



# **Bulletin of Information for the American Board of Genetic Counseling Certification Examination**

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## INTRODUCTION

Congratulations on taking the first step to become certified by the American Board of Genetic Counseling, Inc. (ABGC) or recertified as an ABGC diplomate via the examination pathway. The Certified Genetic Counselor (CGC®) credential is granted by ABGC to genetic counselors who meet established standards for professional practice through documentation of specialized training and who receive a passing score on the ABGC Certification Examination. ABGC certification is valid for five (5) years for those who certify or recertify by examination. After five years, each diplomate is required to recertify to maintain the CGC® credential through continuing education or through examination.

This *Bulletin of Information* contains instructions to help an individual complete the application process, pay the examination fees, and, if accepted, schedule an appointment to take the ABGC Examination. It is important to understand all requirements and carefully follow these instructions. Missing a step or a deadline can delay or prevent an individual from being able to take the examination. If an applicant has any additional questions after reviewing this *Bulletin of Information*, please contact the ABGC Executive Office at 913-222-8661 or [info@abgc.net](mailto:info@abgc.net).

### What is certification?

Professional certification is a voluntary process in which a non-governmental agency grants time-limited use of a credential to professionals who meet predetermined standards. ABGC certification indicates a professional has met standards necessary to pass the certification examination; therefore, meeting the standards of minimal competence to practice as a genetic counselor.

It is the Diplomate's responsibility to apply for recertification prior to the expiration date of his/her current certification. A renewal notification postcard is mailed to each Diplomate's last known postal address approximately four months prior to the current certification expiration date. Email recertification reminders are also sent to those Diplomates for whom ABGC has a valid email address. To ensure that you receive important information from ABGC, please review your online profile and verify current email and postal information.

Each Diplomate is responsible for:

- Applying for recertification within the allotted timeframe,
- Creating and updating the contact information on his/her ABGC online profile,
- Keeping current with ABGC news, information, policy, rules and regulations.

### What is Active Candidate Status or ACS?

ACS signifies an individual has been approved by ABGC to take the ABGC Certification Examination in a specific time frame. ACS is only granted in certain applicant categories. Those who do not successfully certify must reapply for ACS in a future examination cycle, if eligible to do so. Requests for ACS verification will be processed by the ABGC Executive Office once a completed application is received and processed.

Individuals in an applicant category for which the ACS designation is not awarded may not use the ACS designation for any purpose at any time. ACS expires when the applicant is issued the examination score report, or twelve (12) consecutive months following examination application approval, whichever comes first.

### Why are there different examination categories?

The ABGC strives to keep pace with the evolution of the profession while ensuring the public has access to competent genetic counseling services. This may necessitate the creation of new, sometimes time-limited, categories and gradual discontinuation of others. The emergence of licensure, for example, was a driving force for some changes.

### What qualifies as a Category 1 CEU?

NSGC administers Category 1 CEUs. Visit the NSGC website [www.nsgc.org](http://www.nsgc.org) for more information about current CEU opportunities and approval requirements.

## GENERAL INFORMATION

The ABGC Certification Examination consists of 200 multiple-choice questions (170 scored items; 30 pre-test items). An examinee has four (4) hours to complete the examination. The candidate will be asked to select the one best answer from four options provided for each question.

The questions have been devised to test not only the candidate's recall of knowledge, but also the ability to appropriately and correctly apply and analyze information to address problems and situations encountered in the practice of genetic counseling.

The examination questions are derived from the most recent version of the Content Outline, which is based on the results of the Practice Analysis conducted by ABGC. The most recent version of the Content Outline may be accessed on the ABGC website [www.abgc.net](http://www.abgc.net).

Please refer to ABGC's website at [www.abgc.net](http://www.abgc.net) for examination windows and fees.



## EXAMINATION CATEGORIES

The examination categories listed below recognize that there are variations in the certification history of our candidates. They take into account a variety of factors such as whether the examination is being taken for initial certification or recertification, graduation date, and whether this is the first attempt or a repeat attempt. Review of the categories below will help a candidate to determine, which, if any, are applicable to them. The majority of candidates will fall into either category 1 or 2.

