



TEXAS FUNERAL SERVICE COMMISSION

2nd QUARTER NEWSLETTER

December 2011 through February 2012

FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR:

This will be my last article I will write for the newsletter. I am resigning as the Executive Director of the Texas Funeral Service Commission effective February 29, 2012. I will discuss it more toward the end of the newsletter.

By the time many of you receive this newsletter, the December 13, 2011, Commission meeting will have concluded. During that meeting the board proposed amendments to the Texas Administrative Code Rules 203.1, Definitions, 203.29, Funeral Establishment Names, 203.7, Price Disclosures, 203.3, Funeral Director In Charge, 203.39, Embalmer In Charge and Rule 201.11, Disciplinary Guidelines. These aforementioned rules will be posted in the Texas Register for those would like to comment or request their recommended changes. The Commission will take action on these rules during the March 20, 2012, board meeting.

Senate Bill 1167, relating to Cemeteries and Perpetual Care Cemetery Corporations which has been in effect since September 1, 2011, essentially states "If the person with the right to control the disposition of the decedent's remains fails to make final arrangements or appoint another person to make final arrangements for the disposition before the earlier of the 6th day after the date the person received notice of the decedent's death or the 10th day after the date the decedent died, the person is presumed to be unable or unwilling to control the disposition, and: (1) the person's right to control the disposition is terminated; and (2) the right to control the disposition is passed to the following person's in the following priority: (A) any other person in the same priority class under Subsection (a) as the person whose right was terminated; or (B) a person in a different priority class, in the priority listed in Subsection (a)". One can view the entire bill at the Texas Legislature On-Line website which is very easy to navigate. In addition I recommend one become familiar with Health and Safety Code 711.002, which provides the priority order of controlling the disposition of a dead human body.

As a reminder for crematory owners, the Cremation report with regard to the number of cremations performed in the year 2011 is due to the Commission no later than January 30, 2012. Failure to submit the report on time is a \$100 per day administrative penalty.

Veterans Day and Thanksgiving Day have come and gone and I trust all of you are thankful for our past and current military service members that have and continue to serve our nation. Their sacrifices are an example for others to emulate. The bells of freedom will continue to ring because of their past and present commitments.

I trust too, all of you gave thanks on Thanksgiving Day for those things you have been blessed with and hold dearest to you like family and friends. Other holidays will soon be here which will also include family, children and friends and the beginning of a new year.

As I stated earlier I am resigning the end of February. Nothing adverse has happened to cause my resignation. It is my choice plain and simple. It is time for a change and change will be good for the Commission. With change will come new ideas and challenges. The foundation has been laid with the help of my staff. I want to sincerely thank all of you that have supported me for the last 12 ½ years. It is appropriate for me to make this announcement during the holiday season because I have so much to be thankful for. And, I am thankful that I had the opportunity to serve as the Executive Director of the Texas Funeral Service Commission.

On behalf of the Commission and staff have an enjoyable, safe and blessed holiday season.

Yours truly,

Chet Robbins
Executive Director

“A License is a Bestowal of Trust”

Families May Be Entitled to Burial and Death Benefits in Cases of Work-related Fatalities

Are you assisting a client who lost a family member due to a work-related injury or illness? If the employer had Texas workers' compensation insurance, your client may be a beneficiary entitled to burial and death benefits.

The family (or any person who has paid for the funeral) may be reimbursed up to \$6,000 of reasonable burial expenses. A person claiming burial benefits must file a request for reimbursement or payment with the deceased person's employer's workers' compensation insurance carrier and attach the bills showing funeral expenses and transportation costs, if any. The request for burial benefits must be sent to the insurance carrier within one year of the employee's death.

In addition, the family may be entitled to death benefits. Death benefits replace a portion of lost income for the eligible family members of employees who die as a result of a work-related injury or illness. These benefits are paid by the employer's workers' compensation insurance carrier.

