

HCS HBs 2322 & 1774 -- LICENSING OF PERSONS PERFORMING FUNERAL-RELATED SERVICES

SPONSOR: Farnan

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Professional Registration and Licensing by a vote of 13 to 0. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Legislative Oversight by a vote of 10 to 0.

This bill modifies the process for obtaining a student license for the practice of embalming. Under the provisions of this bill, an applicant must submit an application; pay all application fees; and provide evidence that he or she is at least 18 years old, possesses a high school diploma or the equivalent thereof, and is enrolled in or has completed a funeral service education program. Upon application, approval by the State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors a student licensee may, with supervision, assist in the embalming process.

The requirements for full licensure are outlined in the bill and include that the student licensee has completed an apprenticeship of no less than six months, has personally embalmed at least 25 dead human bodies, and has passed the specified exams. Under the provisions of this bill, a student licensee shall have five years to complete the requirements for full licensure.

This bill also modifies the process for obtaining a funeral director license.

An applicant may obtain a provisional license if he or she submits an application to the State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors; pays the current application fees; and provides evidence that he or she is at least 18 years of age, possesses a high school diploma or the equivalent thereof, and will work as an apprentice funeral director under the personal supervision of a licensed funeral director. An applicant for a provisional funeral director license shall have 36 months to complete the requirements for full license.

An applicant may obtain a full license to practice as a funeral director if he or she submits an application to the State Board of Embalmers and Funeral Directors; pays all application fees; and submits evidence to establish to the satisfaction of the board that he or she is at least 18, possesses a high school diploma or the equivalent thereof, and has passed the Missouri law examination.

The applicant must have successfully completed:

(1) A program accredited by the American Board of Funeral Service Education or any successor organization other accrediting entity as approved by the board. The applicant must also do one of the following:

(2) A qualifying apprenticeship for at least 12 months, during which the applicant conducted and arranged at least 10 funerals and passed the National Board or State Board Arts examination; or

(3) A qualifying apprenticeship for at least 18 months, during which the applicant has conducted and arranged at least 25 funerals. Limited licensure for Funeral Director requirements are also outlined in the bill, and permit licensees to work in funeral establishments licensed only for cremation that includes transportation of dead human bodies.

These provisions have a delayed effective date of August 28, 2025.

This bill is similar to HB 629 (2023) and HB 1491 (2022).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this is not lowering the standards for funeral directors and embalmers. This is another way for applicants to obtain a license while getting hands-on experience.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Farnan and the Missouri Funeral Directors Association.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.