**If a candidate has any questions about the examination categories or has difficulty determining eligibility for a category, please contact the ABGC Executive Office at 913-222-8661 or [info@abgc.net](mailto:info@abgc.net).**

***Examinees who graduated from a training program accredited by ACGC after January 1, 2008 may apply for eligibility to take the exam in Categories 1 – 3.***

- **Category 1:** ACS Eligible First Time Examinees
- **Category 2:** ACS Eligible Repeat Examinees

Graduates of a training program accredited by ACGC after January 1, 2008 are eligible for up to three (3) examination attempts within five (5) years of graduation. The five-year examination period starts the first year in which the candidate meets examination eligibility criteria prior to the application deadline of the examination. During the five-year examination eligibility period, Active Candidate Status (ACS) status is granted with each examination application (up to three times). ACS expires when the applicant is issued the examination score report, or twelve (12) consecutive months following examination application approval, whichever comes first.

Among other requirements, candidates applying for the ABGC examination via Category 1 must submit an official transcript from an accredited genetic counseling education program. Transcripts can be sent directly from the school to PSI or submitted by the student as a PDF document uploaded at the time of application. Transcripts must state the degree and date degree was conferred. Please be aware that transcript requests often take an educational institution several weeks to process. ***Request transcripts as soon as possible so they are received by PSI well before the application deadline.***

- **Category 3:** Non-ACS Final Attempt Examinees

If a candidate fails to obtain certification after three (3) examination attempts or the five (5) year cycle has passed/expired, whichever comes first, an individual is

eligible for **one** more examination attempt by completing the following: 1) the individual demonstrates an active commitment to continuing education by obtaining five (5) Category 1 CEUs (issued by NSGC) following loss of ACS eligibility (accrual of CEUs may begin the day after the last examination administration window closes for the year); and 2) the candidate's final examination attempt must be completed within two (2) years (month specific) of the last failed examination attempt. In this instance, the candidate will not have the designation "Active Candidate Status." If certification is not achieved for any reason during the final examination attempt or if the examination cycle has closed (formal withdrawal does not constitute an "attempt"), no future attempts at ABGC Certification Examination will be allowed unless the individual re-enters a training program accredited by ACGC and completes all graduation requirements.

### ***Former ABGC Diplomates Whose Time-limited Certification Has Lapsed***

Former ABGC Diplomates whose time-limited certification has lapsed, may qualify for two (2) examination attempts to re-establish ABGC certification. The second examination attempt must occur within two (2) examination administrations of the first attempt. If lapsed for less than twelve (12) months, the candidate must earn a minimum of 2.0 Category 1 CEUs (issued by NSGC) in the last 12 months and will be granted ACS status for no more than twelve (12) consecutive months. If lapsed for more than twelve (12) months, the individual must obtain a minimum of 5 Category 1 CEUs (issued by NSGC) in the 18 months prior to the application deadline for the examination they plan to attempt and will be granted ACS status for no more than twelve (12) consecutive months.

### ***ABGC Diplomates Who Choose Recertification by Examination***

A diplomate may sit for the ABGC Certification Examination at any time within the period of their current time-limited or voluntary certification. A diplomate must pass the examination to achieve recertification. The new time-limited certification will be effective January 1 following the year the examination was taken and passed. (Note: if the examination is taken and passed in a year prior to expiration of the current certificate, the new certificate will be effective January 1 of the year following the examination, and the initial period of certification is shortened).

Failure to obtain recertification by the deadline will result in expiration of ABGC time-limited certification and loss of credential. If recertification is not achieved for any reason during this examination attempt, the diplomate will have one (1) additional attempt.



## NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY

ABGC does not discriminate among candidates on the basis of age, gender, race, color, religion, national origin, disability, marital status or any other legally protected characteristic.

## EXAMINATION DATES

The examination windows begin on the first business day and close on the last day of February and August. Approved candidates will be eligible to test during a time frame that includes two consecutive examination windows.

## APPLICATION DEADLINE

Applications must be completed at [www.goAMP.com](http://www.goAMP.com) on or before January 17 for the February window. Applications must be completed at [www.goAMP.com](http://www.goAMP.com) on or before July 17 for the August window. Faxed or mailed applications are not accepted.

Payment may be made online by credit card (VISA, MasterCard, Discover or American Express). Credit card transactions that are declined will be subject to a \$25 handling fee. A certified check or money order for the amount due, including the handling fee, must be sent to ABGC to cover declined credit card transactions. PSI is the examination services provider for ABGC. PSI coordinates the certification application and administration processes.

Refer to the Documentation Checklist included in this ABGC Information Bulletin to ensure all application materials are submitted.

## TEST CENTER LOCATIONS

The examination will be administered at PSI computer-based Test Centers around the world. PSI Test Center locations, including detailed maps and directions, are available on the website [www.goAMP.com](http://www.goAMP.com). Specific address information will be provided when you schedule an examination appointment.