Family members who might be eligible to receive death benefits include:

- the surviving spouse;
- dependent children or grandchildren;
- other dependent family members, such as a parent, grandparent, or sibling; or
- a non-dependent parent when there are no surviving eligible spouse or dependent family members.

To file a claim for death benefits, a beneficiary must complete a [Beneficiary Claim for Death Benefits \(DWC Form-042\)](#) and submit it to the Texas Department of Insurance, Division of Workers' Compensation (TDI-DWC) within one year of the death of the employee, unless good cause exists for failure to file a claim within the timeframe.

Texas had over 450 work-related fatalities reported in 2010, which is more than any other state in the nation. When there is a work-related fatality, Texas workers' compensation law requires insurance carriers to attempt to locate potential beneficiaries and provide information about burial and death benefits. However, this can be difficult and information about benefits does not always reach the potential beneficiaries. You can help your clients by advising them to contact the employer's workers' compensation insurance carrier to discuss burial and death benefits eligibility. (The employer's Human Resources Department should be able to provide the workers' compensation insurance carrier's contact information if they have the coverage.) In the event your clients have questions or concerns about burial or death benefits, they may contact the Office of Injured Employee Counsel (OIEC) at 1-866-EZE-OIEC (1-866-393-6432) and ask to speak to an OIEC Customer Service Representative. OIEC can provide free assistance to help family members pursue benefits to which they may be entitled.

A brochure describing the potential burial and death benefits, who might be eligible to receive them, and how to file claims is available in English or Spanish by calling the same toll-free telephone number or emailing OIECInbox@oiec.state.tx.us. You may request brochures from OIEC to provide to your clients. Additional information about these benefits can be found in Texas Labor Code §§408.181 – 408.187 and Texas Administrative Code §§132.1 – 132.17.

OIEC is a state agency created by the Texas Legislature to represent the interests of injured employees in the workers' compensation system. Local field offices throughout the state are staffed to assist you. You can learn more about OIEC at www.oiec.texas.gov.



A MESSAGE FROM COMPLIANCE

Please be advised that when the Commission receives a complaint against you or your establishment, **failure to provide the requested documentation within fifteen (15) days of the notice submitted to you will result in the referral to the Commission for administrative action against the license (s) involved.**

The Commission enforces mortuary laws and rules. Compliance receives numerous calls from people seeking legal advice. We will be glad to assist you with non-legal issues; however, you may be referred to seek legal counsel to assist you with legal matters.

The Commission receives many phone calls throughout the day which are directed to the Division of Consumer Affairs and Compliance. Many of the phone calls presented to us by licensees can be addressed by visiting the Commission website at www.tfsc.state.tx.us and clicking on the link titled "Governing Laws".

In addition, another call frequently received by Compliance is in regards to the complaint process. You can visit the Commission's website at www.tfsc.state.tx.us and click on the link titled "Complaint Procedures". You will then click on the link titled "Complaint Resolution Process Chart". This will provide you a layout of the complaint process.

One of the most common questions asked relates to who has the right to control the disposition of a decedent's body. This information is found under the Health and Safety Code, specifically Chapter 711.002. Additionally, under subsection "k" of Health and Safety Code, Chapter 711.002, a licensee can find the appropriate measures to be taken if there is a dispute amongst persons who may have the right to control the disposition of a decedent's body.

Please check the agency website from time to time for notice of upcoming stakeholders' meetings. It would be to your advantage to attend. The meetings are held to discuss possible changes in the Texas Administrative Code, Title 22, Part 10, relating to the Texas Funeral Service Commission.

The compliance staff receives questions regarding the laws and rules of the Texas Funeral Service Commission. There seems to be some confusion regarding what is statute and what is rule. Laws are created or amended by the Texas Legislature; rules are enacted by the Commission. The rules are proposed at a regularly scheduled Commission Meeting. The proposed rule is published in the *Texas Register*, given a 30 day comment period from the public, and then adopted by the Board of Commissioners at a subsequent meeting. The adopted rule may be adopted with or without changes, depending on the comments received. If you have any questions regarding the procedure for rule proposal and/or adoption, please visit the Texas Secretary of State website at www.sos.state.tx.us. Click on the 'State Rules and Open Meetings' link. Emails may be requested through the *Texas Register* for any rule action taken by the Texas Funeral Service Commission.

