

Funeral Service Workers

SOC: 11-9171 • Career Profile Report

■ Key Facts

<div>\$59,420</div> <div>Median Salary</div>	<div>59,600</div> <div>Employment</div>	<div>+4.0%</div> <div>Growth Rate</div>
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■ Requirements & Salary Range

Education: Associate's degree

■ Automation Risk Assessment

Low Risk - 18.0% probability of being automated in the next 10-20 years.
This job is relatively safe from automation due to its creative, social, or complex problem-solving requirements.

■ Work-Life Balance

9.5/10 - Excellent work-life balance

■ Personality Fit (RIASEC)

Higher scores indicate better personality fit for this career type.

Realistic	4.2/10	Investigative	6.8/10
Artistic	4.4/10	Social	7.8/10
Enterprising	8.6/10	Conventional	7.4/10

■ Top Skills Required

Business skills, Compassion, Interpersonal skills, Time-management skills

✓ Strengths

- High Demand
- Flexible Work
- Continuous Learning

■ Challenges

- Burnout Risk
- Rapid Technological Change

■ What They Do

Funeral Service Workers are compassionate service professionals who help families **plan, coordinate, and carry out funeral and memorial services** while managing the care and disposition of the deceased. Their work combines emotional support, cultural sensitivity, and operational expertise to ensure services are respectful, lawful, and meaningful during a difficult time. This role requires discretion, professionalism, and strong interpersonal skills.

This career is well suited for individuals who are empathetic, organized, and comfortable providing guidance and support in emotionally sensitive situations.

What Do Funeral Service Workers Do?

Funeral service workers assist families and manage logistical details before, during, and after services.

Common responsibilities include:

- Meeting with families to plan funerals, memorials, or celebrations of life
- Explaining service options, costs, and legal requirements
- Preparing and caring for the deceased according to standards and laws
- Coordinating visitations, ceremonies, and graveside services
- Completing death certificates, permits, and required documentation
- Arranging transportation, flowers, music, and clergy or celebrants
- Providing emotional support and guidance to grieving families

Types of Funeral Service Roles

This occupation includes several closely related roles:

- **Funeral Directors:** Oversee services, coordinate logistics, and support families.
- **Embalmers:** Prepare and preserve the deceased for services.
- **Mortuary Assistants:** Support preparation, transportation, and facility operations.
- **Crematory Operators:** Manage cremation processes and equipment.
- **Pre-Need Counselors:** Help individuals plan services in advance.

Skills and Abilities Needed

Funeral service workers combine technical knowledge with emotional intelligence.

Core Professional Skills

Personal Qualities That Matter

Education and Licensing Pathway

Entering funeral service typically requires specialized education and licensure:

- **Associate Degree (common):** Funeral service or mortuary science
- **Apprenticeship or Internship:** Supervised practical experience
- **State Licensure:** Required for funeral directors and embalmers
- **Continuing Education:** Ongoing training to maintain licensure and skills
- **Certification (optional):** Additional credentials for specialization

Where Do Funeral Service Workers Work?

Funeral service workers are employed in dedicated care and service settings:

- Funeral Homes and Mortuaries
- Cemeteries and Memorial Parks
- Crematories

- Religious or Community Organizations
- Pre-Need Planning and Funeral Service Firms

Work schedules may include evenings, weekends, and on-call duties.

How Much Do Funeral Service Workers Earn?

Earnings vary by role, licensure, and location:

- Entry-Level or Assistant Roles: Typically earn hourly or salaried pay
- Licensed Funeral Directors or Embalmers: Often earn higher compensation
- Managers or Owners: May earn more with responsibility and business ownership

Compensation may include benefits and on-call pay.

Is This Career Difficult?

This career is emotionally demanding and requires consistent professionalism. Workers must support grieving families, manage sensitive situations, and comply with detailed regulations. The challenge lies in balancing compassion with operational accuracy and personal resilience.

Who Should Consider Becoming a Funeral Service Worker?

This career may be a strong fit if you:

- Are empathetic and emotionally steady
- Communicate calmly and compassionately
- Are comfortable handling sensitive responsibilities
- Value meaningful service to others
- Can manage both people-focused and administrative tasks

How to Prepare Early

- Develop strong communication and listening skills
- Learn about cultural and religious funeral traditions
- Practice organization and attention to detail
- Explore mortuary science education programs
- Seek informational interviews or shadowing opportunities

Funeral service workers provide dignity, structure, and compassion at one of life's most difficult moments—helping families honor loved ones through thoughtful care, respectful service, and steady guidance when it matters most.