Neither ABGC nor PSI can guarantee examination appointment availability at Test Centers. If no examination appointments are available at a Test Center <1,000 miles from the applicant's residence, the applicant will be entitled to a refund per the refund policy.

## SCHEDULING AN EXAMINATION

The examination is administered by appointment only Monday through Saturday. Appointment starting times may vary by location. Individuals are scheduled on a first-come, first-served basis. Individuals may schedule an examination appointment after receiving a confirmation notice of approval of the application from PSI.

Candidates are encouraged to schedule the examination appointment as soon as possible. This ensures the best choice of Test Center locations and testing dates. For more information on when a candidate can change an examination appointment, please see the Examination Appointment Changes section in this Bulletin.

Be prepared to provide a desired date and location for testing. A candidate will also need to provide their candidate ID number from PSI's eligibility confirmation email as the unique identification number.

To schedule an examination appointment in Canada or outside the United States, please call PSI at 888-519-9901 or email [AMPIntlExamServices@goAMP.com](mailto:AMPIntlExamServices@goAMP.com). There are two ways to schedule an examination appointment in the United States.

1. **Online Scheduling:** Go to [www.goAMP.com](http://www.goAMP.com) at any time and select "Candidates." Follow the simple, step-by-step instructions to choose the examination program, American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC), and schedule the examination.

OR

2. **Telephone Scheduling:** Call PSI at 888-519-9901 to schedule an examination appointment. This toll-free number is answered from 7:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. (Central Time) Monday through Thursday, 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday and 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday.

If special accommodations are being requested, please submit the two-page Request for Special Examination Accommodations form prior to contacting PSI at 888-519-9901 to schedule your examination.

When the appointment is made, a candidate will be given a time to report to the Test Center. The candidate will only be allowed to take the examination during the scheduled appointment. Unscheduled candidates (walk-ins) will not be admitted to the Test Center.

Please visit [www.goAMP.com](http://www.goAMP.com) to determine which national holidays could impact scheduling an examination.



## SPECIAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES

ABGC and PSI comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and strive to ensure that no individual with a disability is deprived of the opportunity to take the examination solely by reason of that disability. PSI will provide reasonable accommodations for candidates with disabilities. Candidates requesting special accommodations must call PSI at 888-519-9901 to schedule their examination.

1. Wheelchair access is available at all established Test Centers. Candidates must advise PSI at the time of scheduling that wheelchair access is necessary.
2. Candidates with visual, sensory, physical or learning disabilities that would prevent them from taking the examination under standard conditions may request special accommodations and arrangements.

Verification of the disability and a statement of the specific type of assistance needed must be made in writing to PSI at least 45 calendar days prior to the desired examination date by completing the Request for Special Examination Accommodations and Documentation of Disability-Related Needs forms. Please inform PSI of your need for special accommodations when scheduling your examination time.

## EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT CHANGES

A candidate may reschedule an appointment for examination within the candidate’s eligibility period at no charge once by calling PSI at 888-519-9901 at least two business days prior to the scheduled testing appointment. (See Table 1.)

TABLE 1

If the examination is scheduled on ...	A candidate must contact PSI by 3:00 p.m. Central Time to reschedule the examination by the previous ...
Monday	Wednesday
Tuesday	Thursday
Wednesday	Friday
Thursday	Monday
Friday/Saturday	Tuesday

If a candidate fails to reschedule the examination appointment within the eligibility period, and does not appear for the appointment, nor does s/he officially withdraw from the examination, the candidate forfeits one examination attempt. In addition, if a candidate has Active Candidate

Status, it will expire on the last day of the examination cycle for which s/he registered and was approved to sit. To sit for the next available ABGC Certification Examination, an individual must meet all published eligibility requirements and submit all required materials and fees for that examination cycle.

## REFUND POLICY

Refunds are only available to those who formally withdraw in writing at least five (5) business days prior to their scheduled examination appointment. In this instance, ABGC will refund the examination fee minus a \$500 processing fee. See more details below regarding withdrawal, failure to schedule and failure to report.

## ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES FOR WITHDRAWAL FROM, FAILURE TO SCHEDULE OR FAILURE TO REPORT FOR AN EXAMINATION APPOINTMENT

### Withdrawal

To withdraw from an examination attempt, candidates must submit a formal written request to withdraw prior to the scheduled examination. If candidates withdraw at least five (5) days prior to the scheduled examination date, they will receive a refund minus a \$500 processing fee. No refund is available if candidates withdraw within five (5) days of the examination date. A candidate will not lose an examination attempt if s/he withdraws prior to the scheduled examination appointment. However, candidates who decide to withdraw in the fifth year of eligibility may not be allowed an additional attempt unless extenuating circumstances apply. Contact the ABGC Executive Office for more information at 913-222-8661 or [info@abgc.net](mailto:info@abgc.net).

### Failure to Schedule or to Report for an Examination Appointment

If a candidate fails to schedule an examination appointment in the eligibility period for which s/he was registered, or does not report for a scheduled appointment (and hasn’t officially withdrawn) s/he forfeits one examination attempt and is ineligible for a refund. In addition, if the candidate held Active Candidate Status, it will expire on the last day of the examination cycle for which s/he registered and was approved to sit. To sit for the next available ABGC Certification Examination, a candidate must meet all published eligibility requirements and submit all required materials and fees for the examination cycle for which s/he is applying.



## INCLEMENT WEATHER, POWER FAILURE OR EMERGENCY

In the event of inclement weather or unforeseen emergencies on the day of an examination, PSI will determine whether circumstances warrant the cancellation, and subsequent rescheduling, of an examination. The examination will usually be administered if the Test Center personnel are able to open the Test Center.

A candidate may visit [www.goAMP.com](http://www.goAMP.com) prior to the examination to determine if PSI has been advised that any Test Centers are closed. Every attempt is made to administer the examination as scheduled; however, should an examination be canceled at a Test Center, all scheduled candidates will receive notification regarding rescheduling or reapplication procedures.

If power to a Test Center is temporarily interrupted during an administration, your examination will be restarted. The answers provided up to the point of interruption will remain intact, but for security reasons the questions will be scrambled. Any bookmarks made prior to the interruption will not be retained. However, by using the double arrows (>>), an examinee can go through any unanswered questions.

## ON THE DAY OF YOUR EXAMINATION

On the day of the examination appointment, report to the Test Center no later than the scheduled testing time. Once the candidate arrives, look for the signs indicating PSI Test Center check-in. If arriving more than 15 minutes after the scheduled testing time, the candidate will not be admitted. To gain admission to the Test Center, the candidate must present two forms of identification. The primary form must be government issued, current and include your photograph. No form of temporary identification will be accepted. The name on the identification must match the name under which the candidate is registered with ABGC. The candidate will also be required to sign a roster for verification of identity.

Acceptable primary forms of identification include a current:

1. Driver's license with photograph
2. State identification card with photograph
3. Passport
4. Military identification card with photograph

Social Security cards, employment ID cards and student ID cards are NOT acceptable as primary identification, but may be used as secondary identification if they include the candidate's name and signature. Misrepresenting identity or falsifying information to obtain admission to the Test Center may be grounds for discipline by the ABGC.

## SECURITY

ABGC and PSI administration and security standards are designed to ensure all candidates are provided the same opportunity to demonstrate their abilities. The Test Center is continuously monitored by audio and video surveillance equipment for security purposes. The following security procedures apply during the examination:

- Examinations are proprietary. No cameras, notes, tape recorders, pagers or cellular/smart phones are allowed in the testing room. Possession or use of a cellular/smart phone or other electronic devices is strictly prohibited and will result in dismissal from the examination.
- No calculators are permitted.
- No guests, visitors or family members are allowed in the testing room or reception areas.

## PERSONAL BELONGINGS

No personal items, valuables or weapons should be brought to the Test Center. Only wallets and keys are permitted. Large coats and jackets must be left outside the testing room. Examinees will be provided a soft locker to store a wallet and/or keys with them in the testing room. The proctor will lock the soft locker prior to the candidate entering the testing room. The examinee will not have access to these items until after the examination is completed. Please note the following items will not be allowed in the testing room except securely locked in the soft locker.

- Watches
- Hats
- Wallets
- Keys

Once the candidate has placed everything into the soft locker, s/he will be asked to pull their pockets to ensure they are empty. If personal items are brought that will not fit in the soft locker, the candidate will not be able to test. The site will not store any personal belongings.

If any personal items are observed or heard (e.g., cell phones, alarms) in the testing room after the examination is started, the candidate will be dismissed and the administration will be forfeited.

## EXAMINATION RESTRICTIONS

- Pencils will be provided during check-in.
- The candidate will be provided with one piece of scratch paper at a time to use during the examination, unless noted on the sign-in roster for a particular candidate. S/he must return the scratch paper to the supervisor at



the completion of testing, or s/he will not receive a score report.