Each licensed funeral establishment must **at all times** have a designated **funeral director in charge**, who is ultimately responsible for compliance with all mortuary, health and vital statistics laws in the funeral establishment. A funeral establishment must designate a funeral director in charge at the time it receives its establishment license, and ***any time the funeral director in charge changes, the funeral establishment must notify the Commission, on a form prescribed by the Commission, within 15 days.*** Commercial Embalming Establishments must at all times have a **designated embalmer in charge. The appropriate forms can be found on our website at www.tfsc.state.tx.us.**

For those taking the Mortuary Law Exam, the Commission no longer mails the test scores, the test scores are now posted on the Commission's website. You can visit the website at www.tfsc.state.tx.us and click on the link titled "Mortuary Law Exam". You will then click on the link titled "Law Exam Results", which you will be identified by the last four digits of your social security number.



LEGAL CORNER

The Commission will propose and adopt the following Rules at the next regularly scheduled Board Meeting on December 13, 2011.

Rules for Adoption: 203.6, Provisional Licensing, 203.26, Funeral Directors and Embalmers Licensing Requirements and Procedures, and Rules Review.

Rules for Proposal: 203.29, Funeral Establishment Names, 203.7, Price Disclosure, 203.3, Funeral Director In Charge, 203.39, Embalmer In Charge, 201.11, Disciplinary Guidelines, and 203.1, Definitions.

Happy Holidays
Kathy Sparks



UPCOMING COMMISSION MEETING DATES

Tuesday, March 20, 2012

Tuesday, June 12, 2012



ATTENTION: **All Provisional Licensees**



****Please be advised on September 1, 2011, Texas Occupations Code 651.303 (b), which states that a provisional licensee must work a minimum of 17 hours per week or 73 hours per month has been repealed.****

****Please be advised on September 1, 2011, Texas Occupations Code 651.303 (c), now states the term of the provisional license program must be at least 12 consecutive months not to exceed 24 months. ****

Pursuant to Texas Administrative Code 203.6, Provisional Licensees, you are required to report directly to your Funeral Director in Charge (FDIC) or the Embalmer in Charge (EIC), whichever is applicable. It is the responsibility of the provisional licensee and the FDIC and/or EIC to schedule case work sufficient for the successful completion of the provisional program. Additionally, it is the responsibility of the FDIC and/or to ensure the provisional licensee under their employment has direct supervision at all times.

I: F.A.Q:

Q.) I've changed employment or need to add an establishment for extra case work, what do I need to do?

A.) You will need to go to our website at www.tfsc.state.tx.us and click on the link "licensing". You then need to go under the "Provisional Information" section and print off the form called "Amendment to Registration of Provisional License"; fill out completely and mail in original to either one of our addresses.

Q.) My FDIC/EIC has left or changed, what do I need to do?

A.) Nothing. When the establishment sends in the "Appointment of FDIC/EIC" form it will automatically update your file.

Q.) I am ready to exit the provisional program, what do I need to do now?

A.) Please read section IV below.

Q.) I am licensed as a Funeral Director AND Embalmer and trying to renew online. I was able to renew one of my licenses but it wouldn't take the other. What happened?

A.) You can only renew one license per day. Please allow 24-48 hours to renew the second license as our database will not allow for two applications to be open at the same time. With that being said, do not wait until the last day of the month to try and renew both licenses as you may incur late fees of \$66.00 per license.

II: NATIONAL BOARDS AND TEXAS STATE BOARD INFORMATION

You **MUST** have official certificates from the National Conference of Funeral Examining Boards on file with a passing score of 75% or better in order to exit the provisional program. If you have not taken your National Boards/Texas State Board, please contact your school for eligibility updates.

