remove red tape – legislative barriers
- Must consider the “bad actors” but not hurt others with license requirements
- Verification of documents – if not in Georgia – barriers trying to get the documents verified
- Criminal background – for those who meet all requirements but have criminal background barriers

Gabe Sterling Provided SOS Licensing Overview, some of items reviewed included....

Current Active Licenses: 570,100

New Licenses Issued FY 23: 40,938

Renewals Issued FY23: 228,333

Licenses in Georgia (SOS) are divided into the following sections

Healthcare 1

Healthcare 2

Healthcare 3

Trades 1

Trades 2

Trades 3

Trades 4

Section 8

Four Functional Areas to Implement Reform:

Administrative

Joint Secretary Rule

(SOS can do these two)

Licensing Board Rule

Statute

Like to see a unifying principles across all the boards

Rebuilding a new licensing system

New GOALS Rollout

- o Biggest administrative change in 2 decades
- o Georgia Online Application & Licensing System: **GOALS**
- o Discovery began in Summer 2022
- o Three start dates:
 - Oct 2023
 - Dec 2023
 - March 2024 *(nurses)*

Points Noted for Commission to Consider:

Examine the statutes – principles of why we license some of the professions ???

Want to get to point where we are leading national in issuing licenses

570,000 current licenses and at record case of issuing licenses

Consider removing some of the professional licenses and just issue a certification

SOS collects around \$20 million in licenses fees - gets back approx. \$8 ½ million in State budget

Licensing Boards: Governor makes the board appointments and the SOS provides the administrative services

SOS – 41 different boards – 507 different licenses

Want to make it easier and efficient – but not detrimentally water down the license requirements/oversight – not reduce the protection of health, safety and general welfare

Make sure changes proposed make it relevant to today and the future....and not continue to do it because have always done it that way