

FUNERAL DIRECTOR INTERN, INFORMATION & INSTRUCTIONS

CAUTIONS: *This document is prepared by the Florida Division of Funeral, Cemetery & Consumer Services, Dept of Financial Services, and is available on the Division website. This document sets out the usual and generally applicable requirements for licensure and does not purport to set out or exclude any exceptions that may exist to the generally applicable requirements. In addition, this documents sets out the application steps in the order most applicants take them, and does not purport to address or prohibit other procedural options that may exist.*

These Information & Instructions documents are revised from time to time. If you are reading this document in paper form, then unless you know for sure when this document was downloaded from the Division website, you are urged to visit the Division website and print a copy yourself, so you can know for sure you have the most recent revision.

TERMS USED

“Division” refers to the Division of Funeral, Cemetery & Consumer Services. The Division is part of the Florida Dept of Financial Services. The Division has a website -- go to the website of the Dept of Financial Services (www.MyFloridaCFO.com), click on Division and Offices, click on Funeral and Cemetery.

“Board” refers to the Board of Funeral, Cemetery, and Consumer Services, established by section 497. 101, Florida Statutes. The Board is administratively located within the Division. The Board and the Division are partners in enforcing chapter 497, Florida Statutes. The Board makes the final decisions as to whether a license will be issued. The Division provides the administrative processing of applications, performs background investigations, and makes recommendations to the Board.

LICENSE REQUIREMENTS

Applicants for Florida funeral director intern license, under s. 497.375, Florida Statutes, should apply to the Board using Division form entitled Application For Funeral Director Intern License, available on the Division website.

Applicants must generally meet the following requirements in order to be approved for licensure:

1. Applicant is at least age 18 and has a **high school diploma or a GED**.
2. Applicant must have a 2-year or 4-year college degree.

Note: A 2-year or 4-year college degree is always required to obtain a funeral director intern license in Florida, and this requirement cannot be waived, nor can anything substitute for the college degree requirement. A 2-year Junior or Community College degree is acceptable. The college degree does not have to include a major in mortuary science. For example, a 2-year or 4-year college degree with a major in art or social work or business, is acceptable. However, a 2-year or 4-year college degree with a major in mortuary science, at a school accredited by the ABFSE, will be accepted as a substitute for the one-year mortuary science course requirement referred to below.

3. Applicant has completed a **course in mortuary science** in a program accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE). Such courses are generally at least one-year long, and must cover the following subjects: theory and practice of embalming, restorative art, pathology, anatomy, microbiology, chemistry, hygiene, and public health and sanitation.

NOTE: A 2-year or 4-year college degree with a major in mortuary science, at a school accredited by the ABFSE, will be accepted as a substitute for the one-year mortuary science course.

3. Applicant has taken and passed a **course on communicable diseases**, including HIV/AIDS. The course must be at least 2 hours long (note the two hour requirement – a one hour course is adequate to renew an existing license, but a two hour course is required for initial licensure). The course must be one approved by the Florida Dept of Health, or by a professional licensing board within the Florida Dept of Health. On this Division’s website appears a list of approved continuing education providers, and many of those providers offer a 2-hour course that will satisfy this requirement.
4. Applicant **submits fingerprints** pursuant to Dept of Financial Services requirements for a criminal background check, in accordance with s. 497.142, Florida Statutes, and has no demonstrated history of conduct indicating a lack of competence, good character, trustworthiness or integrity in business or professional matters.
5. Applicant has obtained agreement with a licensed Florida funeral director, to supervise the applicant if the funeral director intern license is issued.
6. Applicant has obtained agreement with a Florida licensed funeral home, that is approved by the Florida Board as a “training agency,” to let the applicant work at that location if the intern license is issued.

REQUIRED SUPERVISION

A funeral director intern may perform funeral director related tasks only under the direct supervision of a Florida licensed funeral director.

Direct supervision means responsible supervision and control, with the licensed supervisor providing both initial direction as well as periodic inspection of the work. The supervising licensee shall be physically present or on the premises at all times when the intern is performing the services.

The funeral director intern may have a single combination funeral director/embalmer licensee as their supervisor, or may have multiple supervisors.

