



MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF FUNERAL DIRECTING AND EMBALMING
Posted 5/14/2026

State Office Building
301 Centennial Mall South
Lincoln, NE
Lower Level, Morrill Room

Thursday
May 28, 2026
9:00 a.m.

This meeting will be held by WebEx conference and in-person. The public is welcome to attend any Open Session discussion at the State Office Building Lower Level. This meeting will also be available to the public to participate by WEBEX using this link:

<https://sonvideo.webex.com/sonvideo/j.php?MTID=m172bb9e4deca9d0179a11978762729a7>

or call in information is **1-408-418-9388** using meeting number of **2498 527 9815**

Here is a link to the Open Meetings Act:

https://nebraskalegislature.gov/laws/display_html.php?begin_section=84-1407&end_section=84-1414

Here is a link to a copy of all the Open Session discussion items:

<https://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/Board-Meeting-Documents.aspx>

1. Roll Call & Announcement: *A current copy of the Open Meetings Act is available in the meeting room.*
2. Adoption of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes – January 22, 2026
4. **approximately 9:15 am** - Investigational Reports – **CLOSED SESSION** pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §38-1,105 (*The Board will go into closed session for the purpose of review and discussion of investigative reports, licensure applications, and other confidential information, and for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of the individuals.*)
 - a. Investigation Cases
 - b. Applications
5. Application Review – **CLOSED SESSION** pursuant to Neb. Rev. Stat. §84-1410 **approximately 10:00 am** - **OPEN SESSION**
6. Updates and Reports
 - a. Legislation and Regulations
 - b. Nebraska Funeral Directing Association (NEFDA) <http://www.nefda.org>
 - c. International Conference of Funeral Service Examination Board, Inc. (ICFSEB) <http://www.theconferenceonline.org>
 - d. Reports: Disciplinary and Non-Disciplinary Actions, License Statistics, and Examinations Statistics (Attached)
7. Crematory Operator Credential Review – Paul Seger
8. Board of Funeral Directing and Embalming 2026 Meeting Schedule – Next scheduled meeting is May 28, 2026
9. Public Comment
10. Adjournment

Contact Information: Heather Ord at 402-471-4926 or Heather.Ord@nebraska.gov

All items known at time of distribution of this agenda are listed; a current agenda is available on the Bulletin Board, First Floor, State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lincoln, Nebraska.

Notice: A tape recording of the meeting will be made for the purpose of preparing minutes of the meeting. Said tape will not be transcribed but will be available to the public until such time that the minutes of this meeting are approved by the Board. In accordance with the records retention schedule of the Licensure Unit as authorized by Nebraska Statute, the Division may

dispose of the tapes ten (10) days after the meeting; however, staff shall retain the tapes until the Board has approved the minutes.

Auxiliary aids or reasonable accommodations needed to participate in a meeting can be requested by calling Heather Ord with the Licensure Unit at 402-471-2117 (voice). Individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing may call DHHS via Nebraska Relay System at 711 or (800)833-7352 (TDD) at least 2 weeks prior to the meeting.

Agenda Item 3:

These minutes have not been approved by the Board

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF FUNERAL DIRECTING AND EMBALMING
March 26, 2026**

1. ROLL CALL

The Board of Funeral Directing and Embalming was called to order by the Chair, Steven Brunken, at 8:58 a.m., at the Nebraska State Office Building, 301 Centennial Mall South, Lower-Level Morrill Room, Lincoln, Nebraska. The meeting was conducted In-Person and by WebEx. The following members answered roll call.

Steven Brunken, Chairperson
Amy Blinston, Vice-Chairperson
James Conner, Secretary
Jamie Dolan – New Member

A quorum was present, and the meeting convened. Also present were: Sean Loving, Program Manager; Heather Ord, Health Licensing Coordinator; Katherine Amyot, Department Legal; Tyler Walvoord, Department Legal; and T.J. O'Neill, Assistant Attorney General.

Brunken announced that there is a copy of all the public documents being reviewed at this meeting available in the meeting room pursuant to the Open Meetings Act.

In accordance with Neb. Rev. Stat. § 84-1411 of the Nebraska Open Meetings Act, copies of the agenda were e-mailed to the Board members and other interested parties, posted on the DHHS web site at <https://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/Agendas-and-Minutes.aspx> and posted in the Licensure Unit on March 11, 2026.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Dolan moved, seconded by Blinston, to approve the agenda as presented. Voting aye: Brunken, Blinston, Conner, and Dolan
Voting nay: none. Abstain: none Absent: none Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – January 22, 2026

Conner moved, seconded by Dolan, to approve the agenda as presented. Voting aye: Brunken, Blinston, and Conner
Voting nay: none. Abstain: Dolan Absent: none Motion carried.

