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# Wisconsin Legislative Council

## ACT MEMO

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May 27, 2020

**2019 Wisconsin Act 137**  
[2019 Assembly Bill 576]

**Funeral Director's Licenses**

### BACKGROUND

State law prohibits any person from engaging in business as a funeral director without a license granted by the Funeral Directors Examining Board (the Board). As specified in the statutes, a person must meet the following requirements to be eligible for a funeral director's license:

- Two academic years of instruction at a recognized college or university in a course of study approved by the Board.
- Nine months of instruction in a prescribed course in mortuary science approved by the Board.
- Completion of a funeral director apprenticeship.

Also, the statutes require completion of a 16-hour certification class approved by the Board. The certification must be completed prior to completion of the instruction in mortuary science and is a prerequisite to the apprenticeship.

Currently, for renewal of a license, a funeral director must complete at least 15 hours of continuing education during the previous two-year licensure period.

### 2019 WISCONSIN ACT 137

2019 Wisconsin Act 137 modifies the eligibility requirements for a funeral director's license, as follows:

- The act requires a person to complete 24 semester credits of education at a recognized college or university in a course of study approved by the Board. This replaces the current standard of two academic years of education.
- The act eliminates the requirement to complete the 16-hour certification class prior to completion of the prescribed course in mortuary science.
- Under the act, the prerequisite for the apprenticeship may be satisfied in one of two ways. An applicant must complete either the 16-hour certification class or the prescribed course in mortuary science prior to the apprenticeship.

The act also modifies the continuing education requirements applicable to the renewal of a funeral director's license, as follows:

- For renewal of a license that expires on the first renewal date after the Board has initially granted the license, the funeral director must have completed at least four hours of continuing education subsequent to the date on which the initial license was granted.
- For each subsequent renewal, the funeral director must have completed at least 15 hours of continuing education during the previous two-year licensure period, as under current law.

The act requires the Board to promulgate rules specifying permitted or required subjects for the four hours of continuing education applicable to the first renewal, which must be subjects that the Board determines prepare a new licensee for practice as a funeral director.

**Effective date and initial applicability:** The act generally will take effect on October 1, 2020, and the modifications relating to licensure eligibility, the apprenticeship, and continuing education will initially apply as follows:

- Licensure eligibility modifications will initially apply to a license application submitted by an applicant who submitted an application for a certificate of apprenticeship on October 1, 2020.
- Those modifications relating to requirements for the apprenticeship will initially apply to an application for a certificate of apprenticeship on October 1, 2020.
- Continuing education modifications will initially apply to a renewal application submitted by an applicant who submitted a license application on October 1, 2020.

Notwithstanding the above effective date, the act authorized the Board to begin the promulgation of administrative rules under the act on March 5, 2020.

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