

General Overview

There are two ways to become licensed in Oregon, either through the apprenticeship program or by reciprocity.

Reciprocal

The Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board (Board) is authorized to recognize embalmers and funeral service practitioners (FSP) from other states, provided the applicant can show proof satisfactory to the Board that the applicant is licensed in good standing in another state and has practised as a funeral service practitioner or an embalmer in another state for three of the five years immediately preceding the application date, has complied with requirements in the state in which he / she was licensed with requirements substantially equal to Oregon's requirements, and the license(s) is in good standing.

To qualify for an Oregon Reciprocal FSP license, an applicant must have an associates degree or higher and will be required to provide a certified copy of a transcript from a school accredited by a regional association of schools and colleges demonstrating completion of an associate degree or higher-level degree program, or show proof of being licensed in this state or another state for four years in lieu of the associates degree (ORS 692.145). An applicant for an Oregon Reciprocal FSP license will be required to pass the Oregon Funeral Service Practitioner examination as a means of providing satisfactory proof to the Board that the applicant has the requisite qualifications for licensing as an FSP in this state. This exam is offered twice yearly in January and in July. Due to accounting procedures, we can only accept an FSP exam application and fee between 90 and 30 days prior to the exam date.

Applicants for reciprocal embalmer licensure shall be required to show evidence satisfactory to the Board that the applicant has successfully passed the National Board Examination as administered by the International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards Inc (Conference), or an equivalent examination written by the Conference, that shall include two sections, funeral service arts and funeral service sciences, and must receive an average score of at least 75 percent on the sections with not less than 70 percent on either of these two sections.

An Oregon Reciprocal Embalmer license will only be issued after a background investigation has been completed, proof of successfully passing the national or state embalmer exam, and Board approval has been received.

An Oregon Reciprocal FSP license will be only be issued after a background investigation has been completed, after passing the Oregon FSP Board exam, and Board approval has been received.

It is strictly prohibited by Oregon Statute to practice as an FSP or embalmer until fully licensed or certificated as an apprentice. If an applicant is unable to acquire a reciprocal FSP license due to the examination schedule or due to the Board meeting every other month, they may apply for an apprentice FSP certificate and work under the personal supervision of an Oregon licensee until they are able to successfully complete the Oregon FSP exam and meet all requirements necessary to be licensed as a reciprocal funeral service practitioner. If an applicant is unable to acquire a reciprocal embalmer license due to the examination or Board meeting schedule, they may apply for an apprentice embalmer certificate and work under the personal supervision of an Oregon licensee until the applicant is able to receive Board approval and meet all requirements necessary to be licensed as a reciprocal embalmer.

Previously Licensed in Oregon or Another State

If the applicant does not qualify for a reciprocal FSP or embalmer license, but has been licensed in Oregon or another state previously, OAR 830-011-0020(11) provides that the Board shall deem the apprenticeship requirement satisfied upon the applicant's submission of proof satisfactory to the Board that the person has practiced as a licensed embalmer or funeral service practitioner for two of the past five years or for a total of ten

(10) years. Embalmer applicants who meet this requirement shall be required to demonstrate competency by way of a practical examination at a time and place designated by the Board (Mt. Hood Community College, 503-491-6940). Funeral Service Practitioner applicants who meet this requirement shall be required to successfully complete a written examination and receive a score of not less than 75 percent, based on the total number of questions. The Board administers the Funeral Service Practitioner Examination twice yearly, in January and July.

Apprenticeship

Apprentice funeral service practitioners are required to serve a twelve-month apprenticeship in Oregon under the personal supervision of an Oregon licensed FSP, are required to work a minimum of 30 hours a week during normal business hours, excluding up to 30 days of vacation time per year, and assist in the planning of at least 25 funerals or dispositions per year. Apprentices may not receive credit towards their FSP apprenticeship while enrolled in a full-time funeral service education program unless the apprentice qualifies as a part-time student and has received prior written Board approval.

