

AFSRB NEWS

DECEMBER 2023



**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 Board Chair



2023 has been so much more than a year of returning to “normal” for the AFSRB, as we embark on an aggressive campaign to continually improve our services to the industry and the public.

The newly expanded website is now fully operational providing extensive information, resources, and links, including a licensee portal providing confidential, secure one-stop access for all the needs of our industry professionals.

Our conversion to a new licensing system is well underway and will be completed in time for the 2024 licensing renewal season and feature a significantly improved full-service experience.

Our Legislative Review Committee continues to meet and, although the update of the Funeral Services Act has required a longer and more thorough review than originally anticipated, the hard work of the members of this committee will ensure that the funeral industry in Alberta continues to be a leader in the quality of services provided to Albertans. Further to this end, we are pleased to welcome and announce the hiring of our new Program and Policy Officer – Caroline MacDonald-Davis, who has already significantly contributed to assisting Karen in everything in program and policy as well as reducing an overall workload.

Looking forward, the board has just completed a 3 year Strategic Review identifying our key priorities as:

- Increased awareness of AFSRB and its mandate; and
- Attraction and retention of funeral professionals

In 2024 you can look forward to programs and initiatives, working with our partners in achieving these goals. We encourage anyone seeking more information to refer to the AFSRB website or contact the office.

On behalf of myself, and the rest of the Alberta Funeral Services Regulatory Board we would like to wish everyone the merriest of Christmas and a joyful holiday season.

Sincerely,

Jack Redekop
AFSRB Chair

AFSRB Staff Update



The AFSRB is pleased to welcome Caroline MacDonal-Davis to a new position in the office as the Program and Policy Officer.

Prior to joining the team, Caroline worked for the provincial government in various policy, legislative and management roles. She also has experience conducting research and teaching at the University of Alberta. A self-described policy geek, Caroline's interest in policy grew exponentially through her graduate work with communities in Guatemala, the Philippines and Northern

Ontario.

Outside of the office, Caroline loves spending time with her three large-ish rescue dogs. In the summer, you can find her riding one of her three bicycles, her motorcycle, or riding around town with her partner on their vespas. Wintertime brings downhill skiing and spending an inordinate amount of time getting the dogs ready for their walks on those cold days.



New Licensing Portal

The AFSRB is working with Big Picture Software to develop a new and improved licensing portal. The development of the new portal is moving along nicely and the goal is to launch the renewal portion of the database in late January. We will provide some orientation sessions on the new portal once it is ready. Stay tuned to your email for information on this in the new year.

Part of the development is ensuring we have the most up to date data when the information is transferred from the current portal to the new one. To assist with this, we are asking all **business managers** to ensure the licensee list for all branches of your funeral business is up to date (i.e. the status of your licensees) and make the necessary updates where needed. Your assistance on this is very much appreciated.

The new portal will **not** be asking for personal mailing addresses of licensees and therefore licensees do not need to contact us to update this information.



Continuing Education

There are a few months remaining in the April 1, 2023— March 31, 2024 education cycle. Each licensee is required to have completed and entered 3 credits of continuing education (CE) into the licensee portal for licence renewal. Although the deadline for renewals is March 31, 2024, many funeral businesses start the process much sooner, therefore, the sooner you enter your continuing education, the better. A few reminders:

Continuing Education (CE) Reminders

- Credits **cannot** be carried forward and sessions/activities must be completed in the current cycle.
- Anyone licenced between April 1, 2023—March 31, 2024 is responsible for fulfilling the CE requirement.
- Students who become fully licensed within the timeframe can use credits from their formal education (one-time use only).
- If you are licensed under more than one business and have more than one profile, you only are required to enter your CE into **one** profile.

Pre-Need Salesperson Course Changes

On December 1, 2023, the Canadian College of Funeral Service (CCFS) implemented changes to the pre-need salesperson program. The course content and initial cost remains the same. It is important for those businesses that train pre-need salespeople take note of the following changes:

- CCFS is going paperless and will transition this program to a digital format where students can complete and submit their activities online through the CCFS learning environment.
- There will now be a time limit of 6 months to complete the course. If an extension is needed, there will be a fee of \$75.
- The profile for a student in the online learning environment will be deleted one month after the student has finished the course and successfully completed the exam. This means they will no longer have access to the program.
- Prior to writing the final exam, the student must complete 12 modules, which includes the completion of 12 quizzes. If a student receives less than 70% on any quiz, they are required to redo that quiz. This process is being automated through the program. If a student receives less than 70% on a quiz, the system will automatically reset the quiz so that it can be redone. The student will not be allowed to move on to the next module until a satisfactory mark is achieved on the quiz. If the student does not obtain at least 70% on the second attempt, the student will need to contact CCFS and pay a \$75 program reactivation fee in order to continue the program and attempt the quiz again.



AFSRB Holiday Closure

The AFSRB office will be closed starting December 23, 2023 and will reopen Tuesday, January 2, 2024.



Executive Director



Policy Officer



Licensing Officer



Inspector

