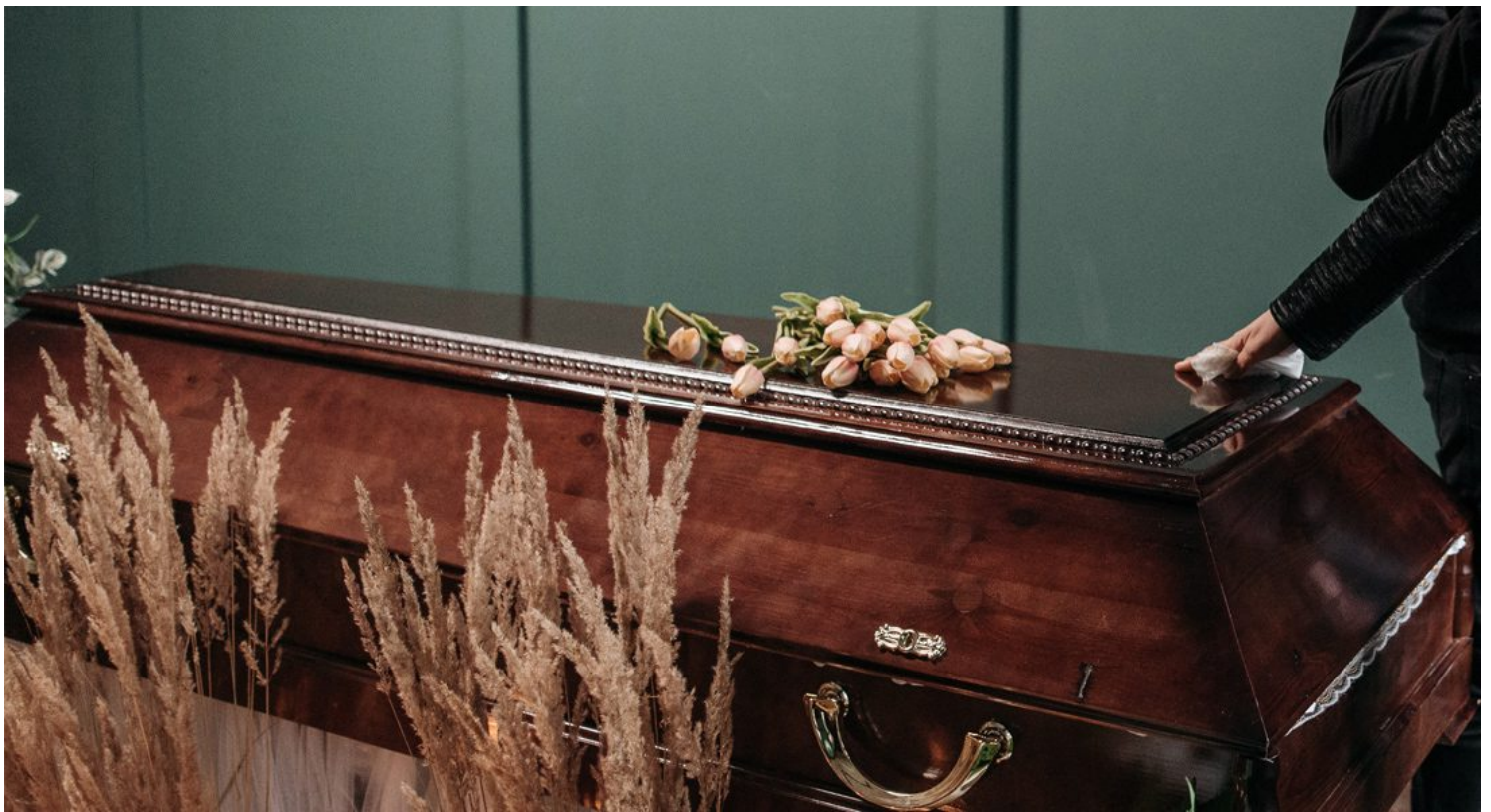


NEWS & INSIGHTS

No grace period for PA Funeral Board renewals and a high-profile alkaline hydrolysis

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PA Funeral Board announces no grace period for license renewals

[Renewals](#) are now open for all licenses issued by the Pennsylvania State Board of Funeral Directors. All Funeral Board licenses will expire on February 1, 2022 if they are not renewed by that date. The Board has announced that

there will be no grace period for renewals this cycle.

Historically, the Board informally allowed licensees to renew after the deadline for good cause or if the delay was minor. This year, however, the Board indicated that licensees cannot renew their licenses after February 1, 2022. After that date, licensees must submit a reactivation application and meet all requirements before their licenses will be returned to active status.

Reactivation requires the applicant to verify, under penalty of perjury, whether they have continued to practice after February 1. If the applicant has continued to practice on a lapsed license, an additional late fee is charged and the applicant may be subject to disciplinary action.

Now more than ever, there is reason to start the renewal process early, especially because the PALS (the Pennsylvania Licensing System) continues to process renewals only once all associated licenses are also renewed.

The Board has published a list of [“helpful suggestions”](#) for funeral directors renewing their licenses.

A high-profile water cremation

Archbishop Desmond Tutu, who won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his anti-apartheid activism, died on December 26, 2021 at the age of 90. At his request, Tutu’s body was cremated through [“aquamation,”](#) also known as alkaline hydrolysis.

This process of breaking down a body with a mixture of water and alkaline chemicals under pressure is considered by some to be more environmentally friendly than traditional flame cremation because it uses less energy and does not produce greenhouse gases. Tutu’s [foundation](#) noted that, in addition to his work on political and ethical causes, he “vociferously campaigned for gentler stewardship of the Earth, and against the coming ravages of climate change.”

According to the Cremation Association of North America (CANA), [alkaline hydrolysis](#) is currently legal in less than half the United States. Its status in Pennsylvania is uncertain. As has been the case for the last several legislative sessions, a [bill](#) has been introduced to include alkaline hydrolysis in the definition of cremation.

Saxton & Stump attorney [Jason Benion](#) is available to assist death care professionals with these and other regulatory and business issues such as succession planning, mergers and acquisitions or employment and workplace safety issues.

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