

Virginia Board of Funeral Directors and Embalmers

Guidance on Surface Transportation & Removal Services

Virginia Code § 54.1-2819 requires the registration of persons or private businesses that engage in the business of surface transportation or removal of dead human bodies in the Commonwealth. This section further provides that:

Surface transportation and removal services shall not arrange or conduct funerals, provide for the care or preparation, including embalming, of dead human bodies, or sell or provide funeral-related goods and services without the issuance of a funeral service establishment license.

Where a registered surface transport and removal service that is not otherwise licensed as a funeral service establishment contracts to provide transportation and removal services with a local governmental entity, the surface transport and removal service may take the dead human body to a location or facility designated by the governmental entity, by a court order, or by the decedent's next of kin or designated representative, but not to a location or facility chosen by the surface transport and removal service. Further, the surface transport and removal service may not store dead human bodies or arrange for storage of dead human bodies at locations or facilities not otherwise designated by the governmental entity, court order, decedent's next of kin, or designated representative.

Virginia Code § 54.1-2819 also provides that:

No licensed funeral service establishment shall be required to receive such registration in addition to its funeral service establishment license. However, such establishment shall be subject to the regulations pertaining to transportation and removal services.... [N]o person or private business shall engage in the business as a surface transportation and removal service without holding a valid registration.

Where an individual or private business independently contracts with a funeral establishment to provide surface transportation and removal services, the individual or business is required to be registered with the Board as a surface transportation and removal service.