4. INVESTIGATIONAL REPORTS & OTHER CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION – CLOSED SESSION

Did not go into closed session at this time.

5. OPEN SESSION Application review and recommendations (initial licensure, reinstatement, convictions, administrative penalties, and mail ballot reports)

6. UPDATES AND REPORTS

a) **Legislation:**

No discussion at this time.

b) **Nebraska Funeral Directing Association (NEFDA):** <http://www.nefda.org>-

Stefanie Gonzalez stated there was nothing to report at this time.

- c) **International Conference of Funeral Service Examination Board (ICFSEB):** <https://theconferenceonline.org/>

[Brunken attended the 122nd International Conference of the Funeral Service Examination Board \(ICFSEB\) as a delegate from February 24, 2026, to February 26, 2026. Brunken discussed what was discussed at the conference:](#)

***International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards (ICFSEB)
February 24–26, 2026***

The 2026 International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards highlighted several regulatory, ethical, and workforce challenges affecting funeral service oversight across the United States.

*A key regulatory theme was **apprenticeship flexibility**, with many states allowing embalming cases to be completed across multiple firms, provided documentation is verified by a licensed embalmer. This approach is helping apprentices meet required minimums while maintaining accountability.*

***Examination integrity** remains a growing concern. Incidents of cheating on the National Board Examination continue to increase, with new and increasingly sophisticated methods emerging since the COVID period. Despite these challenges, the reported national pass rate for 2025 was 71%.*

*States are responding differently to oversight demands. **Colorado** was highlighted as an example of increased regulatory investment, having hired two inspectors dedicated solely to funeral home regulation, each at an approximate salary of \$100,000.*

*Significant concern was expressed regarding **unethical body and tissue donation practices**, including documented cases of organ recovery prior to death and an increase in black-market sales of body parts. The absence of federal guidelines was emphasized, as regulation currently occurs only at the state level. Once individuals register as organ donors, families face substantial legal barriers to reversing that decision. The National Funeral Directors Association has testified before Congress advocating for federal standards.*

*Finally, the expanding use of **Death Doulas** across many states raised regulatory and professional boundary questions. Discussions focused on whether Death Doulas may be acting in capacities similar to funeral directors when providing funeral-related advice. It was suggested that states consider formally defining the role, educational requirements, and certification standards for Death Doulas.*

Overall, the conference underscored the need for strengthened exam security, clearer regulatory definitions, enhanced oversight resources, and potential federal involvement in body and tissue donation governance.

Brunken mentioned the Virtual Learning session of 2026 led by Conference Legal Counsel and Regulator Expert Dail Atkins. A conversation about Conflicts on April 21, 2026, at 12 p.m. Central Time. A free one hour Zoom session. Register here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/8po9zcQsQZ-qpxdzL7R11w#/registration>

- d) **Reports: Disciplinary and Non-Disciplinary Actions; License Statistics; and Examinations:** No discussion at this time

7. MEETING SCHEDULE

The next regular meeting is scheduled for May 28, 2026.

To see the list of meeting dates, agendas, and minutes, go to: <https://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/Agendas-and-Minutes.aspx>

8. PUBLIC COMMENT

Stefanie Gonzales
Nebraska Funeral Directing Association (NEFDA)

If a funeral home has a last name listed on their business sign, does the person whose name is on the sign have to be a licensed funeral director?

Legal and the Attorney General's office confirmed that the business sign and the licensed funeral director do not have to match.

Paul Seger
Seger Funeral Home
Atkinson, Nebraska

Seger commented that the state needs an inspector for funeral homes and crematories.

9. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting date will be May 28, 2026. There being no further business, the chair declared the meeting adjourned at 10:17 a.m.

Board of Funeral Directing and Embalming

Summarized by: Heather Ord, Health Licensing Coordinator, Licensure Unit

Agenda Item 6d:

License Statistics:

**NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH, LICENSURE UNIT
SUMMARY COUNT OF LICENSES BY LICENSE STATUS**



report date: 5/13/2026

Funeral Directing

	Active	Application File Closed	Closed	Deleted	Expired	Inactive	Lapsed	NonDisc Revocation	Null and Void	Pending	Revocation	Suspension	Voluntary Surrender	Withdrawn	Total
Apprentice-Full	8	6	0	0	3	0	0	0	206	0	0	0	0	1	224
Apprentice-Split 1	3	7	0	1	0	1	0	0	149	1	0	0	0	0	162
Apprentice-Split 2	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	98	0	0	0	0	0	103
Branch Establishment	90	2	71	1	78	2	0	3	19	0	0	0	0	2	268
Embalmer	0	0	0	0	3	172	8	278	18	0	0	0	14	0	493
Funeral Director	1	0	0	0	4	113	12	202	39	0	1	0	13	0	385
Funeral Director and Embalmer	391	113	0	0	143	303	19	201	113	1	5	1	14	8	1,312
Funeral Establishment	158	3	172	2	71	2	0	29	50	1	1	0	2	6	497
Total	656	131	243	4	302	593	39	713	692	3	7	1	43	17	3,444

