

OPLA RESEARCH REQUEST MEMO

To: Rachel Olson, Legislative Analyst, IDEA Committee

From: Kristin Brawn, Legislative Researcher

Date: April 7, 2021

RE: States that Accept Foreign Credentials for Occupational Licensure

Hi Rachel,

You asked me to research other states that accept foreign credentials for occupational licensure. I have found six states, Colorado, Florida, South Dakota, Utah, Vermont and West Virginia, that allow the acceptance of foreign credentials to obtain an occupational license in those states. Each of these state laws is detailed below.

Colorado – Colorado law ([C.R.S. 12-105-111](#)) allows an applicant for a cosmetologist, barber, esthetician, nail technician or hairstylist license, for the purposes of fulfilling the contact hour requirements of the license, to substitute work experience obtained in a foreign country in that profession using a ratio of three months of work experience for every 100 contact hours; except that an applicant cannot substitute work experience for any of the contact hours required for disinfection, cleaning and safe work practices or for the hours required to review laws and rules, as determined by rule.

Florida – Florida law ([Fla. Statutes §476.144](#)) authorizes the Barbers' Board to adopt rules specifying procedures for the licensure by endorsement of practitioners desiring to be licensed as a barber in the state who hold a current active license in another country and who have met qualifications substantially similar to, equivalent to or greater than the qualifications required of other applicants.

South Dakota – South Dakota law ([S.D. Codified Laws §36-6A-44](#)) allows any foreign-trained or any other graduate from a dental program not accredited by the American Dental Association Commission on Dental Accreditation to apply for a license to practice as a dentist. The licensing board is required to, by rule, establish requirements to reasonably ensure that an applicant's training and education are sufficient for licensure.

Utah – Utah law ([Utah Code §58-42a-302](#)) authorizes the licensing division to issue a license to an occupational therapist or therapy assistant applicant who meets the requirements of receiving a license, and has been licensed in a state, district, U.S. territory or foreign country where the education, experience or examination requirements are not substantially equal to Utah's requirements, if the applicant passes an examination.

Vermont – Legislation enacted in 2019 ([Act No. 10](#)) requires the Office of Professional Regulation to adopt rules that prescribe a process to assess the equivalence of an applicant's professional credentials earned outside the United States as compared to state licensing requirements for those professions attached to the Office that do not have laws addressing the verification and recognition of those credentials. *The deadline for adoption of the rules was July 1, 2020, but it appears that no rules have been issued yet.*

West Virginia – West Virginia law ([WV Code §18A-3-1](#)) allows a permit to teach in the public schools to be granted to “an exchange teacher from a foreign country or an alien person who meets the requirements to teach.”

I hope you find this information helpful. Please let me know if you have any questions or if you would like me to do further research into this topic.