# ABFSE Town Hall Accreditation Manual updates October 9, 2025

#### Background

What is the Manual?

**COA** responsibility

US Dep't of Education & CHEA expectations/recognition

#### Timeline

- USDE 5 years
- CHEA 7 years



## ABFSE Accreditation and Policy Manual

### ABFSE

AMERICAN BOARD OF FUNERAL SERVICE EDUCATION

#### ABFSE – Articles of Incorporation

...the purpose of the Corporation (ABFSE) is to:

- further education in the field of funeral service and other related fields,
- to formulate standards of funeral service education,
- to grant accreditation to qualified programs and institutions of funeral service education, and
- to do all things incidental to the foregoing.

#### COA – designated body of ABFSE Article VI

...with exclusive authority over actions ... in relation to accreditation of funeral service education programs, including the approval and revision of standards, granting of candidacy, awarding or denying accreditation, and all other actions related to an applicant's accreditation status with the exception of appellate review.



#### ACCREDITATION and POLICY MANUAL

Effective Date: January 1, 2025

Revisions

January 1, 2020

(Language updates and modifications April 2014, October 2014, April 2016, October 2017 April 2019, October 2019, October 2020, April 2022, December 2023, Summer 2025)



#### Details of the Manual Review Process

The current ABFSE Accreditation and Policy Manual is available on the ABFSE website.

While the Manual has undergone many updates in the past decade it has not been reviewed in its entirety. (see Manual cover)

#### Goals of the Manual review project:

- 1. Make the Manual easier to navigate and find needed information.
- 2. A new approach to pagination and table of contents is part of that process.

3. Consolidate information so that answers can be found in one location eliminating the need to search multiple locations to find an answer.

#### Goals of the Manual review project:

4. Update language and add detail to satisfy the US. Department of Education expectations for recognized accrediting agencies.

note: minor changes/additions to Standards 3 & 9 are necessary.

#### Accreditation

- Accreditation & Policy Manual Review
- Accreditation Manual (draft) for comment
- Accreditation Manual Comment Form
- Summary of Manual Revisions
- Accreditation Manual Current
- Town Hall Registration: October 9, 2025 at 2:00 PM (Eastern)

#### Details and process

Accessible via homepage

https://abfse.org/

#### Comparison

Previous (current) edition

10 Chapters

Each with its own pagination

12 Appendices

Often required reference to multiple chapters to find as answer

Additions went at the end

2025 edition

11 Chapters

18 Appendices

151 pages numbered 1 – 151

Efforts to consolidate related information

#### What are the changes?

Chapters re-organized

Some content moved

Substantive changes have own chapter

New forms for Sub Changes in Appendix K

New Appendices to provide better detail/explanation

Changes highlighted in **RED** 

Standards 11 & 13 combined

151 pages numbered 1 – 151

Efforts to consolidate related information

Go to *Draft* Manual:

https://abfse.org/docs/AccreditationManual2025Commen t.pdf

#### What is new???

Adverse actions defined (probation is <u>not</u> adverse action)

Arbitration + new Appendix R

Teach out required for Probation and Candidacy

Teach out policy in Appendix P

Appeals Chapter VII – re-written, renamed

Credit for Prior Learning guidelines in Appendix O

Policies chapter (now Chpt. 11/was 10) re-organized into Accreditation and Operational polices

#### What are some of the changes?

#### New

Must wait 24 months to restart Candidacy if lose accreditation

Must come into compliance with standards w/in 3 years to avoid adverse action

CFR references

#### Revised

Chapters re-organized

Content moved to a new location new chapter or to appendix

**Language** added or tweaked to meet USDE expectations

#### Changes to Standards 3 & 9 - necessary

#### Standard 3

- Processes to protect student privacy
- Disclose extra charges to verify student identity, if applicable

#### Standard 9

#### Must disclose:

- Institutions/programs from which you do NOT accept transfer credit
- Articulation agreements, if any

Credit for prior learning was added to 2025 Standards

#### Prior Changes (in current version)

New Articles of Incorporation replaced Constitution

Standing Committees now Advisory Committees

Committee Chairs as ad hoc members of Executive Committee (not a change)

Job descriptions for COA Chair and Vice-Chair

Complaints updated – must 'coach' complainants

School must notify students of probation &/or adverse actions w/in 7 days

#### Department of Education emphasized

Additional locations

Branch campuses

Unaccredited programs at accredited institutions

Teach out

Arbitration

Appeals process

'Good Cause'

**Enforcement of standards** 

Verify reporting of decisions

#### Timeline Use the Comment Form to provide your feedback by October 15, 2025 (email to Trudy Ellmore trellmore@abfse.org) COA to finalize the Manual at the October meeting in order to respond to US Department of **Education expectations** COA before NACIQI February 2026 **USDE** decision May/June 2026?



