

# Recertification Handbook

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# Table of Contents

- 3** | Recertification Application Instructions
- 3** | Eligibility Requirements for Recertification
- 3** | Recertification by Examination
- 3** | Recertification by Continuing Education Units
- 4** | 12.5 Contact Hours Requirements
- 4** | Required Documentation
- 4** | Hardship Extension Policy
- 4** | If Your Certification Expires...
- 4** | Approved PAC Activities and Required Documentation
- 5** | Recertification Tips
- 5** | Certification Maintenance Fees
- 5** | Review and Appeal
- 6** | ABGC's Disciplinary Policy
- 6** | Non-Discrimination Policy
- 6** | Impartiality Statement

## Recertification Application Instructions

This Recertification Handbook has been published to help you through the recertification process. Included in this recertification guide is a step by step process for how to start the recertification application.

You can make the recertification process easier for yourself by following these easy steps:

1. Read through the entire handbook to thoroughly understand each step of the process.
2. Applications must be submitted electronically at: [abgc.learningbuilder.com](http://abgc.learningbuilder.com)
3. Submit your application between January 1 and December 31 of the year you are due to recertify.
4. Begin documenting your continuing education hours and uploading your certificates as soon as they are earned.

Note, a certificate and/or additional documentation are required at initial submission. If a diplomate is audited the provided documentation will be reviewed and approved for a diplomate to pass recertification. Failure to provide documentation may result in loss of certification.

All documentation uploaded to your recertification application will be held in your library in the application platform.

## Eligibility Requirements for Recertification

ABGC recertification shows a commitment to lifelong learning and helps ensure that knowledge and skills are maintained in a rapidly evolving field. Recertification is becoming more significant for licensing, professional advancement, and employment opportunities.

Diplomates are responsible for:

- Applying for recertification within the allotted time frame
- Updating the contact information under your the ABGC account
- Keeping current with ABGC news, information, policies, rules and regulations

## Recertification by Examination

A diplomate seeking voluntary recertification may sit for the ABGC Certification Examination at any time during the recertification period. The examination must be passed to achieve recertification. The new time-limited certification will be effective January 1 following the year the examination was taken and passed. Successful completion of the CGC exam is required. Please visit PSI's website and select "Begin Scheduling" to apply for the exam.

## Recertification by Continuing Education Units

The American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) views continuing education as essential to maintaining and increasing a genetic counselor's knowledge and skills in a rapidly evolving field. For board certified genetic counselors choosing to recertify by earning continuing education units (CEUs), the associated educational programs must meet a minimum set of standards to ensure that they reflect the profession's current needs and promote high quality genetic counseling services.

Continuing education in genetic counseling is an ongoing process consisting of formal learning activities that: (1) are relevant to genetic counseling practice, education, and science; (2) enable genetic counselors to keep pace with the most current scientific evidence regarding clinical practice and education as well as important legal, professional, or regulatory issues; and (3) allow genetic counselors to maintain, develop, and increase competencies in order to improve services to the public and enhance contributions to the profession.

Diplomates recertifying through continuing education must collect 12.5 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) within their certification period. To determine when your current certification cycle begins and ends, and to record and track your CEUs/PACs, please log in to the online recertification application in the [ABGC Portal](#).

## 12.5 Contact Hours Requirements

- A minimum of 7.5 CEUs must be Category 1 CEUs.
  - » Category 1 CEUs are granted for programs with content targeted to genetic counselors and pre-approved by ABGC or NSGC.
- Up to 5 of the remaining CEUs can be Category 2 CEUs.
  - » Category 2.5 CEUs are available for programs approved by organizations other than ABGC or NSGC or continuing medical education (CME) credits. Even though these programs are targeted towards other healthcare providers, their content may be considered to be relevant to a genetic counselor's continuing education.
- Up to 2 PACs can be submitted as part of your recertification.
  - » PACs are awarded for participation in a variety of professional activities determined by ABGC to promote educational development.

## Required Documentation

ABGC reserves the right to request additional documentation to support an application at any time. You should keep complete records of your contact hours as you earn them. Records should include certificates, brochures, course descriptions, as well as all other documentation mentioned in each category.

Nothing will make completing the Recertification Application easier than complete, concise and careful record keeping. Backup documentation may be requested in the event your application is selected for audit. These records can help substantiate that portions of programs were Category 1 or Category 2.

You are encouraged to start your online application early and keep track of your contact hours in the online application.

## Hardship Extension Policy

The Hardship Extension Policy is intended for diplomats who are unable to fulfill the necessary requirements for recertification due to circumstances of a serious nature.

### 1. Requirements

- » Diplomates must be in their recertification year.
- » Submit an email with an explanation of their hardship.
- » Submit at least 10.0 CEUs with documentation into the ABGC Portal.

### 2. Deadline

- » Requests must be received via email to [info@abgc.net](mailto:info@abgc.net) no later than November 15th. If the hardship request is approved, the diplomate will be required to pay a \$100 non-refundable fee.
- » An invoice will be sent within 10 days after the hardship approval and payment will be required prior to approval of the recertification application.
- » Hardship extensions will be approved for 90-days from the deadline of December 31st to earn additional CEUs.

## If Your Certification Expires. . .

Failure to successfully complete your recertification application will result in expiration of the CGC certification. To achieve certification again, an individual will be required to take the CGC exam during one of the available exam windows.

