Preceptors & Interns

A Funeral Service Necessity
Preceptors & interns

- Terms defined
- Significance in funeral service
- Role of the preceptor
- Expectations
What is a preceptor?

- An expert or specialist (such as a physician) who gives practical experience and training to a student (especially of medicine or nursing).
- A teacher; an instructor.
- Role model / mentor.
- Employer.
• Preceptors are used in clinical teaching.

• Preceptors mentor and train in professional education.

• Preceptors communicate knowledge.
What is a NJ funeral service preceptor?

- "Preceptor" means a duly licensed practitioner of mortuary science who is responsible for the supervision of an intern during the intern's practical training period & has annual case volume of 25 not including stillbirths.

NJ State Board of Mortuary Science definition: (NJAC 13:36-2.1(a)1)
What is an intern?

- A student or a recent graduate undergoing supervised practical training.
- An advanced student or recent graduate in a professional field.
- One trained in a profession (allied to medicine) who undergoes a period of practical clinical experience prior to practicing the profession.
NJ Funeral Service intern

• formerly known as apprentice & trainee

• Part of the learning process in preparation for professional licensure.

• Internship is not indentured servitude.
Registered trainee intern

- Person who is duly registered with the Board and who is engaged ... in learning to practice ... mortuary science under the personal instruction and supervision of a duly licensed practitioner of mortuary science ... in the State of New Jersey.
- NJSA45:7-34(i)
Internship

• 2 years
• 75 funerals / 75 embalmings
• 25 arrangements

while attending college or after completion full-time or part-time

Requires monthly reports; every month that intern holds a card.
Obligations & responsibilities of a preceptor

Obligations to:
- Intern
- Firm/Employer/Self
- Profession
- Public

Responsibilities:
- Legal
- Moral / Ethical
Legal

- Statutes (federal & state), rules & regulations
  - Mortuary Science
  - OSHA
  - FTC
  - ADA
- Mandated training
• General business law: responsibilities & liability

• Employment law
  Wage & hour
  Sexual harassment
Just to name a few others

- Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)
- Social Security
- Federal Insurance Contributions Act (FICA)
- Medicare
- Equal Pay Act (EPA)
- Immigration Reform and Control Act (IRCA)
- Federal Unemployment Tax Act (FUTA)
The following additional laws apply if you have more than 10 employees:

- Occupational Safety & Health Administration Act (OSHA)

The following additional laws apply if you have more than 14 employees:

- Title VII Civil Rights Act
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- Pregnancy Discrimination Act
The following additional laws apply if you have more than 19 employees:

- Age Discrimination in Employment Act (ADEA)
- Older Worker Benefit Protection Act (OWBPA)
- Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA)

The following additional laws apply if you have more than 49 employees:

- Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The following additional laws apply if you have more than 99 employees:

- Worker Adjustment and Retraining Notification Act (WARN)
- Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA)
Preceptors should

- Encourage the intern to assume responsibility
- Encourage questions & critical thinking
• **Offer feedback**
  Reinforce what was done well
  Give guidance about errors and omissions

• **Provide constructive comments**
Characteristics of an effective preceptor

• communication

 *is a complex exchange of information between the parties involved. Clear communication of goals is vital.*

• demonstration of skill

 "*talk the talk*" and "*walk the walk.***

• personable and approachable
More characteristics

- transfer clinical information
- share knowledge
  \textit{but be open to views in conflict with ‘his’ own}
- respect ideas and opinions
- explain the basis for actions and decisions
- answers questions
- be consistent in what you say and do in relations with public and staff
Preceptors' responsibility for training

NJAC 13:36-2.14

NJ rules and regulations charge the preceptor with professional responsibility to:

- ensure interns are thoroughly trained in the theory and practice of mortuary science, and the laws, rules and regulations pertaining thereto, and
ensure interns are proficient in the following areas:

- Removal of remains
- Embalming
- Restorative art
- Dressing and casketing remains
ensure interns are proficient in:

- Making funeral arrangements with families,
  includes selling of merchandise, taking statistical information from families,
- filing death certificates,
- preparing obituary notices and placing same with newspapers,
- attending viewings;
Interns are to be proficient in:

- ordering and pricing funeral merchandise
- arrangement of flowers
- arranging for / coordinating schedule for: clergy, church, crematory or cemetery, livery, pallbearers, visitation of various organizations, transportation by common carrier, and delivery of outer enclosures to the cemetery.
interns are to be proficient in:

- Performing such other incidental duties related to the practice of mortuary science and the maintenance of the funeral establishment.
Anything else?

- Preceptor must write to Board to request intern application (NO PHONE CALLS).

- Preceptor must review and sign monthly reports which are to be submitted in a timely fashion.
You mean there’s more?

- Preceptor must complete a report to the Board whenever an internship is terminated or is completed, (e.g. intern completes training or changes mortuaries during the internship period.)

- Failure of a preceptor to file any reports required by the rules will be deemed professional misconduct and will subject a preceptor to penalties.
Intern expectations

• What do interns expect from the intern experience?

• Opportunity to learn
  – Includes instruction & tactful discipline
  – Exposure to all aspects of the profession
    (the good and the bad; the clean and the dirty)
What is instruction?

- Explain expectations
  - Funeral home policies
  - Dress code
  - Do’s / do not’s

- Learning is an on-going process and many people learn best by doing/observing
Instruction

• Consistent instructions (*in writing?*)
• Meaningful tasks
  (employees need to understand the importance of their work to overall organizational success)
Tactful discipline

• Interns are people and people do make mistakes.

• Interns want to do their work correctly and must be corrected if they make errors.

- corrected by a professional, in a professional manner
Summary

• Licensees who agree to be preceptors should understand what is expected of them.

• Not every licensee should be an preceptor.
  (but every preceptor was an intern!)
Remember

- This is the year 2011. Life/the world is not the same as it was 20-30 years ago.

- Good internships are not necessarily a clone of your intern experience.
The future of our profession?

- Funeral Service needs quality personnel
- We must encourage individuals with the skills and aptitude for our profession.
- We can do this through effective training of interns.

(Training which includes academic preparation and practical application.)
Those who are Preceptors have an obligation to effectively train the intern;
an obligation to the intern, to the profession & to the public.
With a little effort, internship and preceptorship can be an experience of value for all.
Questions?
Thank you

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