

SPRING NEWS 2022

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Alberta Funeral Services Regulatory Board

*promote a fair and informed
marketplace by protecting
consumer rights, enhancing
industry professionalism,
maintaining rigorous
educational standards and
enforcing fair business
practices.*

CONTACT AFSRB

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Message from the Chair



The AFSRB Office renewed over 700 funeral professionals and 179 funeral businesses for the 2022-23 year. The Board is considering making changes to the reporting of continuing education, and is looking for feedback from the profession. Look for the survey, later in the newsletter. The AFSRB will also be making a change to our website and online business and individual employee portals. Information about this change will be sent out to licensees when available.

The AFSRB guided Legislative Review Committee (LRC) continues to meet and propose changes to our General Regulations which will be submitted to Service Alberta in the next few months. The AFSRB will also be bringing back the Funeral Education Review Committee (FERC) this year to help with upcoming projects.

Changes to The Funeral Benefits Program came into effect April 1st, 2022. At an in-person meeting with AFSA, our Board was told ASFA will be advocating for changes to how this program is currently being run.

Now that in-person meetings have started up again, Del August will be out doing business inspections. Businesses must be inspected by the AFSRB once every 3 years, so if you haven't had an inspection in a year or so look for Del to possibly pay your business a visit.

We had an open industry seat on our board for this coming year and with an industry election held, we would like to congratulate and welcome Stu Murray to the Alberta Funeral Service Regulatory Board for a 3 year term. With Stu coming on to the board, we say goodbye to Dean Ross, as his 3-year term comes to an end. We would also like to thank Dean for his service, insight, and efforts over the past 3 years. Dean led the redesign of the 'Funeral Planning in Alberta' brochure and once it meets board approval it will be available from the AFSRB office.

This newsletter continues to keep funeral professionals in the province updated with current Legislative and Regulation changes, as well as situations that can affect the day-to-day operations of funeral service. For the most current information, refer to the AFSRB website or call the AFSRB office.

Shawn Feist
AFSRB Chair

Board News

Dean Ross



The Board and staff of the AFSRB would like to thank Dean for his three years serving with us. Dean brought his experience and expertise to every meeting and ensured the voice of the funeral profession was part of every board discussion. We appreciated the work that Dean put into the Funeral Planning in Alberta brochure, updating the content and the language to make it more user-friendly. (The new version of this will be coming out later this year). Dean will be missed on the board, but we look forward to his continued involvement in the Legislative Review Committee and the Funeral Education Review Committee.

Stu Murray



The AFSRB would like to welcome Stu Murray to our Board. Stu was born in Montreal in June 1967, his family moved west in 1969 settling in Sherwood Park where he went to school graduating from Salisbury Composite. Upon graduation Stu spent a year at Grant McEwan College, playing in the soccer team and occasionally studying accounting. In 1988 after a brief taste of the funeral business Stu did numerous other jobs in and around Edmonton. He met the love of his life Micheline in 1989 and they were married in Edmonton in 1992. They have three children, Nicholas, Emilie and Danielle. Stu has a love for a good golf game, and has been a National Assessor with the Canadian Soccer Association since 2020.

In March, 1993 Stu started with Edens in Fort McLeod and Pincher Creek and then to Rose Garden Chapel in Barrhead in 1996. Stu became a licensed funeral director in 1996, being one of the few in Alberta to study through the Cincinnati School of Mortuary Science. After spending 10 years at Hainstocks, Stu was promoted to location manager in 2008 and then General Manager of Northern Alberta in 2015, assisting with the 7 SCI locations in the and around Edmonton. Just recently he celebrated his 29th year with SCI (Canada). Being brought onto the AFSA board in 2013, Stu served 9 years including a term as President. The chance to give back to the funeral service was an amazing experience with AFSA and I look forward to continuing to learn and support the funeral professionals of Alberta.

Message from the Inspector

Hope everyone is busy and planning some holidays for this summer. I wish to update you on the 2022-2023 inspection process and what it will look like this fiscal year. I will be focusing on some additional items in the inspection process:

- Students
 - Do you have a student at your business?
 - Are they registered with the AFSRB?
 - Is the student's logbook up to date?
 - Are activities being supervised and signed off by a licensee?
- Volunteers - Are the activities appropriate for a volunteer?



If you have any questions or need clarification, please contact me at 587-989-3323 or del@afsrab.ab.ca and I will be glad to help you. Well, that is all I have for now, and I look forward to seeing you into 2022 and early 2023.

Inspector Del August

Continuing Education

Feedback



Renewals are done for another year! It was the first year we utilized an online system for entering continuing education. FILIS is now open for the new reporting cycle. We would like your opinion to help us determine how best to proceed with the next education reporting cycle. Provisions for continuing education are under the Funeral Services Act General Regulation, and therefore will continue to be a requirement for our licensees. Click [here](#) to answer a question on reporting your continuing education. Responses are requested by June 30, 2022.

Lunch & Learn

The AFSRB will be launching a number of “Lunch and Learn” sessions starting in the fall. These will be in a webinar format through Zoom. Sessions may be provided by guest speakers, the AFSRB members or Board staff depending on the topic. Many of these sessions will be based on the feedback the AFSRB received through the mandatory course survey. Each session will be approximately an hour long, with information being provided with some time for questions at the end of the session. Continuing education credits can be claimed for these sessions. Watch for more information in the coming months.

Survey Results

Thank-you to everyone who submitted the feedback survey after the completion of the AFSRB mandatory course ‘*The 5Rs of Funeral Service in the Age of Cremation*’. 278 surveys were submitted and the results have been compiled. As an overall summary, every question had 80%+ positive feedback (strongly agree and agree). Click [here](#) for a detailed summary of the results.