The following is information from The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards.

Testing Location:

The Texas SBE will be given at Pearson Professional Centers. Test center locations can be found at www.pearsonvue.com/theconference.

Registration Procedure:

All candidates (first time takers and/or retakes) sitting for the Texas SBE are required to complete a Texas SBE application and submit it to The Conference with payment.

Eligibility to sit for the TX SBE:

Candidate eligibilities must be submitted to The Conference by the appointed mortuary science schools. The appointed staff member(s) at the mortuary science schools will send eligibilities via e-mail or fax.

III: TEXAS STATE LAW EXAM

You **MUST** have a passing score of 75% or better on your Texas State Law exam in order for you to exit the provisional program. **REMINDER:** THESE SCORES ARE ONLY VALID FOR 2 YEARS FROM THE DATE THAT IT WAS TAKEN. IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A VALID TEST ON FILE BY THE TIME YOU EXIT THE PROGRAM, YOU MUST RETAKE THE TEXAS STATE LAW EXAM AND PASS WITH A 75% OR BETTER BEFORE YOUR PROVISIONAL LICENSE EXPIRES AND/OR YOU EXIT THE PROGRAM.

IV: EXITING THE PROVISIONAL PROGRAM

Are you ready to exit the provisional program? If so, you will need to have the following documents on file:

- 1.) Certified transcript that shows the date conferred and the degree awarded.
- 2.) Certificates from the International Conference of Funeral Examining Boards providing your passing National Boards/Texas State Board scores. (75% or better)
- 3.) Passing Texas State Law Exam scores. (75% or better) These scores are valid for 2 years. If you have not taken the Texas State Law exam, you can obtain the application off of our website at www.tfsc.state.tx.us under the Texas Mortuary Law Exam link located on the left of the page. Please note that all fees are NON-REFUNDABLE. Fees will not be refunded if you register for the exam and fail to appear. A new application and fee will be required to reschedule the examination. If a provisional licensee has not met full licensure within 24 months from the date of initially taking the Texas State Law exam, they will be required to retake the exam before exiting the provisional program.

Once all the above is completed and the Texas Funeral Commission has all required documents on file; you must mail in the following:

- 1.) Send in a copy of your case logs. (We do not require you to send in your case reports such as authorizations, affidavits, etc. **PLEASE REMEMBER: YOU MUST KEEP COPIES OF YOUR COMPLETE CASE REPORTS FOR 2 YEARS FOR YOUR PERSONAL RECORDS.**)
- 2.) A letter from your FDIC/EIC stating that you have completed all requirements and that you are ready to exit the program. (This is just a generic letter typed on their letterhead; there is no form to fill out.)

After we have received the above paperwork we will do an audit of your file. If everything is complete, we will notify you in writing what your fees will be in order for you to become fully licensed in the state of Texas. In addition, an affidavit will be included for your FDIC/EIC to complete. Until all administrative paperwork is returned and completed by the Commission, you are **STILL** a provisional licensee.

If you have any further questions, you may contact Nikki Smith by email at nsmi@tfsc.state.tx.us or directly at 512-936-2479.



ARE YOU PLANNING ON BUILDING OR MOVING INTO A NEW FUNERAL HOME?

If you are, here is some important information that you will need to know. On our web site (www.tfsc.state.tx.us) under 'Governing Laws' you will find Chapter 651 Texas Occupation Code (TOC, the law). If you look up 651.351 you will find what is required for your new funeral home. In the same section you will find Texas Administrative Code 203 (TAC, the rules), 203.14 Display of Funeral Merchandise (selection room), Chapter 203.17 what is required in your Preparation Room, Chapter 203.21 for Presentation of Consumer Brochures (Facts about Funerals brochures, purchased from the TFSC), & Chapter 203.35 for your Chapel Requirements. Also, Chapter 203.7 will aid in the requirements in the setting up of your price lists.