- No documents or notes of any kind may be brought into or removed from the examination room.
- No questions concerning the content of the examination may be asked during the examination.
- Eating, drinking or smoking will not be permitted in the Test Center.
- The examinee may take a break whenever they wish, but will not be allowed additional time to make up for time lost during breaks.

## MISCONDUCT

If a candidate engages in any of the following conduct during the examination s/he may be dismissed, the scores will not be reported and examination fees will not be refunded. Examples of misconduct are when s/he:

- creates a disturbance, is abusive, or otherwise uncooperative;
- displays and/or uses electronic communications equipment such as pagers, cellular/smart phones;
- talks or participates in conversation with other examination candidates;
- gives or receives help or is suspected of doing so;
- leaves the Test Center during the administration;
- attempts to record examination questions;
- attempts to take the examination for someone else;
- is observed with personal belongings; or
- is observed with notes, books or other aids without it being noted on the roster.

## COPYRIGHTED EXAMINATION QUESTIONS

All examination questions are the copyrighted property of ABGC. It is forbidden to copy, reproduce, record, distribute or display these examination questions by any means, in whole or in part. Doing so may subject the candidate to disciplinary action as well as legal sanctions.

## COMPUTER LOGIN

After the candidate's identification has been confirmed, s/he will be escorted to the examination room. S/he will then be directed to a testing carrel. S/he will be instructed on-screen to enter their candidate ID number. The candidate's photograph, taken before beginning the examination, will remain on-screen throughout the examination session. This photograph will also print on the candidate's score report.

## PRACTICE COMPUTER TESTING PROCESS

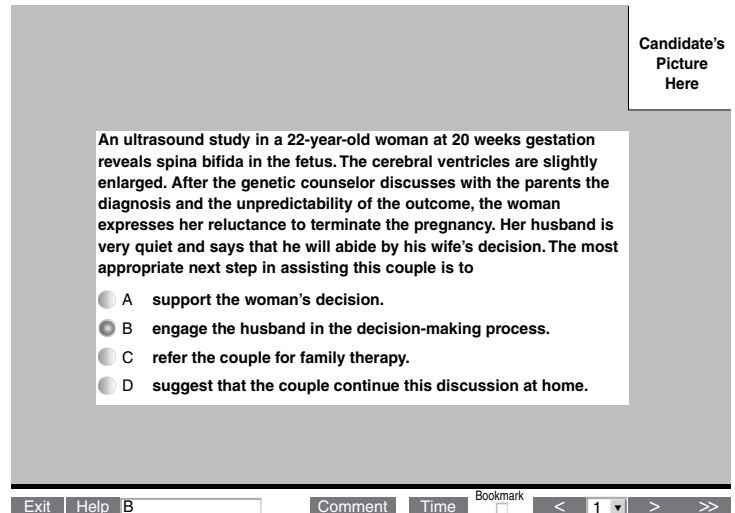
Prior to attempting the examination, the candidate will be given the opportunity to practice taking an examination on the computer. The time used for this practice examination is NOT counted as part of the examination time or score. When the candidate is comfortable with the computer testing process, s/he may quit the practice session and begin the timed examination.

## TIMED EXAMINATION

Following the practice examination, the candidate will begin the timed examination. Before beginning, instructions for taking the examination are provided on-screen.

The computer monitors the time a candidate spends on the examination. The examination will terminate if a candidate exceeds the time allowed. S/he may click on the Time box in the lower right portion of the screen to monitor their time. A digital clock indicates the time remaining to complete the examination. The Time feature may be turned off during the examination.

FIGURE 1



Only one examination question is presented at a time (see Figure 1). The question number appears in the lower right portion of the screen. Choices of answers to the examination question are identified as A, B, C, or D. A candidate must indicate their choice by either typing in the letter in the response box in the lower left portion of the computer screen or clicking on the option using the mouse. To change an answer, enter a different option by typing in the letter in the box or by clicking on the option using the mouse. A candidate may change their answer as many times as they wish during the examination time limit.



To move to the next question, click on the forward arrow (>) in the lower right portion of the screen. This action will move the candidate forward through the examination question by question. If a candidate wishes to review any question or questions, click the backward arrow (<) or use the left arrow key to move backward through the examination.

