# ASHG Calls for State Licensing of Genetic Counselors

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NEW YORK (GenomeWeb) — The American Society of Human Genetics (ASHG) yesterday announced a statement of support for state licensure of certified genetic counselors.

To receive and maintain a license, counselors would need to receive a degree in genetic counseling, pass a national-level exam to receive certification, and fulfill continuing education requirements.

There are currently 15 states that issue licenses for genetic counselors and six more have passed licensure laws. ASHG said its statement supports these states' decisions to license genetic counselors and encourages the remaining states to do the same.

"State licensure of certified counselors will help ensure that the healthcare system has a qualified workforce to provide genetic and genomic services for the growing number of patients and families who need them," ASHG President Neil Risch said in a statement.  "Healthcare reform and the rapidly expanding role of genomics in healthcare decisions will increase the demand for qualified genetics professionals,"

Joy Larsen Haidle, president of the National Society of Genetic Counselors added, "NSGC supports state licensure of genetic counselors in accordance with our guiding principles, which aim to ensure that licensing laws cover a similar scope across states and maximize flexibility among states in how genetic counselors practice."

In March, ASHG issued a [joint statement](https://www.genomeweb.com/molecular-diagnostics/eshg-ashg-issue-joint-statement-nipt) with the European Society of Human Genetics on recommendations for implementing non-invasive prenatal testing. It also recently issued a [position statement](https://www.genomeweb.com/policy-legislation/%20%20%20/molecular-diagnostics/ashg-position-statement-provides-guidance-genetic-testing-children-and) on genetic testing in children and adolescents.