Depending on where you decide to build, you will have to follow the codes and restrictions of that city and/or county as far as construction of a new funeral home. The same would hold true if you moved into an existing structure, you again would

have to meet those same codes and restrictions. There also may be requirements set out by OSHA, but you will have to contact your local office to find anything they might require.

When you finally build, or move into your new facility you will have to apply for a Funeral Establishment License. You will need to submit to us the following; a check for \$462.00, an Authorization to Embalm form, an Embalming Case Report form (both of these forms are located and can be downloaded from our web site), a General Price List, a Casket Price List, an Outer Burial Container Price List, a Funeral Purchase Agreement, a Fire Inspection, and a Health Inspection. If the city/county does not perform Health & Fire Inspections of funeral homes than we will something on their letterhead stating the same. A Certificate of Occupancy will suffice for both of these inspections.

One last thing, there are NO exemptions for Preparation Rooms. Regardless if this is a second or third location, or embalming is being done by a licensed embalming service, you must have a functioning Preparation Room.



GENERAL LICENSING INFORMATION

If you are planning to take the Texas Mortuary Law Examination, please note that **all fees are NON-REFUNDABLE**. If you fail to appear after registering for an exam, your fees will not be refunded. A new application and fee will be required to reschedule the examination.

“Mortuary Law” for the State of Texas is found primarily in the **Texas Occupations Code Chapter 651, Health and Safety Code, Chapter 716**, and the **Texas Administrative Code Chapters 201, 203, 205, 207, and 209**. All codes can be found on the agency website www.tfsc.state.tx.us under “Governing Laws”.

Licensees are expected to know what is considered a prohibited act and this information is found in the Texas Occupations Code Chapter 651, sections 651.451-651.460. The administrative penalties associated with these prohibited acts are found in the Texas Administrative Code Chapter 201 under Disciplinary Guidelines. Texas law allows a penalty range of not less than \$100 or more than \$5,000 for each violation. A suspension or revocation may also be warranted.

Many changes have been made to the existing laws and rules. Changes to the statutes and rules may be viewed using the link on our website.

Each licensed funeral establishment must at all times have a **designated funeral director in charge**. A funeral director in charge must be designated at the time an establishment is initially licensed and any time the funeral director in charge changes, the establishment **MUST** notify the Commission by submitting the prescribed forms within 15 days. Both forms, **Appointment of Funeral Director in Charge** and **Removal of Funeral Director in Charge**, can be found on our website at www.tfsc.state.tx.us. Commercial Embalming Establishments must at all times have a **designated embalmer in charge**. The appropriate form can be found on our website.

Provisional license applicants and reciprocal license applicants are now able to apply for their initial license online.

Applicants are allowed to fill out the application online and pay for their initial license with a credit card. However, with all online licensing, filling out the application and paying the fee does not constitute license issuance. Licenses are issued only when all requested information has been reviewed and approved by the agency. Please understand that all supporting documentation must be received before any license will be issued. There is information on the online site detailing what is required for license issuance.

REINSTATEMENT OF A LICENSE:

A license that has been expired one year or more may be reinstated by completing the required application; retaking and passing the applicable exam; pay all applicable fees; submit to an FBI background check; complete required continuing education.

For more information, please contact Sandy Gonzalez at (512) 936-6551 or email sgon@tfsc.state.tx.us.



CEMETERY NEWS

PERPETUAL CARE CEMETERY REGISTRATION (a) The Texas Department of Banking shall provide annually to the commission a list of perpetual care cemeteries, including the address and other contact information for each cemetery. The commission shall annually register each perpetual care cemetery on that list.

**** A perpetual care cemetery is not required to pay a registration fee or renewal fee under this chapter.*

Should you have questions or concerns regarding **Cemeteries**, please contact **Sandy Gonzalez** at (512) 936-6551 or emailing sgon@tfsc.state.tx.us

Interment of Veterans



All veterans are eligible to be interred in the Veterans Cemetery unless one of three things has occurred:

- The veteran received a dishonorable discharge
- The veteran was convicted of a capital crime that carried a possible sentence of life in prison or the death penalty
- The veteran committed treason against the United States of America

The funeral director must telephone the Scheduling Center at 800-535-1117 to schedule the service and also submit a copy of the decedent's DD214 for verification of eligibility.

