

*Alaska State Senate*  
*Senator Forrest Dunbar*

**Session:**  
Alaska State Capitol  
Juneau, Alaska 99801  
(907) 465-6944



**Interim:**  
1500 W. Benson Blvd.  
Anchorage, Alaska 99503  
(907) 269-0246

**Proudly Serving Senate District J**

*Mountain View | Airport Heights | Russian Jack | U-Med | Campbell Park*

**Sectional Analysis: SB 248 ver. A**

**Section 1:** Amends **AS 08.02.110(a)** to add genetic counselors to a list of health care professions licensed by the Department of Commerce, Community, and Economic Development.

**Section 2:** Amends **AS 08.02.130(j)(1)** to add genetic counselors to a list of health care providers who are authorized to provide services via telehealth.

**Section 3:** Amends **AS 08.02.130(j)(4)** to add genetic counselors to a list of providers authorized to provide services via telehealth as part of a multi-disciplinary care team.

**Section 4:** Amends **AS 08** with a new chapter: Chapter 53: Genetic Counselors

- **Article 1: Licensing of Genetic Counselors**

- **Sec. 08.53.100** requires a license to practice genetic counseling in the state
- **Sec. 08.53.110** lists the qualifications for licensure as a genetic counselor, which include the applicant completing a certification program and passing an examination. The bill also requires a review of the applicant's licenses previously held in other states, and of any disciplinary action taken in another state. Genetic counselors who may not meet these qualifications, but who are able to verify that they have practiced in the field for a minimum of 10 years are also able to qualify for licensure.
- **Sec. 08.53.120** provides for temporary licensure for up to one year for an otherwise qualified applicant who has not yet received their exam results. Temporary licensees must work under the supervision of a licensed genetic counselor or a licensed physician.
- **Sec. 08.53.130** provides for licensure of a genetic counselor who is licensed in another state.
- **Sec. 08.53.140** allow genetic counseling interns to practice under the direct supervision of a licensed genetic counselor

- **Article 2: Regulation of Genetic Counselors**

- **Sec. 08.53.160** permits licensed genetic counselors to operate within their scope of practice and defines the scope of practice to include ordering and interpreting genetic tests and counseling patients.
- **Sec. 08.53.170** gives the Medical Board the authority to revoke or suspend the license of a genetic counselor or to discipline the licensee for any fraudulent, unprofessional, unethical, or criminal activities.

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- **Article 3: Genetic Counseling Advisory Council**
  - o **Sec. 08.53.180** establishes a genetic counseling advisory council under the purview of the State Medical Board. The council consists of 3-5 members, majority of whom are licensed genetic counselors, with at least one licensed physician.
- **Article 4: General Provisions**
  - o **Sec. 08.53.200** affirms that the Administrative Procedures Act (**AS 44.62**) applies to any action taken by the board
  - o **Sec. 08.53.210** provides exceptions for licensure for genetic counselors who are in the military service or employed by another agency of the federal government, and it requires that those providers hold patients to the same standard of care as other licensed providers.
  - o **Sec. 08.53.220** makes violations of this chapter a class B misdemeanor.
  - o **Sec. 08.53.230** allows the State Medical Board, in consultation with the genetic counseling advisory council, to adopt regulations to carry out licensure and regulation of services. These regulations must include adoption of a code of ethics. The board also has the power to administer oaths, subpoena witnesses, and compel the production of documents.
  - o **Sec. 08.53.300** provides definitions for “board” and “licensed genetic counselor.”

**Section 5:** Amends **AS 08.64.101(a)** giving the State Medical Board the authority to impose disciplinary sanctions on violations of the provisions of licensing genetic counselors under **AS 08.53**.

**Section 6:** Amends AS 08.54.103(a) clarifying the authority of the board to conduct investigations into violations under **AS 08.53** and to review the qualifications for licensure or renewal in consultation with the genetic counseling advisory council.

**Section 7:** Amends **AS 08.64.130(a)** with a conforming change.

**Section 8:** Amends **AS 09.55.560(2)** adding genetic counselors to the list of healthcare providers who may be the subject of medical malpractice liability.

**Section 9:** Amends **AS 09.65.300(c)(1)** adding genetic counselors to the list of healthcare providers who receive liability immunity during the provision of health care services for free.

**Section 10:** Amends **AS 21.36.090(d)** adding genetic counselors to the list of healthcare providers who may not practice or permit unfair discrimination based on the type of health insurance coverage they have.

**Section 11:** Amends uncodified law with a new section allowing for transition regulations permitting certified genetic counselors to continue practicing until July 1, 2027.

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**Section 12:** Amends uncodified law with a new section allowing the State Medical Board to appoint the initial members of the genetic counseling advisory council.