

1 State of Arkansas As Engrossed: S2/20/19 S3/5/19 H3/25/19
2 92nd General Assembly **A Bill**
3 Regular Session, 2019

SENATE BILL 190

4
5 By: Senators G. Leding, *Bledsoe, B. Davis*
6 By: Representatives D. Ferguson, *L. Johnson*

7
8 **For An Act To Be Entitled**

9 AN ACT TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS GENETIC COUNSELOR
10 LICENSURE ACT; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

11
12
13 **Subtitle**

14 TO CREATE THE ARKANSAS GENETIC COUNSELOR
15 LICENSURE ACT.

16
17
18 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

19
20 SECTION 1. Arkansas Code Title 17, Chapter 95, is amended to add an
21 additional subchapter to read as follows:

22 Subchapter 11 – Arkansas Genetic Counselor Licensure Act

23
24 17-95-1101. Title.

25 This subchapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Arkansas
26 Genetic Counselor Licensure Act".

27
28 17-95-1102. Definitions.

29 As used in this subchapter:

30 (1) "Genetic counseling" means the process of assisting
31 individuals with understanding and adapting to the medical, psychological,
32 and familial implications of genetic contributions to disease, which includes
33 without limitation:

34 (A) Interpreting family and medical histories to assess
35 the chance of disease occurrence or recurrence;

36 (B) Educating an individual or an individual's family



1 about inheritance, testing, management, prevention, resources, and research;

2 (C) Counseling an individual or an individual's family to
3 promote informed choices and adaptation to the risk or condition;

4 (D) Estimating the likelihood of occurrence or recurrence
5 of any potentially inherited or genetically influenced condition which may
6 involve:

7 (i) Obtaining and analyzing a complete health
8 history of the individual and the individual's family;

9 (ii) Reviewing the pertinent medical records;

10 (iii) Evaluating the risks from exposure to possible
11 mutagens or teratogens; and

12 (iv) Discussing genetic testing to assist in the
13 diagnosis of a condition or determine the carrier status of one (1) or more
14 family members;

15 (E) Assisting the individual, the individual's family, the
16 individual's healthcare provider, or the public to:

17 (i) Appreciate the medical, psychological, and
18 social implications of a disorder, including the features, variability, usual
19 course, and management options of the disorder;

20 (ii) Learn how genetic factors contribute to the
21 disorder and affect the chance for recurrence of the condition in other
22 family members;

23 (iii) Understand available options for coping with,
24 preventing, or reducing the chance of occurrence or recurrence of a
25 condition; and

26 (iv) Understand genetic tests, including without
27 limitation diagnostic genetic tests, screening tests, or predispositional
28 genetic tests, coordinate testing for inherited disorders, and interpret
29 complex genetic test results; and

30 (F) Facilitating an individual's or an individual's
31 family's:

32 (i) Exploration of the perception of risk and burden
33 associated with a genetic disorder;

34 (ii) Decision-making regarding testing or medical
35 interventions consistent with their beliefs, goals, needs, resources,
36 culture, and ethical or moral views; and

1 (iii) Adjustment and adaption to the condition or
2 their genetic risk by addressing needs for psychological, social, and medical
3 support;

4 (2) "Licensed genetic counselor" means a person who is licensed
5 under this subchapter to engage in the practice of genetic counseling; and

6 (3)(A) "Supervision" means the ongoing, direct clinical review
7 for the purposes of training or teaching, by an approved supervisor who
8 monitors the performance or a person's supervised interaction with a client
9 and provides regular documented face-to-face consultation, guidance, and
10 instructions with respect to the clinical skills and competencies of the
11 person supervised.

12 (B) "Supervision" may include without limitation the
13 review of case presentation, audio tapes, video tapes, and direct
14 observation.

15
16 17-95-1103. Exemptions from genetic counselor licensure.

