



General Assembly

February Session, 2014

***Raised Bill No. 437***

LCO No. 2366



Referred to Committee on PUBLIC HEALTH

Introduced by:  
(PH)

***AN ACT CONCERNING LICENSURE FOR GENETIC COUNSELORS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1 Section 1. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2014*) As used in this section  
2 and sections 2 to 7, inclusive, of this act: (1) "Genetic counselor" means  
3 a person who has been licensed as a genetic counselor under the  
4 provisions of sections 2 to 7, inclusive, of this act; and (2) "genetic  
5 counseling" means the provision of services to individuals, couples,  
6 families and organizations by an appropriately trained individual to  
7 address the physical and psychological issues associated with the  
8 occurrence or risk of occurrence of a genetic disorder, birth defect or  
9 genetically-influenced condition or disease in an individual or a  
10 family.

11 Sec. 2. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2014*) (a) No person may practice  
12 genetic counseling unless licensed pursuant to sections 3 and 4 of this  
13 act.

14 (b) No person may use the title "licensed genetic counselor" or the  
15 designation "LGC" or make use of any title, words, letters or

16 abbreviations that may reasonably be confused with licensure as a  
17 genetic counselor unless such person is licensed pursuant to sections 3  
18 and 4 of this act.

19 (c) The provisions of this section shall not apply to a person who (1)  
20 is licensed under chapter 370 of the general statutes, (2) provides  
21 genetic counseling while acting within the scope of practice of the  
22 person's license and training, provided the person does not hold  
23 himself or herself out to the public as a genetic counselor, (3) is  
24 employed by the federal government to provide genetic counseling  
25 while in the discharge of the person's official duties, or (4) is a student  
26 enrolled in (A) a genetic counseling educational program, (B) a  
27 medical genetics educational program accredited by the American  
28 Board of Genetic Counseling or American Board of Medical Genetics,  
29 or (C) a graduate nursing education program in genetics and genetic  
30 counseling is an integral part of the student's course of study and is  
31 performing such counseling under the direct supervision of a licensed  
32 genetic counselor or physician.

33 Sec. 3. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2014*) (a) The Commissioner of  
34 Public Health shall grant a license as a genetic counselor to any  
35 applicant who furnishes evidence satisfactory to the commissioner that  
36 such applicant has met the requirements of this section. The  
37 commissioner shall develop and provide application forms. The  
38 application fee shall be three hundred fifteen dollars.

39 (b) Licenses issued under this section may be renewed annually  
40 pursuant to section 19a-88 of the general statutes. The fee for such  
41 renewal shall be one hundred ninety dollars. Each licensed genetic  
42 counselor applying for license renewal shall furnish evidence  
43 satisfactory to the commissioner of having participated in continuing  
44 education programs. The commissioner shall (1) define basic  
45 requirements for continuing education programs, which shall include  
46 not less than five continuing education units during each renewal  
47 period, (2) delineate qualifying programs, (3) establish a system of

48 control and reporting, and (4) provide for a waiver of the continuing  
49 education requirement for good cause.

50 Sec. 4. (NEW) (*Effective from passage*) (a) Except as provided in  
51 subsections (b) and (c) of this section, an applicant for a license as a  
52 genetic counselor shall submit evidence satisfactory to the  
53 Commissioner of Public Health of having earned a certification as a  
54 genetic counselor from the American Board of Genetic Counseling or  
55 the American Board of Medical Genetics or a certification as a medical  
56 geneticist from the American Board of Medical Genetics.

57 (b) Prior to October 1, 2014, an applicant for a license as a genetic  
58 counselor may, in lieu of the requirements set forth in subsection (a) of  
59 this section, submit evidence satisfactory to the commissioner of  
60 having: (1) Acquired ten years of experience in the practice of genetic  
61 counseling; (2) earned, from a regionally accredited institution of  
62 higher education, a master's or doctoral degree in genetics or a related  
63 field; and (3) attended a continuing education program approved by  
64 the National Society of Genetic Counselors within the five-year period  
65 prior to the date of application.

66 (c) An applicant for licensure by endorsement shall present  
67 evidence satisfactory to the commissioner that the applicant is licensed  
68 or certified as a genetic counselor, or as a person entitled to perform  
69 similar services under a different designation, in another state or  
70 jurisdiction whose requirements for practicing in such capacity are  
71 substantially similar to or higher than those of this state and that there  
72 are no disciplinary actions or unresolved complaints pending.

73 Sec. 5. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2014*) The Department of Public  
74 Health may issue a temporary permit to an applicant for licensure as a  
75 genetic counselor who (1) is certified as a genetic counselor or medical  
76 geneticist by the American Board of Genetic Counseling or American  
77 Board of Medical Genetics, or (2) holds a master's degree or higher in  
78 genetic counseling or a related field. Such temporary permit shall

79 authorize the holder to practice as a genetic counselor. Such temporary  
80 permit shall be valid for a period not to exceed one hundred twenty  
81 calendar days after the date of attaining such certification or master's  
82 degree or higher and shall not be renewable. The fee for a temporary  
83 permit shall be fifty dollars.

