

ETHICS FOR THE MODERN FUNERAL PROFESSIONAL

ONLINE EDUCATIONAL COURSE PROVIDED BY THE
MARYLAND STATE FUNERAL DIRECTORS ASSOCIATION

1.0 CEU approved by the Maryland State Board of
Morticians & Funeral Directors

Ethics for the Modern Funeral Professional

This online course is based on the National Funeral Directors Association (NFDA) Code of Professional Conduct, Article VIII of the Bylaws of the Maryland State Funeral Directors Association and Title 7 – the Maryland Morticians & Funeral Directors Act. It is designed to address the ethical obligations of the funeral professional in the following four key areas of funeral service practice:

- Obligations to the Family
- Obligations for the Care of the Decedent
- Obligations to the Public
- Obligations to the Government

Each area will begin with an ethical principle, followed by specific types of conduct that is either required or prohibited for the protection of the families you serve, the decedents you care for, the profession you dedicated yourselves to, the communities in which you live, and the employees and associates with whom you work.

Service to Families

Ethical Principle

A funeral professional has an ethical obligation to serve each family in a professional and caring manner, being respectful of their wishes and confidences, being honest and fair in all dealings with them and being considerate of lesser means.

Service to Families

Code of Professional Responsibility - continued

1. A funeral professional shall provide funeral services to families without regard to religion, race, color, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, or disability.

It is also a violation to refuse, withhold from, deny or discriminate against an individual with regard to the provision of professional services for which the licensee is licensed and qualified to render because the individual is HIV positive.

Service to Families

Code of Professional Responsibility - continued

2. A funeral professional shall comply with all applicable federal or state laws or regulations relative to the arrangement, prearrangement, prepayment or pre-financing of funeral services or merchandise.

The funeral professional shall confirm that the arrangement or pre-arrangement is in strict conformance with the law, statute or regulations governing the right of interment.

A funeral professional shall not commit fraud or misrepresentation in the practice of mortuary science.

The funeral contract must be given at the time funeral arrangements are made.

A funeral professional cannot be the owner or beneficiary of an insurance policy purchased to fund a pre-need funeral contract.

Service to Families

Code of Professional Responsibility - continued

3. A funeral professional shall release deceased persons to the custody of the person or entity who has the legal right to effect a release without requiring payment prior to the release.

It is a violation to refuse to surrender custody of a dead human body on the demand of a person who is entitled to custody.

4. A funeral professional shall not use any funeral merchandise previously used and sold without prior permission of the person selecting or paying for the use of the merchandise.

Service to Families

Code of Professional Responsibility - continued

5. A funeral professional shall comply with the Federal Trade Commission's Funeral Industry Practices Regulation.

A General Price List must be given out to anyone who begins a discussion of funeral goods, services, arrangements or prices at the start of the discussion.

A Casket Price List must be given out as soon as there is any discussion of caskets and before the consumer is shown a casket.

6. A funeral professional shall protect confidential information pertaining to the deceased or the family of the deceased from disclosure.

Service to Families

Code of Professional Responsibility - continued

7. A funeral professional shall carry out all aspects of the funeral service in a competent and respectful manner.
8. A funeral professional shall properly account for and remit any monies, documents, or personal property that belongs to others that comes into the funeral professional's possession.
9. A funeral professional shall not engage in any unprofessional conduct of a character likely to deceive, defraud or harm the families they serve in the course of providing professional service.

Care of the Decedent

Ethical Principle

Funeral professionals have an ethical obligation to care for each deceased person with the highest respect and dignity, and to transport, prepare and shelter the remains in a professional, caring, and conscientious manner.

Care of the Decedent

Code of Professional Conduct

1. All deceased persons shall be treated with proper care and dignity during transfer from the place of death and subsequent transportation of the remains.
2. Only authorized personnel of the funeral home or those persons authorized by the family or by law, statute or regulation, shall be in attendance during the preparation of the remains.
3. A funeral professional shall only allow embalmers, apprentices and interns, who are licensees to the extent required by state law, to embalm human remains.

It is a violation to aid or abet an unauthorized person in the practice of mortuary science.

4. All deceased persons in the preparation room shall be treated with proper care and dignity and shall be properly covered at all times.

Care of the Decedent

Code of Professional Conduct - continued

5. A funeral professional shall not transport, hold or carry out the disposition of human remains without all permits and authorizations required by law.
6. A funeral professional shall not violate any statute, ordinance, or regulation affecting the handling, custody, care or transportation of human remains.
7. A funeral professional shall not knowingly dispose of parts of human remains that are received with the body by the funeral home in a manner different from that used for the final disposition of the body, unless the person authorizing the method of final disposition gives permission that the body part may be disposed of in a manner different from the disposition of the body and the method of disposition of the body part does not violate any statute, ordinance or regulation affecting the handling, custody, care or transportation of human remains.