An examination question may be left unanswered for return later in the examination session. Questions may also be bookmarked for later review by clicking in the blank square to the right of the Time button. Click on the double arrows (>>) to advance to the next unanswered or bookmarked question on the examination. To identify all unanswered and bookmarked questions, repeatedly click on the double arrows (>>). When the examination is completed, the number of examination questions answered is reported. If not all questions have been answered and there is time remaining, return to the examination and answer those questions. Be sure to provide an answer for each examination question before ending the examination. There is no penalty for guessing.

## CANDIDATE COMMENTS

During the examination, comments may be provided for any question by clicking on the Comment button to the left of the Time button. This opens a text box where comments may be entered. Comments will be reviewed by ABGC, but individual responses will not be provided.

## FOLLOWING THE EXAMINATION

After completing the examination, the candidate is asked to complete a short evaluation of the examination experience. Then, they are instructed to report to the Test Center administrator to receive the score report. **The score report will show the score for the examination and a determination of the pass/fail status.**

## SCORES CANCELLED BY ABGC OR PSI

ABGC and PSI are responsible for the validity and integrity of the scores they report. On occasion, occurrences, such as computer malfunction or misconduct by a candidate, may cause a score to be suspect. ABGC and PSI reserve the right to void or withhold examination results if, upon investigation, a violation of their regulations is discovered or there is reason to question the validity or integrity of scores.

## CONFIDENTIALITY

Information about candidates for testing and their examination results are considered confidential. Studies and reports concerning candidates will contain no identifiable information, unless authorized by the candidate.

Names of candidates who achieve certification and are awarded the Certified Genetic Counselor (CGC®) credential will be listed in the directory of ABGC diplomates on the ABGC website [www.abgc.net](http://www.abgc.net). Candidates who want ABGC to provide their examination result to a state licensing board or agency must complete a signed release of information statement (included in the online Examination Application form) authorizing ABGC to provide this information to the designated recipient(s).

## DUPLICATE SCORE REPORT

A candidate may purchase additional copies of the results at a cost of \$25 per copy. Requests must be submitted to PSI, in writing, within 12 months of the examination. The request must include name, candidate ID number, mailing address, telephone number and date of examination. Duplicate score reports will be mailed within approximately five business days after receipt of the request and fee. See Form, page 12. Submit this information with the required fee payable to PSI Services Inc. in the form of a check, money order, or cashier's check.

## GRIEVANCE PROCEDURES

Individuals whose credentials are deemed unacceptable and who are not granted approval to sit for the ABGC Certification Examination have the right to seek reconsideration of ABGC's decision by submitting a written request for reconsideration, together with an explanation of the basis for the request, no later than 30 days after receipt of notice of this decision.

No request for reconsideration of ABGC's decision regarding certification may be based on an individual's receipt of a failing grade on the ABGC Certification Examination unless extraordinary circumstances exist as determined solely by the Board.

## STRATEGIES FOR ANSWERING QUESTIONS

The purpose of this section is to familiarize examinees with the format of questions, referred to as items, on the examination. It is not intended to illustrate the scope of the examination or the difficulty of individual questions.

The ABGC Certification Examination consists of 200 multiple-choice items. Of this total, 170 items are scored and 30 items are pre-test items that are being evaluated for possible inclusion on future examinations. The scored items and pre-test items are not distinguishable to the examinee. All items should be approached as if they are scored items.

All items will be in multiple-choice, one best answer format. Each item will consist of a statement, question or scenario followed by four response options. The options will be lettered A, B, C, D. The examinee is required to select the one best answer to the question. Options other than the one best (correct) answer may be partially correct, but there is only one best answer to each item. Every effort has been made to eliminate “trick” questions.

### Strategies for Answering One Best Answer Single Items

- Read each question or statement carefully. Be certain that you understand what is being asked.
- Read each option carefully.
- Look for the best choice and do not be misled by other choices that might be considered possible, but less applicable, than the answer considered correct.
- If an option is only partially correct, tentatively eliminate it as incorrect. Of the remaining options, select the one that you believe to be most correct, and mark this answer.

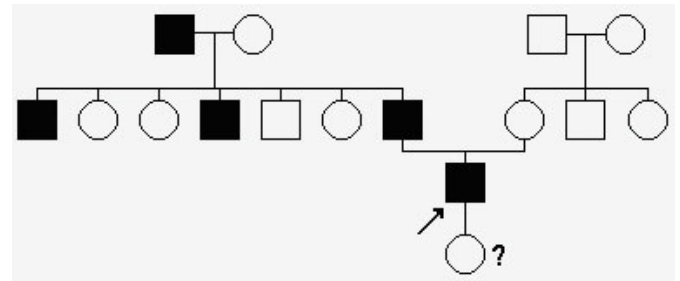
### Sample Questions: One Best Answer Single Items

**Directions (items 1-2):** Each of the questions or statements below is followed by four possible answers, or options. Select the one lettered option that is BEST in each case and mark the correct answer.

