

HOUSE RESEARCH

Bill Summary

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Overview

This bill creates licensure for genetic counselors. Currently, this profession is not regulated by the state of Minnesota.

Section

1 Definitions. Creates § 147F.01. Provides the definitions of terms for this chapter.

2 Scope of genetic counseling. Creates § 147F.03. Permits a genetic counselor to perform the following services:

- Obtain and interpret medical and developmental histories;
- Determine the risk of transmitting genetic conditions and birth defects;
- Discuss inheritance, diagnosis, and management of conditions with clients;
- Identify, interpret, and explain genetic tests and other laboratory studies;
- Provide counseling and guidance to clients;
- Provide information so clients can make informed decisions;
- Identify and use community resources; and
- Provide accurate written information to families and health care professionals.

3 Protected titles and restrictions on use. Creates § 147F.05.

Subd. 1. Protected titles. Protects “genetic counselor,” “licensed genetic counselor,” “gene counselor,” “genetic consultant,” “genetic associate,” and any other words, letters, or abbreviations implying that a person is licensed or eligible for licensure.

Subd. 2. Other practitioners. Clarifies that this chapter does not restrict:

- the practice of professional who is credentialed in Minnesota who is performing services within the profession's scope of practice;
- the practice of genetic counseling by an employee of the federal government or a federal agency;
- a student or intern who is enrolled in an accredited genetic counseling program from performing genetic counseling services under the supervision of a licensed genetic counselor or physician; or
- a non-resident, certified genetic counselor, from providing consultative services in Minnesota.

4 Licensure requirements. Creates § 147F.07.

Subd. 1. General requirements for licensure. Requires an applicant for licensure to submit the following:

- a completed application along with the required fees;
- evidence of graduation from an accredited genetic counseling program;
- evidence of certification as a genetic counselor or medical geneticist;
- additional information requested by the board;
- a signed statement attesting to the truth and accuracy of the information submitted to the board; and
- a signed waiver for the board to access the applicant's educational and licensure records in this or any other state.

Subd. 2. Licensure by reciprocity. Requires the applicant to:

- hold a valid genetic counselor or medical geneticist credential in another state;
- submit an application and fee, evidence of graduation from an accredited program, a release for the board to contact the licensing state and educational institution, and any other information requested by the board;
- provide a copy of the current credential from the credentialing state; and
- provide letters of verification from each jurisdiction in which the applicant is credentialed.

Subd. 3. Provisional license. Permits the board to issue a provisional license if the applicant meets the requirements in subdivision 1, except the certification requirement, if the applicant has received approval to sit for the certification examination. Provides that the provisional license is valid for one year, and under specified circumstances may be renewed once.

Subd. 4. Licensure by equivalency. Permits the board to grant a license to an individual who does not meet the licensure requirements in subdivisions 1 or 2, but who has been employed as a genetic counselor for a minimum of ten years. Requires that the individual submit proof of a Master's degree or higher in genetics or a related field; proof that the individual has never failed a certification examination; three letters of recommendation; and documentation of at least 100 hours of approved continuing education within the prior five years.

Subd. 5. License expiration. Provides that a genetic counselor license is valid for two years from date of issuance.

Subd. 6. License renewal. Requires the licensed genetic counselor to submit a renewal application; the renewal fee; evidence of compliance with continuing education requirements; and any other information requested by the board.

5 Board action on applications for licensure. Creates § 147F.09. Requires the board to determine whether an applicant meets the requirements for licensure, and notify the applicant in writing of the action taken on the application, grounds for denial if the license is denied, and the applicant's right to review. Provides the process for an applicant to request a review of the board's decision.

6 Continuing education requirements. Creates § 147F.11. Paragraph (a) states that a licensed genetic counselor must complete at least 50 hours of approved continuing education during each two-year license period.

Paragraph (b) provides the board authority to grant a variance to the continuing education requirements for a licensee who proves that it would present a hardship to comply with the requirement.

7 Discipline; reporting. Creates § 147F.15. Subjects licensed genetic counselors and applicants to the board's disciplinary action provisions in chapter 147.

8 Licensed genetic counselor advisory council. Creates § 147F.20.

Subd. 1. Membership. Establishes a five member advisory council.

Subd. 2. Organization. Requires the council to be organized and administered under section 15.059, Advisory Councils and Committees.

Subd. 3. Duties. Lists the issues to be considered and reviewed by the council.

Subd. 4. Expiration. Provides that the council does not expire.