



CAGC Certification Board Recertification Protocol

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Questions:

Questions regarding the recertification process and completed applications should be directed to the Certification Board Chair through the CAGC office:

CAGC Certification Board
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Introduction:

The Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors (CAGC) is committed to ensuring that individuals seeking genetic counselling services in Canada are receiving these services from an individual with a high level of competency. The process of certification and recertification has been adopted by most professional organizations as a mechanism for assessing and maintaining the knowledge and skills of its practitioners. The process of recertification demonstrates a commitment on the part of the CAGC and its membership to the continued education and improvement of the standards of practice in the profession of genetic counselling.

Length of Time to Recertification:

All diplomats of the certification examination of the CAGC have received certified status on a **10-year, time-limited basis**. Certification will expire on December 31 of the 10th year from the date the exam was written and passed (e.g. if the exam was written and passed in 1998, certification will expire on December 31, 2008).

<i>Year of Certification / Recertification</i>	<i>Certification Expires</i>	<i>Last year for Recertification by Exam</i>
2008	2018	2017*
2009	2019	2019*
2010	2020	2019*
2011	2021	2021*
2012	2022	2021*
2013	2023	2023*
2015	2025	2025*
2017	2027	2027*
2018	2028	2027*

*years of future exams are subject to change.

Pathways to Recertification:

There are two pathways available for the pursuit of recertification:

- 1) re-examination
- 2) accumulation of continuing practice credits (CPCs) and continuing education credits (CECs)

1) Re-examination Pathway:

Individuals choosing the re-examination pathway are required to apply to write the certification examination prepared by the CAGC Certification Board prior to the expiration of their certification. **Please note that due to changes in the examination schedule, there may not be an exam scheduled in the 10th year of certification.** To recertify by re-examination, applicants must submit an application form but a logbook is not required. **The application**

details can be found in the **Candidate's Handbook** for that year's exam.

2) Continuing Practice Credit (CPC) and Continuing Education Credit (CEC) Pathways:

Individuals choosing to recertify using a combination of **CPCs** and **CECs** will be required to accrue a total of **150 credits** from a combination of **both** of these activities during the 10-year period. This 10-year period for CEC collection begins on the day **following** the examination, which allows for the collection of CECs for the CAGC Annual Education Conference immediately following the exam. For ease of calculation, this 10-year period for CPC collection begins on the 1st of the month **following** the examination. Upon completion of successful recertification, CECs and CPCs will begin to accrue on January 1 of the following year.

The deadline for submission of the completed recertification application will be September 15th (early application deadline) and December 1st (late application deadline) of the recertification year. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure her/his recertification application is received by the application deadline. The applicant will not be notified that their certification will be lapsing, and that their recertification documentation is due.

Continuing Practice Credits (CPCs) are accrued from employment in the field of genetic counselling. Employment may include, but is not exclusive to, genetic counselling in a clinical or research setting, administration/management, and genetic counselling education. Individuals claiming CPCs for non-traditional counselling roles (e.g. employment in research, industry or laboratories) must also supply the following, which should be included with the candidate's application:

1. A formal job description from their employer
2. Print a copy of the "Practice Based Competencies for Canadian Genetic Counsellors" available on the CAGC website (www.cagc-accg.ca/?page=121) and highlight the core competencies practiced in their employment on a regular basis.

CPCs may be accrued starting **the month following the exam** and are accrued at a rate of 10 credits/year of full-time employment. Full-time is designated as 1.0 FTE or 35-40 hours/week. Individuals working part-time or working less than a full year will receive credits at a pro-rated rate based on the months/years employed or the hours per week employed throughout the year.

Examples:

- ✓ A person working 0.6 FTE would receive 6 credits per year.
- ✓ A person working 9 months on a full-time basis would receive 7.5 credits for that year.
- ✓ A person that begins working full-time in February, but obtains CAGC certification by examination in October would receive 1.67 credits for that calendar year (for the months of November and December).
- ✓ A person working on contract on an hourly basis would calculate FTEs using the following formula (# of hours worked per calendar year / 1596 hours per year) to claim a maximum of 1.0 FTE per calendar year. [Note: 1596 hours is equivalent to a 35 hr work week for 52 weeks minus 12 statutory holidays and 20 vacation days.]

Each Canadian certified genetic counsellor is responsible for maintaining her/his own updated records pertaining to their employment status.

Employment status is verified by a signed statement from the counsellor on the Logbook of Continuing Practice Credits (CPCs) form. These records should be updated with any changes in employment, such as new employment, a change in FTE, leaves of absence, etc. **Note that leaves of absence (e.g. maternity leaves) do not count toward CPCs.**

Individuals applying for recertification by means of a combination of CPCs and CECs must have a **minimum of 20 and a maximum of 70 CPCs** to count towards the 150 required total credits for the 10-year period.

