

**House Boards, Agencies and Commissions Reported
Substitute for HB353**



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A BILL
TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

Relating to the State Board of Genetic Counseling; to amend Sections 34-13A-3 and 34-13A-10, Code of Alabama 1975, to authorize the board to conduct regular meetings by electronic means; and to authorize the board to make grants to develop training and continuing education programs for genetic counselors.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

Section 1. Sections 34-13A-3 and 34-13A-10 of the Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as follows:

"§34-13A-3

(a) The State Board of Genetic Counseling is created to implement and administer this chapter.

(b) The membership of the board shall consist of all of the following:

(1) One individual appointed by the Department of Genetics at the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

(2) Four individuals who practice genetic counseling in Alabama and who hold a master's degree or doctoral degree in genetic counseling from an ACGC or ABMGG accredited training program, or an equivalent program approved by the ACGC or the



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29 ABMGG, appointed by the Governor.

30 (3) One physician appointed by the Medical Association
31 of the State of Alabama.

32 (4) One physician appointed by the State Board of
33 Medical Examiners.

34 (5) One physician who specializes in pediatric genetics
35 appointed by the Lieutenant Governor.

36 (6) One physician appointed by the Speaker of the House
37 of Representatives.

38 (c) Board members appointed by the Governor shall serve
39 for terms of two years and, upon the expiration of a term, may
40 continue to serve until replaced or reappointed. All other
41 board members shall serve until they are replaced by their
42 respective appointing authority.

43 (d) The board shall annually elect from its membership
44 a chair, a vice chair, and a secretary.

45 (e) The appointing authorities shall coordinate their
46 appointments ~~so that diversity of~~ to assure the board
47 membership is inclusive and reflects the racial, gender, ~~race,~~
48 ~~and geographical areas is reflective of the makeup~~ geographic,
49 urban, rural, and economic diversity of this state.

50 (f) Unless acting unreasonably or in bad faith, no
51 member of the board shall be civilly liable for acting within
52 the scope of his or her duties as a board member.

53 (g) Members of the board shall serve without
54 compensation but, to the extent funds are available, may
55 receive the same per diem and travel allowance as state
56 employees.



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57 (h) (1) Except as provided in subdivision (2), members
58 of the board may participate in a regular meeting of the board
59 by means of telephone conference, video conference, or similar
60 communications equipment ~~by means of which all individuals~~
61 ~~participating in the meeting may hear each other at the same~~
62 ~~time. Participation by these electronic means shall constitute~~
63 ~~presence in person at a meeting for all purposes, including~~
64 ~~the establishment of a quorum. Except as specifically provided~~
65 ~~otherwise by this section, participation in meetings by~~
66 ~~members of the board shall be conducted in compliance with the~~
67 ~~Alabama Open Meetings Act. Except for emergency meetings,~~
68 ~~notice of board meetings shall be provided in accordance with~~
69 pursuant to the Alabama Open Meetings Act, ~~and any telephone~~
70 ~~or video conference or similar communications equipment used~~
71 ~~by the members of the board shall also allow members of the~~
72 ~~public the opportunity to simultaneously listen to or observe~~
73 ~~meetings held pursuant to this subsection.~~

74 (2) Members of the board may only participate in a
75 meeting of the board relating to a disciplinary action in
76 person."

77 "§34-13A-10

78 There is established in the State Treasury a separate
79 special revenue trust fund known as the Genetic Counseling
80 Fund. All receipts collected by the board pursuant to this
81 chapter shall be deposited into the fund and shall be used
82 only to implement this chapter. The receipts shall be
83 disbursed only by warrant of the Comptroller upon the State
84 Treasury, upon itemized vouchers approved by the executive



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85 director, or the board if no executive director is employed.
86 The board may make grants, and otherwise arrange with
87 qualified individuals, institutions, or agencies to develop
88 and promote genetic counseling programs and continuing
89 education programs for licensees. No funds may be withdrawn or
90 expended except as budgeted and allotted according to Sections
91 41-4-80 to 41-4-96, inclusive, and Sections 41-19-1 to
92 41-19-12, inclusive, and only in amounts as stipulated in the
93 general appropriations bill or other appropriations bills."

94 Section 2. This act shall become effective on the first
95 day of the third month following its passage and approval by
96 the Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.