The supervisor(s) must certify by quarterly reports the funeral director intern activities engaged in by the funeral director intern during the preceding calendar quarter. Typically this means listing on the quarterly report by name every decedent as to which the intern assisted in funeral directing activities, and the date of the work. If you have multiple supervisors, each supervisor must file a separate report each quarter. A Quarterly Intern Supervision Report form may be obtained on this Division’s website.

The intern applicant must know who their initial supervising licensee(s) will be, when the intern applicant applies for their intern license.

An intern may change supervising licensees one or more times over the course of the internship. However, each time that occurs, the intern must promptly file with the Division a Notice of Termination/Change of Supervisor form (available on the Division website).

REQUIREMENT FOR APPROVED TRAINING AGENCY

A funeral director intern can only engage in intern activities, at a Florida licensed funeral home.

In addition, the funeral home must be one that is approved by the Board as a training agency.

An intern may change training locations one or more times over the course of the internship. However, each time that occurs, the intern must promptly file with the Division a Notice of Change of Training Location form (available on the Division website).

LENGTH OF INTERNSHIP

An internship consists of 40 hours a week of funeral director intern related work, for 50 weeks, completed within the contiguous 52 week period following issuance of the internship license.

IMPORTANT: The entire internship must be completed within 52 consecutive weeks of receiving your intern license. So, for example, you cannot intern for 6 months, take a month off, and then do another 6 months of internship, because you would not have completed the internship within 52 weeks of receiving your license. Other than serious illness or injury to the intern, there are no accepted excuses for not completing the entire internship within 52 weeks of receiving your intern license.

In addition, a person can be issued only one intern license during their lifetime, so if you fail to complete your internship, you will not be able to obtain another intern license and try again.

THE MORTUARY SCIENCE COURSE REQUIREMENT

As noted above, the mortuary science course most Florida applicants use, is one of the several ABFSE-accredited Junior or Community College two year degree programs, with a major in mortuary science.

As of Sept. 2005, there are three ABFSE-accredited mortuary science programs in Florida (in alpha order as follows):

Florida Community College at Jacksonville
Funeral Service Program
(904) 766-6622

Miami-Dade College
W. L. Philbrick School of Funeral Sciences
305-237-1245

St. Petersburg College
Funeral Services Program
727-341-3781

However, other ABFSE accredited mortuary science courses or programs are equally acceptable, whether in or out of Florida. There are currently (Sept 2005) 56 ABFSE-accredited programs in the United States. Of these programs, 13 are standalone mortuary science courses not part of a college degree program, while the remainder are at 2-year and 4-year colleges and universities and can only be accessed by students enrolled in the college or university's mortuary science degree program.

The American Board of Funeral Service Education (ABFSE) has a website where you may identify all the ABFSE-accredited courses and programs in Florida and around the nation. As of Sept. 2005 the ABFSE website address is www.abfse.org, and their phone number is (207) 878-6530.

The ABFSE serves as the national academic accreditation agency for college and university programs in Funeral Service and Mortuary Science Education. Although its roots go back to the 1940s, the ABFSE became an autonomous agency in 1962. The US Department of Education and the Council on Higher Education Accreditation recognize it as the sole accrediting agency for academic programs that prepare funeral service professionals.

Close liaison between ABFSE and the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards is maintained by those two entities.

THE PROCESS OF GETTING A FULL FUNERAL DIRECTOR LICENSE

A person desiring a funeral director license in Florida, and not licensed as a funeral director in another state, will typically proceed as follows:

1. Get a Junior or Community College degree, with a Major in mortuary science (in one of the ABFSE-accredited programs).
 - Some people majoring in mortuary science, obtain or have obtained an embalmer apprentice license and work in a funeral home as an embalmer apprentice while going to school. However, this is not a requirement, and an embalmer apprenticeship is not a pre-requisite for a funeral director internship or a funeral director license.
 - During the last semester in their mortuary science degree program, they take and pass both the Science and Arts Sections of the National Board Exam.
2. Once they get their 2-year degree in mortuary science, they apply for and obtain a funeral director intern license, and commence a funeral director internship.
3. Towards the end of their internship they apply for their full funeral director license. The Florida Board reviews their application and if its in order, they are approved to take the Florida Law & Rules Exam. They take the Florida Law & Rules Exam while interning.
4. Assuming they have gotten the required scores on exams, as soon as they complete their internship, they get their full funeral director license.