84 Sec. 6. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2014*) The Commissioner of Public  
85 Health may take any disciplinary action set forth in section 19a-17 of  
86 the general statutes against a genetic counselor for any of the following  
87 reasons: (1) Failure to conform to the accepted standards of the  
88 profession; (2) conviction of a felony; (3) fraud or deceit in obtaining or  
89 seeking reinstatement of a license to practice genetic counseling; (4)  
90 fraud or deceit in the practice of genetic counseling; (5) negligent,  
91 incompetent or wrongful conduct in professional activities; (6)  
92 physical, mental or emotional illness or disorder resulting in an  
93 inability to conform to the accepted standards of the profession; (7)  
94 alcohol or substance abuse; (8) wilful falsification of entries in any  
95 hospital, patient or other record pertaining to genetic counseling; or (9)  
96 violation of any provision of sections 20-195aa to 20-195dd, inclusive,  
97 of the general statutes or any regulation adopted pursuant to section  
98 20-195ff of the general statutes. The commissioner may order a license  
99 holder to submit to a reasonable physical or mental examination if his  
100 or her physical or mental capacity to practice safely is the subject of an  
101 investigation. The commissioner may petition the superior court for  
102 the judicial district of Hartford to enforce such order or any action  
103 taken pursuant to said section 19a-17. The commissioner shall give  
104 notice and an opportunity to be heard on any contemplated action  
105 under said section 19a-17.

106 Sec. 7. (NEW) (*Effective October 1, 2014*) The Commissioner of Public  
107 Health may adopt regulations, in accordance with the provisions of  
108 chapter 54 of the general statutes, to implement the provisions sections  
109 1 to 6, inclusive, of this act.

110 Sec. 8. Subsection (c) of section 19a-14 of the 2014 supplement to the

111 general statutes is repealed and the following is substituted in lieu  
112 thereof (*Effective October 1, 2014*):

113 (c) No board shall exist for the following professions that are  
114 licensed or otherwise regulated by the Department of Public Health:

115 (1) Speech and language pathologist and audiologist;

116 (2) Hearing instrument specialist;

117 (3) Nursing home administrator;

118 (4) Sanitarian;

119 (5) Subsurface sewage system installer or cleaner;

120 (6) Marital and family therapist;

121 (7) Nurse-midwife;

122 (8) Licensed clinical social worker;

123 (9) Respiratory care practitioner;

124 (10) Asbestos contractor and asbestos consultant;

125 (11) Massage therapist;

126 (12) Registered nurse's aide;

127 (13) Radiographer;

128 (14) Dental hygienist;

129 (15) Dietitian-Nutritionist;

130 (16) Asbestos abatement worker;

131 (17) Asbestos abatement site supervisor;

- 132 (18) Licensed or certified alcohol and drug counselor;
- 133 (19) Professional counselor;
- 134 (20) Acupuncturist;
- 135 (21) Occupational therapist and occupational therapist assistant;
- 136 (22) Lead abatement contractor, lead consultant contractor, lead  
137 consultant, lead abatement supervisor, lead abatement worker,  
138 inspector and planner-project designer;
- 139 (23) Emergency medical technician, advanced emergency medical  
140 technician, emergency medical responder and emergency medical  
141 services instructor;
- 142 (24) Paramedic;
- 143 (25) Athletic trainer;
- 144 (26) Perfusionist;
- 145 (27) Master social worker subject to the provisions of section 20-  
146 195v;
- 147 (28) Radiologist assistant, subject to the provisions of section 20-74tt;
- 148 (29) Homeopathic physician;
- 149 (30) Certified water treatment plant operator, certified distribution  
150 system operator, certified small water system operator, certified  
151 backflow prevention device tester and certified cross connection  
152 survey inspector, including certified limited operators, certified  
153 conditional operators and certified operators in training; [and]
- 154 (31) Tattoo technician; and
- 155 (32) Genetic counselor.

156 The department shall assume all powers and duties normally vested  
157 with a board in administering regulatory jurisdiction over such  
158 professions. The uniform provisions of this chapter and chapters 368v,  
159 369 to 381a, inclusive, 383 to 388, inclusive, 393a, 395, 398, 399, 400a  
160 and 400c, including, but not limited to, standards for entry and  
161 renewal; grounds for professional discipline; receiving and processing  
162 complaints; and disciplinary sanctions, shall apply, except as otherwise  
163 provided by law, to the professions listed in this subsection.

This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections:		
Section 1	<i>October 1, 2014</i>	New section
Sec. 2	<i>October 1, 2014</i>	New section
Sec. 3	<i>October 1, 2014</i>	New section
Sec. 4	<i>from passage</i>	New section
Sec. 5	<i>October 1, 2014</i>	New section
Sec. 6	<i>October 1, 2014</i>	New section
Sec. 7	<i>October 1, 2014</i>	New section
Sec. 8	<i>October 1, 2014</i>	19a-14(c)

**Statement of Purpose:**

To establish licensure requirements for genetic counselors.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*