There was also written feedback submitted on two topics. One question requested feedback for future topics for the mandatory course, and the other requested feedback on additional information related to cremation that individuals were interested in obtaining. There was a significant variety of responses from these two questions. The Board has reviewed all of this feedback and we now have a number of topics to consider for future sessions.

Do You Have a Student Working at Your Business?

Only individuals possessing a **current** Eligibility Certificate, issued by the AFSRB, are permitted to engage in activities restricted to licensed individuals or trainees under supervision, **and**, are eligible to write the Funeral Director exam. Logged activities for the purpose of training and credentialing can only be completed by individuals with a current Eligibility Certificate. To become registered as a student in Alberta, individuals must fulfill the following requirements:

Step 1: Register in a funeral service education program (funeral director/embalmer)

Mount Royal University or the Canadian College of Funeral Service.

Step 2: Be working at a funeral business

Step 3: Apply for Student Certificate

The Business Manager must apply and pay for the registration through FILIS (3.a) . A current criminal record check (conducted within the last 90 days), and Student Eligibility Declaration are also required. The declaration can be found on the AFSRB website under the Industry tab.

Note: the initial payment for student certification is only required once, as long as they continue to work at the same funeral business. Students are not included in renewals.

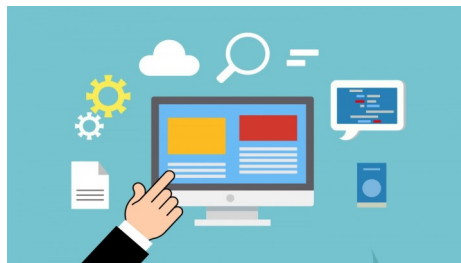
New AFSRB Website

The AFSRB is revitalizing the website and we are asking for your help! The new website will be a source of up-to-date information on funeral services in Alberta and the Board is looking to include imagery related to the funeral profession. The AFSRB is asking the Alberta funeral community to submit pictures you would like to share with the AFSRB for use on the website.

The criteria is as follows:

- High quality pictures of funeral services or cemeteries
- Pictures that you have the rights to, we cannot use pictures that may be copyright (professional photographers, newspaper pictures, etc.)
- Pictures should not depict specific business names, recognizable individuals (without their permission) or names on headstones.
- Historic pictures are also welcome, even if the quality is not perfect

If you have any questions about providing pictures, please contact the AFSRB office.



Funeral Education Review Committee (FERC)

The AFSRB is pleased to announce that FERC will be starting some new projects for the Board. A new committee has been convened with the following members: Stuart Murray (AFSRB industry member), Deborah Gust (AFSRB public member), Gemma Beierback (facilitator and former AFSRB public member), and from the funeral profession, Dean Ross, Dale Wright, Sheila Bartsch, Tyler Weber and Chris Jong. The first organizational meeting was held June 8.

The projects that FERC will be undertaking are related to education and training that will be provided by the AFSRB. There are a variety of initiatives that the FERC members will be starting work on in September.

The proposed projects are as follows:

- Course for business managers
- Course for non-professional business owners
- Training for businesses that sponsor students
- Develop a policy for practicum requirements for funeral education students
- Develop introductory information for people considering entering the funeral profession

The AFSRB will keep you updated on the progress of these projects in future newsletters.

Alberta Insurance Council Renewal Update

The Alberta *Insurance Act* (the “Act”) requires that every business that acts as an insurance agent must hold a valid certificate of authority. The Act also requires that a business that is issued a certificate of authority must appoint a Designated Individual (“DI”) who is responsible for receiving all notices and documents from the Alberta Insurance Council (“AIC”).

This requirement applies to **Funeral Services Businesses** which sell life insurance and annuity products as a way of funding pre-arranged funeral services contracts (i.e. “Funeral Services Insurance”). If you require additional information on licensing please contact the Alberta Insurance Council at licensing@abcouncil.ab.ca

If your **Funeral Services Business** currently holds a valid certificate to sell funeral services insurance, your license(s) will expire on June 30, 2022 and must be renewed prior to that date if you wish to continue doing business. The AIC will email renewal notifications to all license holders through their Designated Individual(s) **in early May**.

If you are not the Designated Individual (“DI”) for the license issued to your business, a new DI must be appointed. **The new individual must register for their own CIPR number. CIPR numbers are not interchangeable.** The new prospective DI can submit an online application by logging into the AIC portal. If the agency name under which you conduct insurance business or the sponsoring insurance company has also changed, the DI must update those changes through an online application. **These updates cannot be made on renewal application(s).** It is your responsibility to ensure that the agency and DI information provided to the AIC is current and accurate.

Not sure if you currently hold an active insurance agent’s certificate of authority? Search for your business name from the link Other Resources-Popular Lookups-Agent and Agency Search on our web site at www.abcouncil.ab.ca.

If you have any other questions, please email us at licensing@abcouncil.ab.ca

Third Party Sellers on Funeral Business Websites

The Board is sharing this information proactively to ensure that the funeral profession was aware of what has occurred in other provinces.

In October there was a CBC Go Public article out of Toronto, where a third-party marketer (through the website platform) was placing advertising on the obituary page of the funeral services business’ website, that would lead mourners to a different for-profit site where trees could be planted, candles lit, etc. The family was concerned that the wishes of their loved one (money to be donated for a certain purpose) were diverted to this for-profit site without their knowledge or permission. The mourners who visited the site would not necessarily understand that this was not the wishes of the family and therefore made donations to this third-party site. Here is a link to the article: [CBC News](#)

Mourners may not understand “who” they are donating to because that disclosure was not provided through the website. This article highlights why the possibility of additional sales components must be disclosed to the person making the funeral arrangements if this kind of third-party involvement is part of your website provider’s services. If you become aware of this type of activity please notify the Board.