



CHAPTER 90
ARTICLE 13A - PRACTICE OF FUNERAL SERVICE

N.C.G.S. § 90-210.20.

Definitions.

SOURCE	LAST AMENDMENT IN THIS TEXT	RETRIEVED	SOURCE FINGERPRINT
General Statutes of North Carolina, as published by the General Assembly	S.L. 2025-76, s. 3.2(a), (b) — twenty-second act in the lineage	21 September 2026, 03:37 UTC	b8557e74649992c11e1a0568 - 2ab80d44d15af3d9d6e0211b - 87f837879753c697

Unless a different meaning is required by the context, the following definitions apply to in this Article and Articles 13D and 13F of this Chapter:

The following definitions apply in this Article:

Advertisement. - The publication, dissemination, circulation or placing before the public, or causing directly or indirectly to be made, published, disseminated or placed before the public, any announcement or statement in a newspaper, magazine, or other publication, or in the form of a book, notice, circular, pamphlet, letter, handbill, poster, bill, sign, placard, card, label or tag, or over any radio, television station, or electronic medium.

Alkaline hydrolysis. - The technical process that reduces dead human bodies to bone fragments using heat, water, and chemical agents.

Board. - The North Carolina Board of Funeral Service.

Branch establishment. - A funeral establishment that serves as an ancillary facility to a principal funeral establishment, which is not required to contain a preparation room pursuant to G.S. 90-210.27A(a).

Burial. - Includes Interment in any form, cremation and the transportation of the dead human body as necessary.

Chapel. - A facility separate from the funeral establishment premises for the primary purpose of reposing of dead human bodies, visitation, funeral ceremony, or memorial service that is owned, operated, or maintained by a principal funeral establishment under this Article, and that is not staffed on a full-time basis, in which or on the premises of which, there is not displayed any caskets or other funeral merchandise; in which or on the premises of which there is not located any business office or preparation room; and which no owner, operator, employee, or agent thereof represents the chapel to be a funeral establishment.

A funeral establishment may utilize a chapel to make funeral arrangements and to sell funeral merchandise to the public by photograph or digital presentation, and to make financial arrangements related to the sale, provided that such uses are secondary and incidental to and do not interfere with the reposing of dead human bodies, visitation, funeral ceremony, or memorial service.

Dead human bodies. - Includes The body of a decedent, regardless of its stage of decomposition, and includes fetuses beyond the second trimester and the ashes, bone fragments, or human materials produced as a result of cremation or alkaline hydrolysis.

Embalmer. - Any person engaged in the practice of embalming.

Embalming. - The preservation and disinfection or attempted preservation and disinfection of dead human bodies by application of chemicals externally or internally or both and the practice of restorative art including the restoration or attempted restoration of the appearance of a dead human body. Embalming shall not include the washing or use of soap and water to cleanse or prepare a dead human body for disposition by the authorized agents, family, or friends of the deceased who do so privately without pay or as part of the ritual washing and preparation of dead human bodies prescribed by religious practices; provided, that no dead human body shall be handled in a manner inconsistent with G.S. 130A-395.

Embalming facility. - A facility, other than a funeral establishment, at which an embalmer or funeral service licensee engages in embalming and in which, or on the premises of which, there is not displayed any caskets or other funeral merchandise, and which no owner, operator, employee, or agent represents the embalming facility to be a funeral establishment or engages in funeral directing.

Embalming fluid. - Any chemicals or substances manufactured primarily for use by licensed funeral directors, undertakers or embalmers, or registered residents to prepare, disinfect, or preserve, either hypodermically, arterially, or by any other recognized means, the body of a deceased person for burial, cremation, or other final disposition.

Entry-level examination in funeral directing. - An examination recognized by rule adopted by the Board to assess competency in all of the following subjects:

- a.Funeral arranging and directing.
- b.Funeral service marketing and merchandising.
- c.Funeral service counseling.
- d.Legal and regulatory compliance.
- e.Crematory operations.

Funeral directing. - Engaging in the practice of funeral service except embalming.

Funeral director. - Any person engaged in the practice of funeral directing.

Funeral establishment. - Every place or premises devoted to or used in the care, arrangement and preparation for the funeral and final disposition of dead human bodies and maintained for the convenience of the public in connection with dead human bodies or as the place for carrying on the practice of funeral service.

Funeral merchandise or funeral supplies. - Any personal property used in connection with the conduct of funerals or with the transportation and final disposition of a dead human body, including caskets, outer burial containers, cremation caskets, urns, and burial clothing. The term does not mean mausoleum crypts, pre-installed outer burial containers or interment receptacles, and columbarium niches or other services or merchandise at a cemetery regulated by the Cemetery Commission.

Funeral service. - The aggregate of all funeral service licensees and their duties and responsibilities in connection with the funeral as an organized, purposeful, time-limited, flexible, group-centered response to death.

Funeral service licensee. - A person who is duly licensed and engaged in the practice of funeral service.

