

Clinical Preceptor Handbook
Clinical Embalming Program and Funeral
Directing Practicum

DALLAS
INSTITUTE
OF FUNERAL SERVICE

Clinical Preceptor Handbook

Dallas Institute of Funeral Service
Clinical Embalming Program
2025-2026

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Clinical Coordinator Policy

1. Definition

Dallas Institute of Funeral Service (DIFS), also referred to as "the Institute," offers a Clinical Embalming Program and Funeral Directing Practicum as part of its required curriculum. These programs are conducted in affiliation with embalming facilities and funeral homes in Indiana and across the country. DIFS maintains **Affiliation Agreements** with all participating firms, which must be approved before any clinical embalming or practicum work begins. Additionally, DIFS operates a fully equipped laboratory where embalming procedures may be performed under the direct supervision of faculty members or the Clinical Coordinator.

2. Purpose

The Clinical Embalming Program and Funeral Directing Practicum supplement the embalming and funeral directing theory taught at DIFS by providing hands-on experience under the supervision of an approved preceptor. Preceptors must submit a **Clinical Preceptor Application** for approval. These programs foster professionalism, reinforce respect for the deceased, and expose students to various embalming and funeral directing techniques. Preceptors are responsible for demonstrating all phases of the embalming process, the arrangement conference, and service preparation while ensuring adherence to facility sanitation, disinfection, maintaining decedent/family privacy, and OSHA guidelines.

3. Clinical Procedures

A. Embalming Requirements

Students must actively participate in at least twelve (12) embalming cases. At least one (1) case must be completed under the direct supervision of DIFS faculty or a Clinical Coordinator. Participation includes performing specific tasks identified on the **Clinical Activity Report Form**, which the supervising preceptor must complete. Discussions should include embalming treatments, case analysis, and the types and quantities of embalming fluids used.

B. Student Participation & PPE

No more than five (5) students may participate in a single embalming case. DIFS provides **Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)** and **Clinical Activity Report Forms**, which students must use properly. Students without PPE or refusing to wear PPE may not participate, and a school official should be notified immediately.

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C. Documentation & Reporting

Upon completion of an embalming case, both the preceptor and student(s) must complete and sign the **Clinical Activity Report Form**. This form must be submitted to DIFS. In addition, the preceptor will and must provide a copy of the **written Authorization to Embalm** for each case. The Authorization to Embalm must be signed by the next of kin and/or family representative regardless of the requirements of the state that the embalming case takes place in. Every student must submit both Clinical Activity Report Form and Written Authorization to Embalm. **This is a zero tolerance policy** with no exceptions and failure to do so will result in the student's practicums not being accepted.

4. Clinical Preceptors

A. Eligibility

- i. Must complete and sign an **Off-Site Clinical Preceptor Application**. Each preceptor must be individually registered. Cases performed with unregistered preceptors will not count toward program requirements.
- ii. Must have a valid **Embalmer's and/or Funeral Director License** or provide verification of licensure. DIFS will attempt to verify licensure through state databases. If verification is unavailable, a transcript from an accredited mortuary science school must be on file.
- iii. Must be employed at an affiliated embalming facility.
- iv. Must have adequate work experience as determined by DIFS.

B. Renewal of Documentation

- i. The affiliated facility must submit an updated **Affiliation Agreement**, verification of a valid/current location license, results of a recent formaldehyde test, and undergo an **Embalming Facility Inspection** at least every three years.
- ii. Each preceptor must submit an updated **Off-Site Clinical Preceptor Application** and verification of a valid/current license to practice at least every three years.

C. Termination of Eligibility

A preceptor's eligibility will be terminated immediately if:

- i. They cease employment at the affiliated facility.
- ii. Their embalming license expires.
- iii. They fail to provide an updated **Off-Site Clinical Preceptor Application**.

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- iv. Becomes the subject of an investigation or disciplinary action involving any professional license, regardless of whether it is related to embalming or funeral service.

5. Rules and Regulations

A. Supervision Requirement

Preceptors must always be physically present with students during embalming procedures and may not supervise more than two (2) cases simultaneously.

B. Professional Conduct

Preceptors must demonstrate professionalism and serve as role models by maintaining appropriate conduct, language, sanitary practices, and correct industry terminology.

C. Student Discipline & Reporting

Preceptors must maintain order and report any disruptive student behavior to the Clinical Coordinator and the Dean of Academics.

