

Introduction to Funeral Directing

NOTICE: Effective April 1, 2016, the Bereavement Authority of Ontario assumed responsibility for the licensing and enforcement activities previously exercised by the Board of Funeral Services (BOFS) and BOFS was dissolved as a corporation. This publication remains for informational purposes. Please contact the BAO at 1-844-493-6356 or visit www.bereavementauthorityontario.ca for more information.

**INTERNSHIP
SUPPORT
PROGRAM**

In support of the internship program, the Board of Funeral Services (BOFS), in collaboration with funeral directors, has developed a process to support the introduction of the intern to the process of directing a funeral. While there are many ways to approach training an intern, the following is a proven approach that has worked successfully for many interns and preceptors.

Step 1 – Finalizing details of the funeral with the family prior to the service

The purpose of finalizing the details of the funeral (often referred to as “clearing” the funeral) is essential to the successful completion of the funeral and related services. It is imperative that the intern understands the importance of carefully guiding the family through the process regardless of whether the funeral was arranged several days prior or just the day before.

- Ensure the intern communicates with the family in a sensitive and caring manner
- Discuss expected arrival times with the family in addition to also providing a detailed overview of the steps that will be followed throughout the entire process.
- Eliminate the surprise factor by taking the time necessary to offer sufficient information related to what will be happening
- Clarify with the family as required any outstanding decision related to flowers, the church or cemetery, limo pick up time and residence addresses
- The intern is encouraged to demonstrate the ability to effectively “clear” the funeral with the family prior to the service before proceeding to Step 2

Step 2 – Pre-Service Team Member Huddle

Communication is key. Once the funeral has cleared determine what steps need to be taken next to ensure expectations are met.

- Share decisions made and family expectations with all team members who will be working on the funeral
- Ensure everyone involved fully understands their roles and responsibilities before announcements are made to the family and guests that the services are commencing

Step 3 – Lead a Procession

Plan the proper route in advance. Ensure the intern is aware of safety techniques and understands the importance of abiding by the rules of the road.

Step 4 – Conducting Oneself Professionally and Appropriately

Ensure the intern fully understands what is expected of them from the outset.

- Discuss proper conduct at the funeral, taking into consideration that expectations may change from place to place. Ensure the intern is fully aware of policies and various equipment requirements.
- Ensure the intern understands protocol for the cemetery or crematorium. Emphasize what is and is not permissible to include in the casket or container. Provide information related to health and safety concerns that could put others at risk during the cremation process

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Step 5 – Review the Process and Lessons Learned

Advise the intern that no two funerals are alike however various procedures can be applied in more than one instance.

- Take the time to review what worked well, what could have been improved and anything that did not happen as previously planned
- Ensure all team members who were present on the funeral are involved in the discussion
- Recognize the successes and consider how they could be used in the future
- Discuss procedures for preventing any possible mishaps from occurring again