1. An ultrasound study in a 22-year-old woman at 20 weeks gestation reveals spina bifida in the fetus. The cerebral ventricles are slightly enlarged. After the genetic counselor discusses with the parents the diagnosis and the unpredictability of the outcome, the woman expresses her reluctance to terminate the pregnancy. Her husband is very quiet and says that he

will abide by his wife’s decision. The most appropriate next step in assisting this couple is to

- A. Support the woman’s decision.
- B. Engage the husband in the decision-making process.
- C. Refer the couple for family therapy.
- D. Suggest that the couple continue this discussion at home.



2. For a trait that has a population frequency of 1 in 40,000, assuming the most likely interpretation of the mode of inheritance in the pedigree shown above, the probability of the proband’s daughter inheriting the familial mutation is which of the following?
  - A. 1/2
  - B. 1/100
  - C. 1/200
  - D. 0

### Correct Answers to Sample Questions

1. (B)
2. (A)

Additional insights into the structure of the ABGC Certification Examination questions may be gained by working through the content of the ABGC practice examination. Information about purchasing the practice exam is available on the ABGC website.

## PASS/FAIL SCORE DETERMINATION

The examination development process and scoring determination for the ABGC Certification Examination are extremely rigorous and follows industry standards. This elaborate process is designed to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and that all pass/fail decisions are valid. This detailed process provides distinction and value to genetic counselors in the field and ensures that passing candidates have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for competent practice. Additional information about this process is available on the ABGC website [www.abgc.net](http://www.abgc.net) under the “Becoming Certified” tab.



ABGC uses a criterion-referenced methodology to score examinations, which is a certification examination industry standard. With this type of scoring methodology, there is no “curve.” Candidates do not compete against one another. The “bar” for performance level is the same for each candidate – minimally competent practice. In this method of scoring, it is theoretically possible for all examinees to pass the examination or for all examinees to fail the examination. Since candidates are compared to the criterion of competent practice, there is no minimum percentage of examinees that must fail the exam.

Prior to the institution of instant scoring with the August 2013 examination administration, the Angoff scoring method was used to set the performance level required to pass the examination. This is the most common methodology for establishing passing scores for credentialing exams. This process was overseen by a psychometrician and was based on a combination of statistical analysis and the expert judgment of the Certification Exam Committee (CEC) to determine what constituted the minimum qualification to pass the exam. This performance level established using the Angoff method is retained with instant scoring through a statistical process known as equating.

As mentioned above, all items used to calculate a person’s score on the examination have been previously used and, therefore, have known statistical performance characteristics. This information allows the CEC to develop new forms that are parallel to previous forms, with consistent levels of difficulty and score reliability. A psychometrician uses each item’s statistical performance characteristics to project results on the new form, and an equitable passing score is determined. Because score equating occurs before the examination is administered, this procedure is characterized as pre-equating.

Equating controls for slight variations in difficulty can occur among multiple test forms and thus helps ensure that all candidates are held to the same standard (aka performance level). A great deal of time and effort is spent ensuring an exam’s passing score is derived fairly for each examinee. Careful adherence to this process yields a rationally determined score that can be used with confidence to make pass/fail decisions.

In closing, the ABGC Certification Examination development process follows established psychometric principles and industry standards. The examination is constructed from items that are based on the actual practice of certified genetic counselors. Each item undergoes multiple reviews by certified genetic counselors and undergoes rigorous statistical analyses before it is used to determine a candidate’s score. This elaborate process is designed to ensure that all candidates are treated fairly and that all

pass/fail decisions are valid. In addition, the examination development process provides distinction and value to genetic counselors in the field and ensures that passing candidates have the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary for competent practice.

## **ABGC TRADEMARK POLICY**

The American Board of Genetic Counseling (ABGC) has the responsibility to protect its federal trademarks from infringement by unauthorized parties. The federal trademark registrations owned by the ABGC include its corporate logo and the designation CGC®. ABGC works with patent and trademark attorneys to ensure that only those who have passed the ABGC examination have the right to use the trademark designations, adding to the meaning and value of the CGC® designation. Certificants who meet ABGC’s requirements for recertification are authorized to continue to use the credential. Individuals who allow their ABGC certification to expire may not use the CGC credential nor may they hold themselves out to be an ABGC certified genetic counselor.

