



VOLUNTARY RECERTIFICATION

www.abgc.net

ABMG and ABGC Diplomates without Time-Limited Certification

Voluntary recertification is strongly encouraged for genetic counselors certified by ABGC before 1996 or by ABMG. Although these diplomates do not have a time-limited certification, recertification demonstrates an ongoing commitment to lifelong learning in a dynamic field that is rapidly evolving. Recertification is becoming even more significant for licensing, professional advancement, employment opportunities, hospital credentialing and insurance reimbursement.

Beginning January 1, 2010, a diplomate seeking voluntary recertification will be required to submit 12.5 Continuing Education Units (CEUs) accrued within the previous 5 year period to apply for voluntary recertification. This requirement coincides with ABGC's change from a ten year certification period to a five year certification period for all certificates issued January 1, 2010 or later.

PATHWAYS FOR RECERTIFICATION

- *Re-examination Pathway* – A diplomate seeking voluntary recertification may sit for the ABGC Certification Examination at any time during the period he or she chooses to recertify. 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. Completion of an exam application form is required, including a notarized Application Statement, notarized Website Users Agreement, Felony Attestation Form and examination fee. ABGC Exam Services must receive these materials by the deadline set for that examination cycle. No letters of recommendation are required.
- *Continuing Education Pathway* – Recertification by continuing education is achieved by acquiring a preset number of continuing education credits, which include Continuing Education Units (CEUs) and Professional Activity Credits (PACs). CEUs and PACs must be accrued

during a specified recertification cycle and cannot be applied to later cycles.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

- Category 1 CEUs are granted for programs with content targeted to genetic counselors and pre-approved by ABGC or the National Society of Genetic Counselors (NSGC), as detailed below. At least 60% of the credits required for recertification must be Category 1.
- Category 2 CEUs are available for programs approved by organizations other than ABGC or NSGC for CEUs or continuing medical education (CME) credits. Even though these programs are targeted to other healthcare providers, their content may be considered to be relevant to a genetic counselor's continuing education. Genetic counselors were able to begin collecting Category 2 CEUs as of 02/01/1999. Up to 40% of credits required for recertification can be Category 2. Please visit the NSGC website for more information on Category 2.
- Until April 1, 2008, approval of Category 1 CEUs was administered by ABGC in conjunction with the American Counseling Association (ACA) and approval of Category 2 CEUs was administered by ABGC. As of April 1, 2008, NSGC assumed administration of both Category 1 and Category 2 CEU approval. Visit the NSGC website www.NSGC.org for more information about current CEU opportunities and approval requirements.

PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITY CREDITS (PACs)

Professional Activity Credits (PACs) are awarded for participation in a variety of professional activities determined by ABGC to promote educational development. PACs have been available since 09/01/2003 and are granted by ABGC for a variety of activities including authorship, clinical supervision, volunteer leadership and teaching. PACs may be used to

help reach the required total number of CEUs; however the minimum number of required Category 1 CEUs **must** be met first before PACs or Category 2 CEUs can be applied to the total requirement. Please see the table below for the minimum/maximum guidelines.

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDITS

Diplomates certified before 1996 applying for voluntary recertification after January 1, 2010 are required to submit a total of twelve-and-one-half (12.5) continuing education credits accrued within the previous five year period. A minimum of 7.5 (60%) of the required 12.5 CEUs **must** be Category 1 CEUs. Once a Diplomat has at least 7.5 Category 1 CEUs, the remainder of CEUs can be achieved by any combination of: additional Category 1 CEUs, or no more than 5 (40%) Category 2 CEUs, or no more than 2.5 (20%) PACs. Please see the table below.

Summary Table of CEU and PAC Requirements for Voluntary Recertification

| Voluntary Recertification Cycle | # CEUs Required | Minimum # Category 1 CEUs | Maximum # PACs | Maximum # Category 2 CEUs |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|
| 2010 or later | 12.5 accrued during previous 5 years | 7.5 | 2.5 | 5 |

APPLICATION AND CEU REPORTING PROCESS

Diplomates need to maintain a personal file of continuing education activities. This file should include verification of Category 1 CEUs from ACA or (beginning 04/01/2008) NSGC, approval letter from ABGC or (beginning 04/01/2008) NSGC of Category 2 CEUs and appropriate documentation of PAC activities. Random audits will be conducted and diplomates may be asked to submit documentation of accrual of CEUs and PACs for the full period of their selected recertification cycle.

Diplomates should utilize the online recertification system on the Members Only section of the ABGC website. This system is used to enter and track continuing education activity and also to complete the entire recertification process online. Diplomates may submit their recertification information beginning on January 1st of the year they plan to voluntarily recertify.

There is no fee for recertification. However, a diplomate must be current with ABGC for payments of the annual Certification Maintenance Fee (CMF) that was instituted beginning with the 2008 calendar year. Diplomates who are not current with their CMF payments must first pay any outstanding CMF balance at the current prevailing CMF rate before they will be allowed to recertify

DOCUMENTATION OF RECERTIFICATION STATUS

Updated records of all diplomates' current certification status is published on the ABGC website. For diplomates who voluntarily recertify, the diplomate's original date of certification by ABGC or ABMGG will be listed along with the date of most recent voluntary recertification. The new certificate will be dated January 1 of the year following submission and approval of required materials and will expire on December 31 five years later.

FAILURE TO VOLUNTARILY RECERTIFY

Failure to obtain voluntary recertification will not result in expiration of ABGC or ABMGG certificates or loss of certification for diplomates certified before 1996.

RECERTIFICATION TIPS

- Consult the ABGC website on a regular basis for detailed and updated information. All instructions, deadlines and online forms are located there.
- Carefully read and follow all instructions and deadlines. Diplomates are responsible for meeting deadlines and requirements for voluntary recertification.
- Utilize the ABGC online system to track 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 voluntary recertification process. The ABGC Executive Office is available to assist you and can be reached at 913-222-8661 or info@abgc.net.