17 This subchapter does not require licensure as a genetic counselor of:

18 (1) An individual who is licensed or lawfully permitted to
19 practice by this state as a healthcare professional and who is practicing
20 within his or her scope of practice, including without limitation a physician
21 or an advanced practice registered nurse;

22 (2) An individual who has successfully completed an accredited
23 genetic counseling training program and who is:

24 (A) Reapplying for the American Board of Genetic
25 Counseling certification examination and gathering logbook cases under
26 supervision in an approved genetic counseling training site; or

27 (B) Practicing under direct supervision of a licensed
28 physician;

29 (3) A student enrolled in an approved academic program in
30 genetic counseling if the practice constitutes a part of a supervised course
31 of study and the student is designated by a title that clearly indicates the
32 student's status as a student or trainee;

33 (4)(A) An individual who is employed by a state genetics center
34 to provide education regarding single gene conditions, including without
35 limitation sickle cell, cystic fibrosis, and hemoglobinopathies.

36 (B) An individual described in subdivision (4)(A) of this

1 section shall not use the title "genetic counselor" or any other title
2 tending to indicate that he or she is a genetic counselor unless he or she is
3 licensed in this state; and

4 (5)(A) A visiting genetic counselor who is certified by the
5 American Board of Genetic Counseling or American Board of Medical Genetics
6 from outside the state performing activities and services for a period of
7 thirty (30) days each year.

8 (B) A visiting genetic counselor shall be licensed if the
9 license is available in his or her home state.

10
11 17-95-1104. Authority of the Arkansas State Medical Board.

12 The Arkansas State Medical Board shall:

13 (1) Develop appropriate rules necessary to regulate genetic
14 counselors;

15 (2) Receive, review, and approve applications for genetic
16 counselor licensure;

17 (3) Issue, renew, suspend, revoke, or deny licensure as a
18 genetic counselor;

19 (4) Conduct hearings on investigative and disciplinary
20 proceedings;

21 (5)(A) Maintain a database of all licensees and all persons
22 whose licenses have been suspended, revoked, or denied.

23 (B) Access to a database under subdivision (5)(A) of this
24 section shall be available upon written request and payment of an appropriate
25 fee as determined by the board; and

26 (6) Perform other functions and duties required to carry out
27 this subchapter.

28
29 17-95-1105. Title protection.

30 A person shall not use or assume the title "licensed genetic counselor"
31 or "genetic counselor" or use any words, letters, abbreviations, or insignia
32 indicating or implying that the person holds a genetic counselor license
33 unless the person is licensed by the Arkansas State Medical Board.

34
35 17-95-1106. Genetic counselor licensure.

36 (a) The Arkansas State Medical Board shall license as a licensed

1 genetic counselor an applicant who:

2 (1) Submits an application approved by the Arkansas State
3 Medical Board;

4 (2) Pays an application fee approved by the Arkansas State
5 Medical Board that is comparable to other fees for licensure of other
6 midlevel healthcare professionals licensed by the Arkansas State Medical
7 Board; and

8 (3) Provides evidence of:

9 (A) Having earned a master's degree from a genetic
10 counseling training program that is accredited by the American Board of
11 Genetic Counseling or an equivalent as determined by the American Board of
12 Genetic Counseling or the American Board of Medical Genetics; and

13 (B) Meets the examination requirements for certification
14 and has current certification as a genetic counselor by the American Board of
15 Genetic Counseling or the American Board of Medical Genetics.

16 (b)(1) The Arkansas State Medical Board may issue a license to an
17 applicant who provides evidence that he or she is licensed to practice as a
18 genetic counselor in another state or territory if the requirements for
19 licensure in the other state or territory are equal to the requirements in
20 this subchapter.

21 (2) The issuance of a license by reciprocity shall be at the
22 sole discretion of the Arkansas State Medical Board.

23
24 17-95-1107. Renewal of genetic counselor license.

25 (a) Except in the case of a temporary license under § 17-95-1108, a
26 license shall be valid for a two-year period from the date of issuance.

27 (b) Upon receipt of a renewal application and renewal fees as
28 determined by the Arkansas State Medical Board, the board shall renew a
29 license to practice as a licensed genetic counselor.

30 (c)(1) As a condition of licensure renewal, a licensed genetic
31 counselor shall submit documentation that he or she has completed fifty (50)
32 hours of continuing education units approved by the board.

