



From The NC Board of Funeral Service

As the Coronavirus continues to spread across the United States, it has direct and immediate impact on North Carolina. With regard to the practice of funeral service, the NC Board of Funeral Service will send you regular updates on the crisis as more information is announced at both the state and federal levels.

As an important first step, please visit the Board website at www.ncbfs.org for links to current, critical sources of information regarding the virus and its impact on our state and profession.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION & UPDATES FOR LICENSEES

STAY-AT-HOME DIRECTIVES

We reported to you yesterday that Mecklenburg County issued a county-wide proclamation ordering residents to “stay-at-home” and which closed non-essential business in the county. As we noted, funeral service including funeral establishments, crematories, and cemeteries are deemed essential business and are not subject to the requirement for closing.

With the City of Durham announcing a similar order, there are now six local and municipal governments that have implemented “Stay-at-Home” directives. These are:

- Madison County
- Pitt County
- Town of Beaufort
- City of Durham
- Mecklenburg County
- Buncombe County

According to the Raleigh News & Observer, Wake County is considering a similar order for its residents which they plan to announce on March 25th followed by a news conference on March 26th. So far, the Governor’s Office has not issued statewide restrictions that would be considered a “stay-at-home” directive for citizens statewide.

Please pay particular attention to these orders and directives for any restrictions on the number of individuals allowed at a public gathering. We have learned that some of you may be under a municipal and a county directive with different requirements for the number allowed at a public gathering. While we cannot give you legal guidance on compliance with these directives, please consult with your counsel if necessary to determine how you should comply in such cases.

IMPACT OF STAY-AT-HOME ORDERS ON FUNERAL SERVICE PROFESSIONS

Except for Madison County's Shelter-in-Place order, all other local governments listed above have identified funeral service professions as "Essential Businesses" and are therefore exempt from these orders. **The Board is advising all licensees and permit holders to keep their pocket cards with them at all times in case local law enforcement requests identification.** For non-licensed funeral home staff who may be responsible for the removal and transportation of a decedent, you may want to create an identification badge with your establishment logo that a non-licensee can carry and present upon demand from local law enforcement should there be a question about their removal/transportation activity. Some establishments are creating these badges with photos of the non-licensee as well as identifying the funeral establishment as an "Essential Business" under a particular proclamation or order. We'll share additional ideas in upcoming Advisories.

We are providing placards that you can print and use to identify a funeral home vehicle in service during a funeral or committal service. These sample placards can be found at the end of this Advisory.

The Board will be posting the proclamations, orders and declarations from the listed local governments on the website at www.ncbfs.org under the Coronavirus Advisory page/Stay-at-Home. You can then read the text for each county or municipality implementing these orders or share them with legal counsel should you need guidance on their interpretation and application.

SURVEY FROM THE NC DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES [DHHS]

The Emergency Management Planner in the state's Epidemiology Branch in the DHHS Division of Public Health is asking each licensed establishment to respond to a survey to help in their development of strategic plans and assessments of body storage capacity in North Carolina in their response to the coronavirus epidemic. Please take a moment and access the survey at <https://nc.readyop.com/fs/4chS/d8d0>. It's a brief questionnaire and will only take a few moments to complete and return. Your information will be helpful in their emergency planning process.

FSI OFFICE BULLETIN

We are passing along to you for informational purposes a bulletin the Board office received today from FSI Office, a vendor that supplies cleaning, disinfecting, sanitizing, paper towel and tissue products. This firm is currently open and conducting business as an Essential Business, and we wanted to let you know of this supplier which serves a variety of government organizations in a five-state area.

To access the vehicle placards, please double-click on the icons to open the file. You can then print and save these files if you wish.



Placard Cemetery
Professional.pdf



Placard Funeral
Professional.pdf