## Checklist of Documentation Needed to Apply for Each Category

Some Examination Categories require document uploads as part of the application process. Please see below for a list of required documents.

### Category 1:

- Official transcript from an accredited genetic counseling education program. Transcripts can be sent directly from the school to PSI or submitted by the candidate as a PDF document uploaded at the time of application. Transcripts must state the degree and date degree was conferred.
- For candidates who wish to be granted ACS when a degree has not yet been conferred, a letter from the Registrar/Dean stating the degree and date of conferral is required.
- Verification of training by the Director of the genetic counseling program from which the candidate graduated. This information will automatically be requested via PSI's Electronic Eligibility Database (EED) after the online application is completed.

### Category 2: No required documents.

### Category 3:

- Documentation of participation in five (5) Category 1 Continuing Education Units (CEU). Submit PDF copies of your certificates of participation, keeping originals for your records.

### Recertification by Examination: No required documents.

#### Lapsed Diplomate Recertification by Examination:

- If lapsed for less than twelve (12) months: Documentation of participation in a minimum of two (2) Category 1 Continuing Education Units (CEU) in the 12 months prior to the application deadline (must be completed prior to examination application deadline). Submit PDF copies of your certificates of participation during the application process, keeping originals for your records.
- If lapsed for more than twelve (12) months: Documentation of participation in a minimum of five (5) Category 1 Continuing Education Units (CEU) in the 18 months prior to the application deadline (must be completed prior to examination application deadline). Submit PDF copies of your certificates of participation during the application process, keeping originals for your records.





## DUPLICATE SCORE REPORT REQUEST FORM

**Directions:** Use this form to request a duplicate score report. Requests must be submitted to ABGC Examination Services, 18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061, in writing, within 12 months of the examination. Complete all requested information. The form must include fee payment payable to PSI Services Inc. (**check or money order only**). Duplicate score reports will be mailed within approximately five (5) business days following receipt of the request and fee. *Note: It is against PSI and ABGC policy to send score reports to anyone other than the candidate.*

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

First Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Maiden/Other Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Candidate ID Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Examination: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fee: \$25 per report requested. Number of copies requested: \_\_\_\_\_

Method of Payment:  Check  Money Order

Check #: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Fee: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

I hereby request that PSI send me a duplicate score report.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Mail completed form to:  
 ABGC Examination Services  
 18000 W. 105th St.  
 Olathe, KS 66061







## REQUEST FOR SPECIAL EXAMINATION ACCOMMODATIONS

If you have a disability covered by the Americans with Disabilities Act, **please complete this form and provide the Documentation of Disability-Related Needs on the next page and submit both pages at least 45 days prior to your requested examination date.** The information you provide and any documentation regarding your disability and your need for accommodation in testing will be treated with strict confidentiality.

### CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Candidate ID # \_\_\_\_\_ Requested Test Center: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name (Last, First, Middle Initial, Former Name)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mailing Address

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
City State Zip Code

\_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Telephone Number Email Address

### SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

I request special accommodations for the \_\_\_\_\_ examination.

Please provide (check all that apply):

- Reader
- Extended testing time (time and a half)
- Reduced distraction environment
- Please specify below if other special accommodations are needed.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**PLEASE READ AND SIGN:**

I give my permission for my diagnosing professional to discuss with PSI staff my records and history as they relate to the requested accommodation.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this form to:**  
PSI, 18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061-7543.  
If you have questions, call Candidate Services at 888-519-9901.



## DOCUMENTATION OF DISABILITY-RELATED NEEDS

Please have this section completed by an appropriate professional (education professional, physician, psychologist, psychiatrist) to ensure that PSI is able to provide the required accommodations.

### PROFESSIONAL DOCUMENTATION

I have known \_\_\_\_\_ since \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ in my capacity as a  
Candidate Name Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
My Professional Title

The candidate discussed with me the nature of the test to be administered. It is my opinion that, because of this candidate's disability described below, he/she should be accommodated by providing the special arrangements listed on the Request for Special Examination Accommodations form.

Description of Disability: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ License # (if applicable): \_\_\_\_\_

**Return this form to:**  
 PSI, 18000 W. 105th St., Olathe, KS 66061-7543.  
 If you have questions, call Candidate Services at 888-519-9901.