Veterans who have been incarcerated for one reason or another are not denied their right to be interred and honored for their service to this country, unless one of the above bulleted items had occurred.

It has come to the attention of the Commission the above information is not being followed by some industry licensees. Your attention to this matter and corrective action are requested.

Due to a high volume of calls regarding assistance with indigent funerals/burials, the Commission requests that persons having information applicable to your area to call Sandra Gonzalez at (512) 936-6551.



CREMATORY NEWS

Texas Occupations Code 651.658 requires all crematories to report to the Texas Funeral Service Commission, no later than January 30th every year, in writing, an annual report of the total number of cremations performed for the prior calendar year. The report may be faxed, emailed or sent regular mail with a postmark no later than January 30th!

In the event reports are not received, a late penalty of \$100.00 PER DAY will be imposed until the annual report is received by the Commission. The Commission has no authority to waive or reduce the late fee.

As a courtesy, the Commission will mail a reminder postcard to each crematory the first week of December. It is the crematory owners' responsibility to see that the Commission receives the report whether a postcard was received or not.

****NEW**** If there have been any changes in your general price list, please submit a copy to the Commission for the files.

JUST AS A REMINDER: IT IS IMPORTANT TO RENEW THE CREMATORY ESTABLISHMENT LICENSE PRIOR TO THE EXPIRATION DATE PRINTED ON THE BOTTOM OF THE LICENSE

Crematory Owner Reminder: A post card is sent out approximately two months in advance reminding you that your license is about to expire. You may request a paper renewal or renew online.

If you are planning to open a crematory on your cemetery, funeral home property, or commercial embalming establishment it is imperative that you acquaint yourself with the laws and requirements. This information is on our website under "Cemeteries and Crematories". Should you have questions or concerns regarding **Crematories**, please contact **Cindy Martinez** at 512-936-2480, or emailing cmar@tfsc.state.tx.us

A new crematory establishment **may not** cremate a case **until the facility is licensed**. Once all the requested paperwork has been submitted, the inspector will contact the facility to schedule the inspection. A license will be issued when the inspection is completed and then the manufacturer may come to your location to train the personnel.

It is important to acquaint yourself with the crematory laws which can be found on our website.

Information Retention on Cremation

Chapter 716.251(b) of the Health and Safety Code states "A record must be kept on file at least until the fifth anniversary of the cremation". If the death is under investigation, Article 49.04(c) of the Code of Criminal Procedures requires the records to be kept for a period of 10 years from the date of cremation of the body named on the certificate.

Attorney General Opinion

Opinion No. GA-0218 states that Chapter 716 of the Health and Safety Code permits a person authorized to dispose of remains of a deceased individual to contract directly for cremation services, but only if the crematory is also licensed as a funeral establishment or if the authorizing agent receives written authorization from either a justice of the peace or medical examiner of the county in which the death occurred.

Crematory News (NEW)

An opinion has been issued regarding whether or not a county may request cremation of an unidentified deceased pauper. Opinion number GA-0543 which can be found on the Attorney General's website at www.oag.state.tx.us. A crematory **cannot** receive an unidentified person for cremation.

Transporting Cremated Remains

There have been instances where consumers have tried to carry on a plane the cremated remains of a loved one, in an opaque urn purchased at the funeral home. Due to the heightened security we now have in place, this is not acceptable as it cannot be x-rayed and the consumer will be refused entrance to the plane with the remains. It has been suggested if the funeral director knows the family will be traveling with the cremated remains and they want to purchase an opaque urn, to suggest they travel with the remains in the temporary container until they reach their destination and then have the cremated remains transferred into a permanent receptacle.