33 (2) The licensed genetic counselor is responsible for
34 maintaining:

35 (A) Competent records of having completed qualified
36 professional education for a period of four (4) years after close of the two-

1 year period to which the records pertain; and

2 (B) Information with respect to having completed a
3 qualified professional education to demonstrate that the education meet the
4 requirements of this subchapter.

5 (3) The Arkansas State Medical Board may waive the continuing
6 education requirement or grant an extension of time to complete the
7 continuing education requirement in cases of retirement, illness, disability,
8 or other undue hardship.

9
10 17-95-1108. Temporary licensure.

11 (a)(1) The Arkansas State Medical Board may issue a temporary license
12 to an applicant who does not meet the certification requirement in § 17-95-
13 1106 if the applicant:

14 (A) Has been granted an active-candidate status by the
15 American Board of Genetic Counseling;

16 (B) Applies for and takes the certification examination
17 within twelve (12) months of the issuance of a temporary license; and

18 (C) Submits an application and appropriate application
19 fees with the Arkansas State Medical Board.

20 (2) A temporary license is valid for one (1) year from the date
21 of issuance.

22 (3)(A) A temporary license may be renewed for one (1) year if
23 the applicant fails on his or her first attempt to pass the certification
24 examination of the American Board of Genetic Counseling or the American Board
25 of Medical Genetics and Genomics.

26 (B) An application for renewal shall be signed by a
27 supervisor of the applicant.

28 (4) A temporary license shall expire automatically upon the
29 earliest of:

30 (A) The date of issuance of a license under § 17-95-1106;

31 (B) Ninety (90) days after the date that the applicant
32 fails on his or her second attempt to pass the certification examination; or

33 (C) The date printed on the temporary license.

34 (b) As a condition of temporary licensure, an applicant shall work
35 under the supervision of a licensed genetic counselor or a licensed physician
36 with current American Board of Genetic Counseling certification in clinical

1 genetics when the applicant provides genetic counseling services.

2 (c) A temporary license shall not be issued if the applicant has
3 failed the American Board of Genetic Counseling certification examination
4 more than two (2) times.

5
6 17-95-1109. Denial, suspension, revocation, or refusal to renew -
7 Censure.

8 (a) The Arkansas State Medical Board may deny, suspend, revoke, or
9 refuse to renew a license, or may reprimand, censure, place on probation, or
10 otherwise discipline a licensee, upon proof that the licensee has:

11 (1) Obtained or attempted to obtain a license by fraud or
12 deception;

13 (2) Been convicted of a felony under state or federal law;

14 (3) Been adjudicated mentally ill or incompetent by a court;

15 (4) Used illicit drugs or intoxicating liquors, narcotics,
16 controlled substances, or other drugs or stimulants to an extent that
17 adversely affects the practice of genetic counseling;

18 (5) Engaged in unethical or unprofessional conduct, including
19 without limitation willful acts, negligence, or incompetence in the course of
20 professional practice;

21 (6) Violated any provision of this subchapter or any rule of the
22 board; or

23 (7) Been denied licensure or disciplined in another state or
24 territory in connection with a license in another state or territory.

25 (b) A licensee under subsection (a) of this section shall promptly
26 deliver his or her license to the board if the licensee:

27 (1) Has his or her license suspended or revoked; or

28 (2) Surrenders his or her license with or without prejudice if
29 the surrender is approved by the board.

30 (c) The board may restore a license or remove a probation on a license
31 based on the decision of the board.

32
33 17-95-1110. Surrendering license due to retirement.

34 (a) In order to retire his or her license, a licensed genetic
35 counselor shall file an affidavit with the Arkansas State Medical Board
36 stating the date on which the individual will retire or has retired and other

1 information determined necessary by the board.

2 (b) If a licensed genetic counselor retires his or her licensed as
3 described in subsection (a) of this section, the individual shall apply for
4 licensure as provided in § 17-95-1106 and is not liable for renewal fees that
5 may accrue during the retirement period.

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/s/G. Leding

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APPROVED: 4/4/19

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