D. Student Participation & Evaluation

Preceptors must ensure students actively participate in embalming procedures and assess their competency. Evaluations must be documented in the **Student Clinical Activity Report Form**, which is required for the case to count toward the student's total case requirement.

E. Student Guidance & Support

Preceptors should provide students with constructive feedback, answer questions, and create a meaningful learning experience.

F. Documentation & Reporting

Preceptors must assist students in completing the **Clinical Activity Report Form** and verify that all required signatures and license numbers are recorded. Forms must be returned to DIFS.

G. Authorization to Embalm

Preceptors must obtain a signed Authorization to Embalming for each case. Some states have mandated embalming authorization forms and other states may only require a reason for embalming on a statement of goods and services. Both of these are acceptable as evidence of written permission. For states that require written permission to embalm prior

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to embalming when students are involved, the written permission **must be obtained prior** to student participation in accordance with state law. Violations of state law will result in denial or revocation of preceptor status.

Legally authorized persons have the right to make informed decisions regarding the preparation and care of their loved one. Principles of Patient Right to Know laws have been used in litigation against funeral homes when funeral homes fail to disclose what parties came into contact with, or prepared, human remains for funeralization.

To limit your liability we recommend the following language be added to your firm's embalming authorization:

The undersigned authorizes and directs the Funeral Home, its employees, independent contractors, and agents (including licensed trainees and/or mortuary students under the direct supervision of a licensed embalmer), to care for, embalm, and prepare the body of the Decedent.

We acknowledge that some states provide a standard form that must be used. In such cases we recommend that the funeral home present this information in writing on another form the funeral home can control. This form should be presented to the legally authorized person for their review and signed acknowledgement. A copy should be given to the legally authorized person and the original should be kept in the funeral home permanent file.

As with any document used in your business, the review of forms and language by a licensed attorney competent in this area is strongly recommended.

H. Student Well-Being

Preceptors should be mindful that students depend on their guidance and support throughout their training.

I. Unannounced Site Visits

The **Clinical Coordinator** or an appointed representative may conduct unannounced visits to affiliated embalming facilities at any time.

J. Mandatory Meetings

Preceptors are required to attend periodic meetings as scheduled by DIFS with adequate notice.

K. Notification of Employment Changes

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Preceptors must inform the **Clinical Coordinator** immediately of any employment changes, as failure to do so may result in removal from the program.

L. Use of Assistants

A preceptor may be assisted by a licensed embalmer who does not meet the full qualifications of the **Clinical Embalming Program**. However, the preceptor remains responsible for student supervision and must sign all required documentation.

M. Resignation from Preceptor Role

Preceptors who can no longer fulfill their responsibilities should notify the **Clinical Coordinator** or the **Dean of Academics**.

N. Program Integrity & Compliance

A preceptor may be dismissed from the program if verified evidence indicates that they have:

- Falsified embalming reports by signing off on cases in which students were not present or did not participate.
- Violated any established **Rules and Regulations**.
- Had their professional license disciplined by an appropriate licensing authority.
- Been under investigation for, found guilty of, or pled no contest to a felony or to a misdemeanor offense other than a traffic violation or citation.

6. Disciplinary Actions

If a student fails to conduct themselves professionally or disregards a preceptor's instructions, DIFS reserves the right to remove the student from an off-site facility at the facility's request. This includes any behavior or health concerns that may negatively affect the facility's clients, staff, or operations. Facilities also reserve the right to deny placement to students they have previously discharged.

Due to the sensitivity of the clinical environment, preceptors must ensure that students do not wear or use technology capable of recording, such as smart glasses or similar devices. Any violations must be reported immediately to the Clinical Coordinator and the Dean of Academics.

By upholding these standards, preceptors play a vital role in shaping the future of the embalming and funeral service profession. DIFS deeply values their dedication to student learning and professional integrity.

Preceptor Training Acknowledgment



Funeral Home Name

City

State

I certify that I have received and reviewed the Clinical Preceptor Handbook. I further certify that I will abide by the Clinical Preceptor Handbook.

Preceptor's Signature

Preceptor's Printed Name

Date

I affirm that I have viewed the Preceptor Orientation video, which serves as my training on the expectations, responsibilities, and requirements of my role as a clinical preceptor. I understand these expectations and agree to fulfill my role in accordance with the program's standards and policies.

Preceptor's Signature

Preceptor's Printed Name

Date