Licensee Summary By Status Report

Run Date: 05/13/2026

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Profession: Crematory, Funeral Directing

License Type: Crematory - Crematory, Funeral Directing - Apprentice-Full, Funeral Directing - Apprentice-Split 1, Funeral Directing - Apprentice-Split 2, Funeral Directing - Branch Establishment, Funeral Directing - Embalmer, Funeral Directing - Funeral Director, Funeral Directing - Funeral Director and Embalmer, Funeral Directing - Funeral Establishment

Date Range: None

Profession	License Type	License Status	Total
Crematory			
	Crematory	Active	33
Crematory Total:			33

Profession	License Type	License Status	Total
Funeral Directing			
	Apprentice-Full	Active	8
	Apprentice-Split 1	Active	3
	Apprentice-Split 2	Active	5
	Branch Establishment	Active	90
	Funeral Director	Active	1
	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	391
	Funeral Establishment	Active	158
Funeral Directing Total:			656
Total Licenses :			689

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH, LICENSURE UNIT



EXAMINATION STATISTICS SUMMARY REPORT

Profession: Funeral Directing

Date Range: 03/10/2026 to 05/13/2026

Exam Battery	Exam Name	Result	Number of Candidates
Funeral Directing and Embalming Exam	1-JURISPRUDENCE	Pass	1
Funeral Directing and Embalming Exam	2-VITAL STATISTICS	Pass	1
Funeral Directing and Embalming Exam total:			2
National Arts Exam Section	3-ARTS TOTAL	Pass	2
National Arts Exam Section total:			2
National Science Exam Section	4-SCIENCE TOTAL	Pass	2
National Science Exam Section total:			2
Report total:			6

Compliance Listing

Sort Name	License No	License Type	License Status	Sanction	Sanction Start	Sanction End
Kurtzhals Terry J	965	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Revocation	Civil Penalty	11/13/1995	11/13/1995
Thompson Harlan Martel	1082	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Expired	Civil Penalty	11/28/2001	12/07/2001
Jones, Keith A	1165	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	Civil Penalty	07/29/2004	11/30/2004
Schmidt James L	921	Funeral Director	Expired	Civil Penalty	09/22/2004	03/22/2005
Schmidt James L	921	Funeral Director	Expired	Suspension	09/22/2004	03/22/2005
Rozanek, R A	1155	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Revocation	Civil Penalty	02/15/2005	05/16/2005
Kuncl, Jeffrey R	1200	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	Civil Penalty	11/29/2004	05/29/2005
Rozanek, R A	1155	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Revocation	Suspension	03/17/2005	06/15/2005
Beckenhauer, Gerald Leonard	1080	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Expired	Civil Penalty	02/15/2005	08/15/2005
Cantrell Funeral Home	2073	Funeral Establishment	Active	Civil Penalty	09/22/2004	09/22/2005
Knott Funeral Home	2263	Funeral Establishment	Null and Void	Suspension	02/26/2006	03/28/2006
Thomas Funeral Home	887	Funeral Establishment	Expired	Civil Penalty	03/13/2007	06/13/2007
Roper & Sons, Inc	2182	Funeral Establishment	Active	Civil Penalty	04/06/2007	07/06/2007
Rozanek, R A	1155	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Revocation	Civil Penalty	09/25/2009	03/25/2010
Dubas, Steve R	1238	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	Civil Penalty	03/31/2010	10/01/2010
Roby, Keith Leland	880	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	Suspension	01/06/2013	02/05/2013
Solt, Leslie Mitchell	1398	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	Civil Penalty	04/12/2013	10/12/2013
Roby, Keith Leland	880	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	Civil Penalty	12/27/2012	12/27/2013
Lauber, William J	1097	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Null and Void	Civil Penalty	10/23/2013	04/23/2014
Rozanek, Rodney Adolph	666	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	Civil Penalty	01/10/2014	07/10/2014
Westlawn-Hillcrest Memorial Park & Funeral Home Crematory	2295	Funeral Establishment	Null and Void	Civil Penalty	08/26/2016	02/26/2017
Rozanek, Rodney Adolph	666	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	Civil Penalty	10/04/2017	04/04/2018
Braman Mortuary	2288	Funeral Establishment	Active	Civil Penalty	01/08/2019	07/08/2019
Fischer, Kara Michelle	1198	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	Civil Penalty	11/20/2024	05/30/2025