



Jim Pillen, Governor

MEETING OF THE
BOARD OF FUNERAL DIRECTING AND EMBALMING
Posted 8/6/2026

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

Thursday
August 20, 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=mef67c42c13ae306b5f4836f1b4b4bea9>

or call in information is **1-408-418-9388** using meeting number of **2482 773 7308**

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 – May 28, 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. Board of Funeral Directing and Embalming 2026 Meeting Schedule – Next scheduled meeting is TBD.
8. Public Comment
9. 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**

May 28, 2026

1. ROLL CALL

The Board of Funeral Directing and Embalming was called to order by the Chair, Steven Brunken, at 9:00 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 – via WebEx

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

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 May 14, 2026.

2. ADOPTION OF AGENDA

Conner moved, seconded by Blinston, to approve the agenda with the following corrections:

Item 2: "Approval of minutes – January 22, 2026" changed to "Approval of Minutes – March 26, 2026".
Item 7: "Board of Funeral Directing and Embalming 2026 Meeting Schedule – Next scheduled meeting is May 28, 2026", changed to "Board of Funeral Directing and Embalming 2026 Meeting Schedule – Next scheduled meeting is August 20, 2026".

Voting aye: Brunken, Blinston, Conner, and Dolan Voting nay: none. Abstain: none Absent: none
Motion carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES – March 26, 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

Conner moved, seconded by Dolan, to enter into closed session at 9:06 a.m. 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. Voting aye: Brunken, Blinston, Conner, and Dolan Voting nay: none. Abstain: none Absent: none Motion carried.

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

The board returned to Open Session at 9:22 a.m.

6. UPDATES AND REPORTS

a) **Legislation:**

No discussion at this time.

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

Dolan and Conner attended the 140th NEFDA convention on April 21-23, 2026, in Kearney, Nebraska.

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

Brunken mentioned:

The virtual Learning session #2 – June 16, 2026

The virtual Learning session #3 – August 18, 2026

ICFSEB Board Meeting – August 25, 2026, in Vail, CO

The virtual Learning Session #4 – October 20, 2026

d) **Reports: Disciplinary and Non-Disciplinary Actions; License Statistics; and Examinations:**

No discussion at this time

7. Crematory Operator Credential Review Proposal – Paul Seger

Overview

- Applicant Group: Submitted by the Nebraska Funeral Directors Association (NeFDA) on behalf of its 288 active member funeral directors, assistant funeral directors, and mortuary students.
- Application Date: May 27, 2026.
- Submitted To: Nebraska Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Licensure Unit.

The Problem / Regulatory Gap

- Under current Nebraska Revised Statutes Chapter 71, the state regulates funeral establishments and licensed funeral directors but does not establish a distinct credential, registration, or certification for individual crematory operators.

- There are currently no statutory or regulatory provisions defining the role, requiring minimum education/competency standards, or providing direct individual oversight and discipline for those performing cremations.
- Non-funeral establishments can legally operate crematories in Nebraska without a licensed funeral director on staff, leaving a gap with no checks and balances, inspections, or DHHS oversight for these facilities.

The Proposal

- Establishment of Certification: Create a mandatory Crematory Operator Certification administered by the Nebraska DHHS.
- Initial Qualifications: Applicants must possess a high school diploma (or equivalent), complete an approved training program (e.g., CANA, ICCFA, or NFDA programs), and pass a competency-based examination.
- Continuing Competency: Certified operators must complete a refresher or continuing education course every five years, aligned with the renewal cycle of the cremation equipment/licensure.
- Standardized Protocols: Establish uniform procedures for decedent identification, chain of custody, equipment operation, and crematory inspections.

Public Benefit & Risk Assessment

- Public Benefit: Protects public health and safety, ensures proper handling of human remains/hazardous materials, ensures equipment safety, and preserves public trust during a highly sensitive process.
- Precedent and Prevention: Proactively addresses rising cremation rates in Nebraska and aims to avoid severe operational and ethical failures seen in deregulated or under-regulated states (e.g., Colorado, Georgia, Illinois).
- Financial Impact: Minor to no additional cost to the state. Providers would incur training fees every five years, with an estimated maximum impact on consumers of approximately \$5 per case (or zero for larger operators).

Seeger commented that the state needs an inspector for funeral homes and crematories. He proposed adding crematories to the board of funeral directing and embalming and asked the board to provide a letter of support in the 407 process (Crematory Operator Credential Review).

8. MEETING SCHEDULE

The next regular meeting is scheduled for August 20, 2026.

To see the list of meeting dates, agendas, and minutes, go to:

<https://dhhs.ne.gov/licensure/Pages/Agendas-and-Minutes.aspx>

9. PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comment at this time.

10. ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting date will be August 20, 2026. There being no further business, the chair declared the meeting adjourned at 9:56 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 Ran: 8/6/2026

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	7	6	0	0	3	0	0	0	207	0	0	0	0	1	224
Apprentice-Split 1	0	7	0	1	0	1	0	0	152	1	0	0	0	1	163
Apprentice-Split 2	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	99	0	0	0	0	0	103
Branch Establishment	89	2	72	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 Funeral Establishment	394	114	0	0	142	303	19	201	113	0	5	1	14	8	1,314
Total	654	132	245	4	301	593	39	713	697	2	7	1	43	18	3,449

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

License Status: Active - 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	32
Crematory Total:			32

Profession	License Type	License Status	Total
Funeral Directing			
	Apprentice-Full	Active	7
	Apprentice-Split 2	Active	4
	Branch Establishment	Active	89
	Funeral Director	Active	1
	Funeral Director and Embalmer	Active	394
	Funeral Establishment	Active	159
Funeral Directing Total:			654
Total Licenses :			686

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



EXAMINATION STATISTICS SUMMARY REPORT

Profession: Funeral Directing

Date Range: 05/14/2026 to 08/06/2026

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	2
Funeral Directing and Embalming Exam total:			3

Report total: 3

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