Continuing Education Credits (CECs) are accumulated by attendance at recognized educational forums. Regularly scheduled (weekly, monthly) conferences such as, but not limited to, journal clubs, case conferences, or multidisciplinary team meetings are **not** eligible for the accumulation of CECs. These are considered part of the job responsibilities of genetic counsellors and are therefore considered to be included in CPCs. Continuing education programs that do not relate directly to genetic counselling are **not** eligible for continuing education credits.

CECs are accrued at the rate of **1 credit per hour** of educational session attended. No credits are granted for attendance of business meetings, committee meetings, poster sessions or social events at these meetings. Credits are granted only for educational or workshop sessions. Online educational courses will be considered for CECs provided that proof of attendance can be shown.

Individuals applying for recertification by means of a combination of CPCs and CECs must have a **minimum of 80 and a maximum of 130 CECs** to count towards the 150 required credits for the 10-year period.

PLEASE NOTE: CECs are not the same as the CEUs used for recertification through the American Board of Genetic Counseling. Please ensure that the credits you log are CECs as these are attributed different values.

The Recertification Subcommittee is not responsible for maintaining individual information pertaining to conferences attended. Individuals are required to maintain proof of attendance for all conferences for which they are claiming CECs.

A. Proof of attendance may include any of the following:

- Official receipt of payment of conference or online education course fee
- ABGC certificate of accumulation of CEUs
- Certificate or letter of attendance provided by the conference organizer
- For online courses, passing a quiz will be accepted as proof of attendance

B. Recognized Educational Sessions:

Examples of educational sessions that are automatically recognized for accrual of CECs are listed below. This list will be reviewed regularly and modified as deemed appropriate by the Certification Board. A list of recognized education sessions will be posted on the CAGC website.

Examples of automatically recognized educational sessions:

- Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors Annual Education Conference

(CAGC)

- Canadian Association of Genetic Counsellors Short Courses
- National Society of Genetic Counselors Annual Education Conference (NSGC)
- National Society of Genetic Counselors Short courses
- American Society of Human Genetics Annual Education Conference (ASHG)
- American College of Medical Genetics Annual Clinical Genetics Meeting (ACMG) (previously known as “March of Dimes”)
- Canadian College of Medical Geneticists Annual Education Conference (CCMG)

For the above mentioned meetings, the number of CECs assigned will be noted on the CAGC website. Individuals are required to maintain proof of attendance for these education sessions.

Organizers of Conferences Requesting CECs:

For all meetings *other* than those listed above, approval for CECs may be obtained by the conference organizers. We recommend that the application for CEC approval be submitted to the Certification board **at least 3 months prior*** to the start of the educational session. The conference organizers submit the following:

- Continuing Educational Credit (CEC) Application Form
- Copy of the conference agenda
- Non-refundable administration fee

An acceptance letter will be sent to the conference organizer prior to the start of the conference. This will allow for the conference organizer to include the number of CECs in the conference program and/or the attendance certificate. The number of CECs assigned will also be noted on the recertification page of the CAGC website. The conference is then considered a “**Recognized Educational Session**” for that one time only. If the conference is held again the following year, the conference organizers would once again need to apply for CECs.

*For applications received less than 3 months prior to the start of the conference, we cannot guarantee the receipt of the acceptance letter prior to the start of the conference.

C. Unrecognized Educational Sessions:

For all remaining meetings and online educational courses each individual must submit to the chair of the Certification board:

- Continuing Educational Credit (CEC) Application Form
- Copy of the conference *or online course* agenda
- Non-refundable administration fee
- Proof of attendance. For online courses, passing a quiz will be accepted as proof of attendance.

Applications for unrecognized educational sessions need to be submitted to the Certification Board within 12 months following the end of the conference or online course. Applications submitted after this time frame will not be processed. We aim to send an acceptance letter to the individual within 3 months of the receipt of their application, listing the number of CECs assigned. That meeting or online course will then be approved for that individual only, and not for all conference attendees. Each individual is then required to maintain the original letter along with proof of attendance.

Please note: not all educational sessions that are approved for CEUs by the ABGC will necessarily be approved for CECs by the CAGC Certification Board as well.

D. Maintenance of CPC and CEC documentation:

Genetic counsellors seeking recertification through the CPC/CEC pathway are expected to maintain their own records of employment and educational experiences.

For **every** conference considered for CECs, proof of attendance must be kept by the individual. Receipts, CEC approval letters, certificates of attendance, and ABGC CEU certificates SHOULD NOT be submitted with an applicant's recertification application, but kept by the individual genetic counsellor for his/her records and in case of audit.

During each recertification year, some applicants will be chosen for audit. Proof of attendance will be required only from those applicants selected for audit.

Failure to apply for Recertification:

Individuals who do not recertify by examination or by a combination of CECs and CPCs prior to the end of their 10th year of certification will no longer be Canadian Certified Genetic Counsellors and cannot continue to use the CCGC designation. Appeals from individuals who do not accrue the required CPCs or CECs will not be entertained.

Individuals whose certification has expired are eligible to sit the next certification exam. Such individuals will be considered new applicants and will be required to submit a new application form and logbook consisting of cases not previously submitted.

QUESTIONS:

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