## Approved PAC activities and Required Documentation

ABGC has 5 types of Professional Activities that may be used for a maximum of 2 CEUs. ABGC provides templates for each type of PAC, for your use

### 1. Clinical Supervision

- » Activity Required – 0.5 PAC per student for minimum of 25 hours of direct clinical supervision.
- » At a site used by ACGC accredited program
- » Maximum: 1 PAC per year
- » Required Documentation – List student's initials, training program, dates supervision began and ended, and number of supervision hours provided per week.
- » **Clinical Supervision PAC Form**

### 2. Publication

- » Activity Required – 1 PAC if first, second or senior author of an article or chapter in peer-reviewed journal or book; 0.5 PAC for any other author that is not first, second or senior; must be related to a practice-based competency.
- » Maximum – 1 PAC per Article or Chapter
- » Required Documentation – Completely and accurately reference each publication.
- » **Publication PAC Form**

### 3. Leadership Activities to a Genetics-Related Organization

- » Activity Required – 0.5 PAC per 25 hours of service per year per organization in a leadership role as a board member, chair or leader of a genetics-related organization.
- » Maximum of 1PAC per organization per year
- » List organization name, contact information and dates of service. Keep records (e.g., meeting minutes, dated agenda) documenting at least 25 hours of service.
- » **Leadership Activities to a Genetics-Related Organization PAC Form**

### 4. Teaching

- » Activity Required - 0.5 PAC per minimum of 5 hours of teaching.
- » Maximum of 1 PAC (10 hours) per course
- » Document titles and dates of all courses. Must be a graduate level course in an area related to Genetics competency. Keep printed documentation (e.g., course description, faculty list) of each course.
- » **Teaching PAC Form**

### 5. Peer Review Manuscripts

- » Activity Required - 0.2 PAC per manuscript reviewed by invitation for a scientific journal.
- » Maximum of 1 PAC per year for conducting peer review of manuscripts for scientific journals
- » Document review of a manuscript at the invitation of a scientific journal, including any email notifications inviting them to complete the review and thanking them for completing the review. Diplomates should keep all written documentation that the review was completed.
- » **Peer Review Manuscripts Form**

### Deadline for Receipt of Materials

Submit your application between January 1 and December 31 of the year your certification expires. Your certification will always expire on December 31 of the year you are due to recertify.

**The application will close at 11:59 p.m. Central Standard Time on December 31.**

### Recertification Tips

- Consult the ABGC website on a regular basis for detailed and updated information. All instructions, deadlines and online forms are located here.
- Carefully read and follow all instructions and deadlines. Diplomates are responsible for meeting deadlines and requirements for recertification. ABGC does notify diplomates of approaching recertification deadlines.
- Utilize the ABGC online application to track your continuing education activities. ABGC does not keep track of these activities for individual diplomates outside of the online system.
- Ask for clarification if you are unsure about any aspect of the recertification process. The ABGC Executive Office is available to assist you and can be reached at **312-321-6879** or **info@abgc.net**.

### Certification Maintenance Fees

ABGC bills all diplomates an annual certification maintenance fee (CMF) in January of each year for the current year. The CMF can be paid upon receipt of the invoice, or it can be paid at the time of recertification. However, if the CMF is paid at the time of recertification, the diplomate pays the current rate for all past year's due.

### Review and Appeal

A review process and an appeal procedure are available for candidates whose applications for recertification by continuing education have been denied or for those whose certifications have been revoked. Please contact ABGC Executive Office for more information regarding the process and policies for review and appeals.

## **ABGC's Disciplinary Policy**

ABGC diplomates (those certified by ABGC), ABGC examination applicants, and ABGC examination candidates (when used collectively, "ABGC Individuals") may be subject to disciplinary review for matters stemming from improper behavior, fraudulent credentials, and/or legal, regulatory and credentialing actions as described below. Individuals who misuse ABGC trademarks, compromise the security of ABGC exams, or assist others in such behavior may also be subject to legal action by ABGC. Those who are the subject of disciplinary review under this policy are hereby referred to as "Respondents." In addition, NO APPEAL may be taken from an adverse decision based on an individual's receipt of a failing grade on the Certification Examination. More details about ABGC's disciplinary policy [here](#).

## **Non-Discrimination Policy**

ABGC endorses the principles of equal opportunity and nondiscrimination in its certification program and prohibits discrimination against its applicants, candidates, certified persons, staff, and volunteers. Certification is offered to all eligible persons regardless of age, gender, religion, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation or disability, or any other category protected by federal or state law. ABGC attempts to ensure fair and equitable treatment of all candidates throughout all phases of the certification process. All ABGC decisions related to certification (including granting, suspending, and withdrawing) are made impartially and free from discriminatory judgments.

## **Impartiality Statement**

The ABGC Executive Office and its employees, volunteers, and contractors understand the importance of impartiality and the consideration of any potential conflicts of interest in carrying out its certification activities. ABGC shall manage conflicts of interest and ensure the objectivity of its certification activities. ABGC shall act impartially in relation to its applicants, candidates, and certified persons. Decisions on certification programs shall be made in accordance with established policies and procedures. Certification of individuals is based on objective evidence obtained by ABGC through a fair, valid, and reliable assessment process.