



HOUSE BILL 697: NC Genetic Counselors Workforce Act.

2025-2026 General Assembly

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| Committee: | House Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House | Date: | June 24, 2025 |
| Introduced by: | Reps. Potts, Reeder, Campbell, Cervania | Prepared by: | Jason Moran-Bates |
| Analysis of: | First Edition | | Staff Attorney |

OVERVIEW: *House Bill 697 would define the scope of practice of genetic counseling, require a license for genetic counselors, and set up an occupational licensing board to enforce those requirements.*

BILL ANALYSIS: House Bill 697 would add a new Article to Chapter 90 (Health and Allied Occupations) creating licensing for genetic counselors as follows:

- Definitions are created for "ABGC," "ACGC," "ACS," "active candidate status," "Board," "CEU," "Department," "examination," "genetic counseling," "Genetic Counseling Intern," "Genetic Counselor," "genetic testing," "NSGC," "qualified sponsor," "reciprocity," "referral," "supervisee," "supervisor," and "temporary license."
- The Genetic Counselors Licensure Board (Board) is created. The Board will consist of two genetic counselors appointed by the General Assembly and one genetic counselor, one physician, and one member of the public appointed by the Governor. Members will serve three-year terms and can be removed by the Governor.
- The Board will have the power to adopt rules to administer the practice of genetic counseling, to issue, deny, and revoke licenses, to establish fees for licensure, to subpoena witnesses and patient records, and to retain jurisdiction over inactive licenses.
- The Board must annually publish a list of all licensed genetic counselors and disciplinary action on its website. The same information and a list of contested cases and a financial report must be submitted annually to the Governor.
- Applicants for licensure must meet the following criteria:
 - Payment of a fee.
 - Certification as a genetic counselor by the American Board of Genetic Counseling.
 - Be 18 years of age and of good moral character.
 - Not engage in conduct that would be grounds for denial of a license.
 - Submit a criminal history record.

Temporary licenses would be available for individuals who were not yet certified. These licenses would be good for one year and renewable for an additional year. Temporary licensees must be supervised.

Individuals licensed in other states may be licensed in North Carolina by reciprocity.

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Individuals who have worked as genetic counselors for 10 years may be licensed, without certification, provided they have a graduate degree, submit three letters of recommendation, and provide proof of taking five years' of continuing education programs.

- The practice of genetic counseling does not include the diagnosis or treatment of disease. It does include:
 - Obtaining medical histories to determine risk for genetic or medical conditions.
 - Discussing risk of genetic or medical conditions.
 - Identifying appropriate tests for genetic assessment.
 - Integrating lab results to assess and communicate risk factors and explaining the clinical implications of the lab results.
 - Evaluating client responses to risk assessments.
 - Identifying and using community resources.
 - Providing written documentation to clients and other healthcare professionals.
- The Board can charge a \$250 licensure application fee, a \$200 licensure renewal fee, a \$250 reciprocity licensure application fee, a \$100 temporary licensure application fee, and \$50 late renewal fee.
- All applicants must submit a criminal history report to the Board. In determining whether a conviction makes an applicant ineligible for licensure the Board must consider the seriousness of the crime, the date of the crime, the age of the applicant when the crime was committed, the connection between the crime and the practice of genetic counseling, and the applicant's subsequent history.
- No one may practice genetic counseling without being licensed. Practicing without a valid license is a Class I felony.
- Individuals who are licensed to practice in other professions do not need to have a genetic counselor's license to practice within their scope of practice. Genetic counselor students and governmental employees are also exempt from licensure requirements.
- Licensees must complete 30 hours continuing education each renewal period.
- The Board may revoke, suspend, or deny a license, reprimand a licensee, or require additional examination or supervision of licensees for:
 - Conviction of crimes of moral turpitude.
 - Using fraud or deceit to obtain a license or defrauding the public or the Board.
 - Having a license revoked in another state.
 - Violating the provisions of this act or helping others to do so.
 - Engaging in immoral conduct.
 - Demonstrating an inability to practice genetic counseling with reasonable skill.
 - Failing to maintain a complete case record.
- Disciplinary actions must follow the provisions for administrative hearings in Chapter 150B, and revoked licenses may be reinstated after one year.

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- The Board may seek injunctive relief to prevent violations of the provisions of this act.
- The Board must adopt temporary rules to implement this act, and those rules will remain in force until permanent rules are adopted. Initial Board members must be appointed by October 1, 2025.
- The SBI may provide criminal background information to the Board.

EFFECTIVE DATE: The temporary rulemaking and initial appointment provisions of the bill are effective when they become law. The remainder of the bill would be effective October 1, 2026.

Greg Roney, with the Legislative Analysis Division, substantially contributed to this summary.