An applicant for a FSP license shall be required to pass the Board's FSP examination as a means of providing satisfactory proof to the Board that the applicant has the requisite qualifications for licensing as a FSP in this state. Before being eligible to take the FSP exam, an applicant must provide to the Board's office written evidence of graduation from an associate or higher degree program* **OR** proof of four years of licensed FSP or embalmer experience in this state or another state. (*If only submitting written evidence, prior to becoming fully licensed as an FSP, the applicant must submit a certified copy of a transcript demonstrating graduation with an associate or higher degree from a school accredited by a regional association of schools and colleges.)

The individual must successfully complete practical experience as an FSP's apprentice under ORS 692.190. Effective January 1, 2008, a person may serve a funeral service practitioner apprenticeship for an aggregate total of not more than 48 months, excluding time lost for interruptions described in ORS 692.190(5).

Apprentice embalmers must complete a twelve-month apprenticeship in Oregon under the personal supervision of an Oregon licensed embalmer, are required to work at least 30 hours per week and at least three days per week, excluding up to 30 days vacation a year, must assist in the preparation of at least 45 human remains during the apprenticeship period, and submit a certificate of completion from an accredited course of funeral service education. On completion, the apprentice becomes eligible for the state embalmer exam and subsequent licensure.

In order to qualify for an embalmer's license, an applicant must show proof of successfully passing the National Board embalmer examination written and administered by The International Conference of Funeral Service Examining Boards Inc (Conference) or an equivalent examination written by the Conference. Currently, all states except California accept the results of a successful National Board Examination.

If the applicant takes the National Board embalmer examination and submit overall passing scores of at least 75 percent, they would be eligible for licensure upon completion of the required apprenticeship time. Extensions of the period for completion of an embalmer apprenticeship may be granted by the Board due to extenuating circumstances beyond the control of the apprentice.

You may not take the embalmer exam unless you are a qualified applicant for an embalmer's license. In order to qualify for the Oregon State Embalmer exam, you must submit evidence of graduation from a funeral service education program accredited by The American Board of Funeral Service Education to the Oregon Mortuary and Cemetery Board's office, prior to applying for this exam.

The Conference will now be administering the Oregon State Embalmer Examination via a computer-based exam. The examination will not be given at the Board's office; it will be available at Pearson Professional Centers to eligible candidates. Registration for either exam is available from the Board's website or office upon request.

Effective January 1, 2008, a person may serve an embalmer apprenticeship for an aggregate total of not more than 48 months, excluding time lost for interruptions described in ORS 692.190(7). An embalmer apprentice may serve the apprenticeship concurrently with the FSP apprenticeship. The 30 hour time requirement remains the same whether you serve one apprenticeship or a combined apprenticeship.

The certificate of apprenticeship shall be issued to the applicant as an apprentice to a specified licensee. If the apprentice changes establishments or person to whom apprenticed, he / she shall file a request for approval of transfer with the Board immediately. Note that for the purpose of obtaining the required number of embalmings, the Board determined that current rules and statutes do not prohibit an embalmer apprentice to work at more than one facility, provided they are properly supervised by their apprentice supervisor.

In order to receive apprenticeship application forms, the applicant must already have been accepted for a position as an apprentice with an Oregon licensee willing to serve as their supervisor.

In accordance with ORS 692.025(7), all applicants for licenses must consent to a background investigation. The information solicited may be from the Department of State Police, Department of Motor Vehicles, Credit information, personal references, previous employer interviews and other sources. Providing there is nothing found during the background investigation process that would give the Board cause to refuse to grant a certificate to the applicant, the effective date of the apprenticeship shall be the date the completed application and required certificates are received and validated in the Board's office, as stated in OAR 830-011-0020(7).

For information regarding possible job openings, please contact the Oregon Funeral Directors Association, Suite 105 – Executive Center Bldg., 12725 SW 66th, Portland, OR 97223. The telephone number is (503) 639-1186 or 800-304-5095. They assist individuals who are seeking employment positions by making your resume available to firms that have openings.