

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS – Mortuary Science

Funeral Director

Funeral directors take charge of caring for the remains of people who have died, help families plan funeral services, and co-ordinate and manage arrangements for services.

Also Known As: Mortician, Undertaker

Duties

Funeral directors co-ordinate the work involved in bringing the deceased to the funeral home and making all the necessary arrangements for a funeral service. In general, they:

- provide information about funeral service options, products and merchandise
- maintain a casket display area
- prepare funeral service contracts
- arrange funeral services according to the social or religious practices of the people involved
- help bereaved families with immediate legal, social and emotional concerns
- arrange for the time and place of funerals
- contact religious leaders
- file death certificates, obtain burial permits, contact the cemetery
- prepare obituary notices for newspapers
- arrange transportation for mourners, pallbearers and religious leaders
- oversee the conduct of funeral services.

Working Conditions

Funeral directors sometimes work long, irregular hours that may include many evenings and weekends. The funeral director will work visitations or calling hours as well as being on call to remove the deceased person from their place of death as well. They work both indoors and outdoors regardless of weather conditions.

Heavy lifting over 50 pounds and more is required usually without assistance.

Personal Characteristics

Since they work in an atmosphere of grief and bereavement, funeral directors need the following characteristics:

- maturity
- emotional stability
- compassion
- tact

- sensitivity to the needs of the people they serve.
- professional dress is required
- while working all tattoos must be covered as this is a very conservative profession
- limited amount of piercings if any may be allowed

They should enjoy supervising people and coordinating information, consulting with families, and having clear rules and organized methods to guide their activities.