— TOP TAKEAWAYS —

Solutions to Occupational Licensing Challenges

MAKE LICENSING REFORMS ENACTED DURING THE PANDEMIC PERMANENT

- All 50 states enacted various temporary executive and regulatory changes to increase the supply of medical professionals, expand telehealth services, and increase capacity at healthcare facilities.
- These changes demonstrate that occupational licensing can be relaxed without harm to the public health / consumers.
- Some pandemic-related actions have expired, and others will soon.
- By making reforms permanent, states can strengthen the responsiveness of their healthcare systems to future emergencies and address shortages of healthcare workers.

REDUCE OR ELIMINATE OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES

- States vary in their occupational licensing requirements, creating significant challenges for workers who cross state lines to keep their licenses in good standing.
- States should make every effort to eliminate excessive licenses or reduce the onerous requirements for licenses in their jurisdiction.
- States should conduct regular cost-benefit analyses of their licensing systems to determine if they truly serve a public good and remove any licensing requirements that do not.

CONSIDER ALTERNATIVES TO OCCUPATIONAL LICENSES

- Licenses are the heaviest-handed government approach to regulating occupations.
- The National Conference of State Legislatures offers a continuum of regulatory approaches for states from no government action to licensing.
- States should consider private and light-touch government approaches that achieve the same goals, but do not impose insurmountable barriers to opportunity for workers.

Click here to read the full policy focus and learn more about innovative and more flexible approaches to occupational licensing.