***** NEW INSTRUCTIONS FOR ONLINE RENEWALS *****

When accessing the online renewal or initial applications please go to Texas.gov by typing www.Texas.gov in your browser. You will find links for renewals as well as initial provisional and reciprocal applications..

Many changes have been developed to enable the use of technology to accommodate our licensees. **To Provisional Licensees: Please be aware that you cannot renew both provisional licenses (if you hold both provisional funeral director and provisional embalmer license) online the same day.** Texas.gov will only allow one open renewal application to sit on their site at one time. You must renew one license on one day and wait at least 24 hours to renew the other...**prior to the expiration date. PLEASE DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE LAST MINUTE!**

CONTINUING EDUCATION



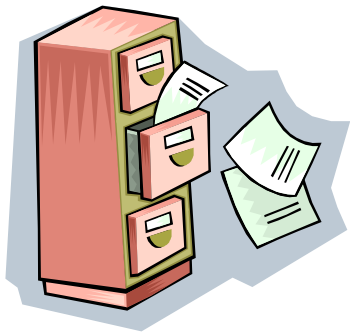
All active license holders must submit 16 hours of continuing education prior to renewal, or upon renewal. Failure to do so will delay renewal of the license and additional fees and penalties may be imposed.

Continuing education providers do **NOT** submit certificates to the Commission on behalf of any licensees' hours obtained. It is the sole responsibility of the licensee to submit the certificates or details online to the Commission. If certificate information is not submitted during online renewal, the license is not renewed or mailed out. A letter of audit is sent out immediately advising the licensee of the need to submit their certificates.

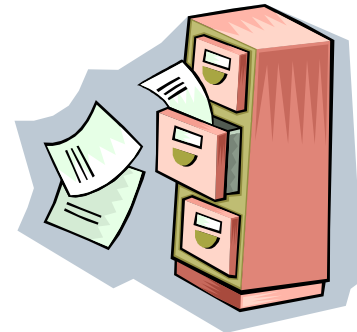
A licensee can receive up to four hours of continuing education credit per renewal period for attendance at Commission meetings. The credit is hour for hour of attendance and the licensee must sign in, sign out and pick up certificate at the conclusion of the meeting. Certificates are not mailed out to those that sign in and don't sign out.

For more information, or a list of approved providers, please visit our website.





PUBLIC INFORMATION



To verify that an individual and/or establishment is licensed with the Texas Funeral Service Commission, an individual may call the Public Information Officer: 512-936-6552. By phone, the Public Information Officer can verify a maximum of three names, with the following information: if the licensee is current, delinquent, null and void, retired, deceased and the type of licensure and expiration. Additionally, by phone the Public Information Officer may provide if a licensee has any disciplinary action. By law, information concerning current complaint status, current investigation status, or previously dismissed complaints may not be provided.

Written Verification of Licensure

If additional information is needed, such as the dates of licensure, an individual may make a request in writing for this information. The Board provides the requested information in writing. The cost of standard written licensure verification is \$30 per license. The standard written verification contains the following information: name, address, date of birth, license number, category of license, current status, date license issued, expiration date of license, and existence of past disciplinary actions accompanied by any agreed orders. Any additional information regarding disciplinary actions must be requested in writing.

License Certification

If written verification is needed to be sent to another state licensing board, the cost is \$50. Additionally, copies of large professional files may need to be calculated on a per sheet basis and therefore exceed these standard costs.

Please make checks or money orders payable to the Texas Funeral Service Commission (TFSC). Questions should be directed to Public Information Officer: 512-936-6552 or acurrier@tfsc.state.tx.us.



“FACTS ABOUT FUNERALS”

Please use the new order form to avoid delays in shipment of your orders!!

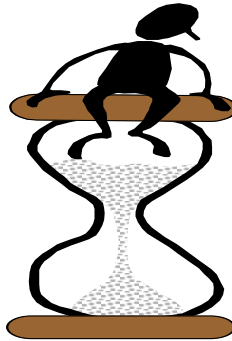
Effective immediately, order forms sent to the Commission with incorrect and/or incomplete shipping addresses with will be charged an additional fee of \$10.00 or the brochures will NOT be sent.