Practice of funeral service. - Engaging in the care or disposition of dead human bodies or in the practice of disinfecting and preparing by embalming or otherwise dead human bodies for the funeral service, transportation, burial, cremation, or other lawful means of final disposition, or in the practice of funeral directing or embalming as presently known, whether under these titles or designations or otherwise. "Practice of funeral service" also means engaging in making arrangements for funeral service, selling funeral supplies to the public or making financial arrangements for the rendering of such services or the sale of such supplies.

Principal funeral establishment. - The funeral establishment that serves as the primary or principal business office of a funeral establishment that has been issued a license by the Board to operate a branch funeral establishment or chapel.

Resident trainee. - A person who is engaged in preparing to become licensed for the practice of funeral directing, embalming or funeral service under the personal supervision and instruction of a person duly licensed for the practice of funeral directing, embalming or funeral service in the State of North Carolina under the provisions of this Chapter, and who is duly registered as a resident trainee with the Board.

END OF SECTION TEXT

APPARATUS FOLLOWS — DERIVED, NOT ENACTED

APPARATUS I
22 ACTS

Amendment lineage

The State prints this history as a single parenthetical at the foot of the section. It is reproduced verbatim in the colophon and unpacked below in order of enactment.

TICK HEIGHT = ACTS IN THAT YEAR DASHED = RECODIFICATION, NOT AMENDMENT			
Nº	YEAR	ACT	CHARACTER
01	1957	c. 1240, s. 2	ENACTED
02	1957	c. 1240, s. 2	AMENDED
03	1975	c. 571	AMENDED
04	1975	c. 571	AMENDED
05	1979	c. 461, s. 6	AMENDED
06	1979	c. 461, s. 6	AMENDED
07	1987	c. 430, s. 2	AMENDED
08	1987	c. 430, s. 2	AMENDED
09	1987	c. 879, s. 6.2	AMENDED
10	1987	c. 879, s. 6.2	AMENDED
11	1997	S.L. 1997-399, s. 1	AMENDED
12	1997	S.L. 1997-399, s. 1	AMENDED
13	2001	S.L. 2001-294, s. 2	AMENDED
14	2001	S.L. 2001-294, s. 2	AMENDED
15	2003	S.L. 2003-420, ss. 1, 3	AMENDED
16	2003	S.L. 2003-420, ss. 1, 3	AMENDED
17	2007	S.L. 2007-531, s. 2	AMENDED
18	2007	S.L. 2007-531, s. 2	AMENDED
19	2022	S.L. 2022-63, s. 1(a)	AMENDED
20	2022	S.L. 2022-63, s. 1(a)	AMENDED
21	2025	S.L. 2025-71, s. 2(a)	AMENDED
22	2025	S.L. 2025-76, s. 3.2(a), (b)	AMENDED

APPARATUS II

2 AUTHORITIES

Authorities referenced

Every G.S. cross-reference appearing in the text of this section, in order of first appearance. Nothing is characterized; the operative language is quoted from the section itself.

REFERENCE	APPEARS IN	OPERATIVE LANGUAGE IN THIS SECTION
G.S. 90-210.27A(a)	(null)(4)	"contain a preparation room pursuant to"
G.S. 130A-395	(null)(9)	"handled in a manner inconsistent with"

APPARATUS III

Citation

FULL SECTION

N.C. Gen. Stat. § 90-210.20 (2025).

Pinpoint keys are set in the left margin of the text rather than line numbers: subsection designators are stable across editions and paper sizes, line numbers are not.

COLOPHON

Provenance

This document reproduces the text of one section of the General Statutes of North Carolina from a source file whose SHA-256 digest is printed on every page. The digest fixes the bytes this export was made from; if the State's file changes, the digest will not match.

The text of the section is unaltered. Subsection designators have been moved from the run of text into the margin. The amendment history and the table of authorities are derived from the section by mechanical extraction — they add no characterization of the law.

This is not the official text. The official text is published by the General Assembly of North Carolina.

HISTORY PARENTHETICAL, AS PRINTED BY THE STATE
(1957, c. 1240, s. 2; 1957, c. 1240, s. 2; 1975, c. 571; 1975, c. 571; 1979, c. 461, s. 6; 1979, c. 461, s. 6; 1987, c. 430, s. 2; 1987, c. 430, s. 2; c. 879, s. 6.2; c. 879, s. 6.2; 1997-399, s. 1; 1997-399, s. 1; 2001-294, s. 2; 2001-294, s. 2; 2003-420, ss. 1, 3; 2003-420, ss. 1, 3; 2007-531, s. 2; 2007-531, s. 2; 2022-63, s. 1(a); 2022-63, s. 1(a); 2025-71, s. 2(a); 2025-76, s. 3.2(a), (b).)

SET IN SPECTRAL AND ARCHIVO
NORTH CAROLINA LAW — STATUTE EXPORT, FORMAT V1