Obligations to the Public

Ethical Principle

Funeral professionals have an ethical obligation to the public to offer their services and to operate their businesses in accordance with the highest principles of honesty, fair dealing and professionalism.

Obligations to the Public

Code of Professional Conduct

1. A funeral professional shall not engage in any unprofessional conduct which is likely to defraud or deceive the public.

It is a violation to sell or offer to sell any share, certificate or interest in a mortuary science business with a promise to offer to perform services to the buyer at a cost less than offered to the general public.

2. A funeral professional shall not engage in false or misleading advertising.

Obligations to the Public

Code of Professional Conduct - continued

3. A funeral professional shall not personally or through an agent or employee solicit deceased human remains, whether the solicitation occurs after death or while death is imminent; provided, however, that general advertising directed to the public at large would not constitute a violation of this section.

It is a violation to solicit mortuary science business, either personally or by an agent, from a dying individual or the relatives of a dead or dying individual, other than through general advertising.

It is also a violation to pay a capper, steerer, solicitor or any other person to obtain mortuary science business, directly or indirectly pay or offer to pay to obtain mortuary science business, or to solicit or accept any payment or rebate for recommending any crematory, mausoleum or cemetery or causing a dead human body to be disposed there.

Obligations to the Public

Code of Professional Conduct - continued

4. A funeral professional shall not pay or offer to pay a commission or anything of value to third parties, such as medical personnel, nursing home and hospice organizations or employees, clergy, government officials or others, to secure deceased human remains for funeral or disposition services.
5. A funeral professional shall not use alcohol or drugs to the extent that such use adversely impacts the member's ability to carry out his or her obligation as a funeral professional.

It is a violation to provide professional services while under the influence of alcohol, narcotics or controlled dangerous substances or any drug that is in excess of therapeutic amounts or without valid medical indication.

Obligations to the Public

Code of Professional Conduct - continued

6. A funeral professional shall not be convicted of any felony or any crime involving immoral conduct.

A license may be denied, suspended, or revoked if a funeral professional is convicted of or pleads guilty or nolo contendere to a felony or a crime involving moral turpitude

7. A funeral professional shall not offer to sell or arrange the sale of funeral goods or services on a preneed basis in violation of any applicable federal or state laws or regulations.

It is a violation to fail, after proper demand and in accordance with applicable law, to refund promptly, any payment received under a preneed contract with interest.

Obligations to the Government

Ethical Principle

A funeral professional has an ethical obligation to maintain strict compliance with the letter and spirit of all governmental laws and regulations that impact the funeral consumer, the funeral profession, the public health and employee health and safety.

Obligations to the Government

Code of Professional Conduct

1. A funeral professional engaging in the profession of funeral directing or embalming shall hold all necessary licenses to engage in such businesses.
2. A funeral professional shall require any person in their employ or under their control who serves as a funeral director or embalmer, or as an apprentice or intern, to have all appropriate licenses.

It is a violation to fraudulently or deceptively obtain a license for the applicant or licensee or for another, fraudulently or deceptively use a license or aid or abet an unauthorized person in the practice of mortuary science.

Obligations to the Government

Code of Professional Conduct - continued

3. A funeral professional shall not knowingly make a false statement on a death certificate.

It is a violation to willfully fail to file or record any report as required by law, willfully impede or obstruct the filing or recording of the report or to induce another to fail to file or record the report.

4. A funeral professional shall not knowingly make or file false records or reports in the practice of funeral service.

It is a violation to file a false statement to collect a fee.

5. A funeral professional shall comply with all federal, state or local laws, rules or regulations governing or impacting the practice of funeral service or any provision of the laws or regulations regarding cremation.

Obligations to the Government


Code of Professional Conduct - continued

6. A funeral professional shall comply with all federal, state, or local laws, rules or regulations that were enacted to protect consumers, the public and funeral home employees

Except in an emergency life threatening situation, where it is not feasible or practicable, the funeral professional must comply with the Centers For Disease Control's Guidelines on Universal Precautions.

7. A funeral professional shall comply with all federal, state or local laws, rules or regulations that were enacted to protect the environment and employee safety and health.

A funeral professional must know, understand and comply with all applicable OSHA and EPA rules, regulations, laws and standards in the practice of mortuary science.



**THANK YOU FOR TAKING
OUR ONLINE COURSE.**