United Parcel Service (UPS) charges the Commission every time we attempt to ship and the package is returned undeliverable.

The revised order form for the “Facts about Funerals” brochures can now be found on our website at www.tfsc.state.tx.us under Agency News and Information, Publication Order Forms.

All orders must include a physical shipping address or the orders will not be processed.

At this time we cannot accept credit card orders for brochures and we request a check or money order be mailed to us along with the order form. **The new law book can be purchased at a cost of \$15.00.** Be advised the law book does not include the Texas Administrative Code. The Texas Occupations Code, Texas Administrative Code, and the Health and Safety code may be accessed through our website under the Governing Laws link.



In recent months the agency has received several telephone calls by licensees complaining about the difficulty they experience in getting through to a live person. We would like to remind all of our licensees that there are over 5,000 licensees and only twelve agency employees to assist you and the consuming public.

Additionally, if you reach a voice mailbox that means the person you have reached is unavailable to take your call. In most cases that is a result of that staff member assisting someone on another call. Please remember no one can return your call if you fail to leave your name and telephone number.

If the person you are trying to reach is on the phone, please do not ask or expect the operator to place your call on hold until that person is available. You may return your call at a later time or leave them a voice mail.

Your help would be appreciated by limiting some of the telephone calls into our office to important calls only. All paperwork with the Texas Funeral Service Commission letterhead has our mailing address, email address, telephone and

fax number included. The funeral home contracts and the brochures have our mailing address printed on them. The telephone lines into our office could be freed up by eliminating the number of calls that we receive each day requesting this information or confirmation that your fax was received. Please refer to the confirmation page that you receive from your fax machine as a confirmation that your fax was sent to and received by our office.

We are always here to assist you, but less time on the telephone means more time spent on the other important tasks such as license renewals, establishment license renewals, license issuance, and compliance issues.

For those of you that do not have our current information:

Mailing Address	Physical Address	Telephone Numbers
Texas Funeral Service Commission PO Box 12217, Capitol Station Austin, TX 78711	Texas Funeral Service Commission 333 Guadalupe Street, Ste. 2-110 Austin, TX 78701	512-936-2474 888-667-4881 512-479-5064 fax

Web Address

www.tfsc.state.tx.us



Agency Directory

The offices of the Texas Funeral Service Commission are located in the Wm. Hobby Building at 333 Guadalupe Street, Suite 2-110, Austin, Texas 78701. The mailing address is P.O. Box 12217, Capitol Station, Austin, Texas 78711-1440.

To contact members of the staff the telephone numbers are:

1. **Executive Director**- Chet Robbins 512-936-2474
2. **Administrator of Consumer Affairs and Compliance**- Donna Potter 512-936-2470
3. **Executive Assistant/Administrator of Licensing/Office Manager**- Martha Gussoni 512-936-2468
4. **Legal Assistant** – Kathy Sparks 512-936-2469
5. **Accountant**-Jennifer Noack 512-936-2474
6. **Investigator**- Miguel Stoker 512-936-2484
7. **Investigator** – Rodney Van Oudekerke 512-936-2466
8. **Provisional Licensing Technician** –Nikki Smith 512-936-2479
9. **Individual, Reciprocal and Establishment Licensing** -Cindy Martinez 512-936-2480
10. **Reinstatements/Cemeteries** and “Facts About Funerals”-Sandy Gonzalez 512-936-6551
11. **Inspector Consumer Affairs and Compliance**- Bill Vanneste 512-936-2490
12. **Inspector Consumer Affairs and Compliance**- Andre Jackson 512-936-2488
13. **Open Records** - Amy Currier 512-936-6552
14. **Toll Free number** 888-667-4881
15. **Fax Number** 512-479-5064