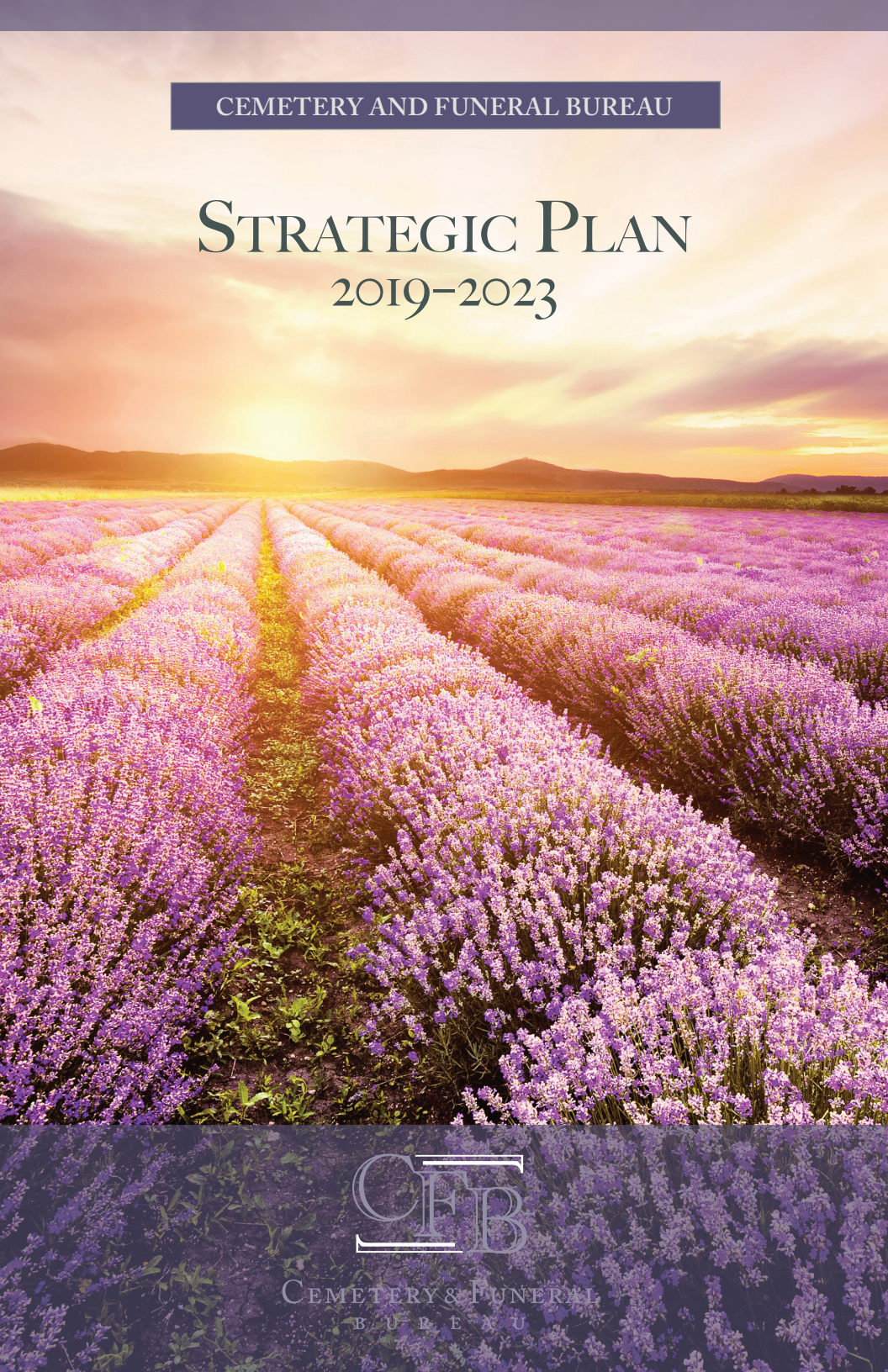
CEMETERY AND FUNERAL BUREAU

Strategic Plan
2019–2023



CFB

Cemetery & Funeral Bureau

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEMETERY AND FUNERAL BUREAU CHIEF

On behalf of the California Department of Consumer Affairs Cemetery and Funeral Bureau (CFB), I am pleased to present the 2019–2023 Strategic Plan. I would like to thank all the individuals who participated in the strategic planning process, as it is a road map for CFB's continued success. I am grateful to all involved, including the Department staff who oversaw and encouraged this collaborative effort and the feedback received from consumers, licensees, Advisory Committee members, and CFB staff.

I look forward to continuing the efforts of CFB by being an efficient and effective part of state government, and promoting increased awareness and consistent interpretation of the laws governing the death care industry. This plan puts forth thoughtful and attainable goals derived from the culmination of feedback from our stakeholders and will guide the activities of CFB over the next five years.

This plan highlights CFB's Business Modernization Plan that will replace the existing licensing and enforcement business software platforms, along with the implementation of several regulation packages. It also focuses on an increased outreach plan to both consumers and licensees to encourage a fair marketplace for consumers to make informed end-of-life decisions.

CFB staff are committed to its mission and mandate that protection of the public shall be its highest priority. I am greatly looking forward to putting that in action as we achieve this robust and positive strategic plan.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve,

Gina Sanchez, *Chief*
Cemetery and Funeral Bureau, Department of Consumer Affairs

ABOUT THE CEMETERY AND FUNERAL BUREAU

CFB licenses, regulates, and investigates complaints against 13 different licensing categories in California, totaling approximately 13,500 licensees. These licensing categories include funeral establishments, funeral directors, embalmers, apprentice embalmers, cemetery brokers, cemetery broker branch, cemetery broker additional, cemetery salespersons, cremated remains disposers, crematories, crematory managers, cemetery managers, and private nonreligious cemeteries.

CFB has statutory authority to enforce the Cemetery and Funeral Act which incorporates the licensing and practice acts in the Business and Professions Code relating to the funeral, cemetery, and crematory industries. CFB also has jurisdiction over specified sections of the Health and Safety Code dealing with human remains, cemetery, and crematory provisions. To carry out its duties and protect consumers, CFB currently has 23.5 authorized positions, consisting of nine full-time field staff located throughout the state and 14.5 office staff in Sacramento.

To meet its mission of consumer protection, CFB regulates nearly every aspect of the licensed cemetery and funeral industries and has oversight responsibility for both the fiduciary and the operational activities of its licensees. Specific to its fiduciary oversight, CFB oversees preneed funeral trust funds, cemetery endowment care trust funds, and cemetery special care trust funds. CFB has financial examination authority to protect, or audit, these trust funds by ensuring compliance with the laws, verifying accounting and investing practices, and identifying funding shortages.

CFB has voluntarily established a seven-member Advisory Committee that meets approximately two times per year. These meetings encourage both consumers and licensees to provide input on funeral- and cemetery-related issues and assists CFB in addressing its regulatory obligations in an open and transparent environment.

As the death of a loved one can be one of the most traumatic experiences consumers will face, CFB promotes the "Consumer Guide to Funeral and Cemetery Purchases," along with other pamphlets, to assist consumers in making the difficult end-of-life decisions for themselves or a loved one. The information contained in the publications will help consumers ask the right questions and compare prices and services to make informed decisions. The publications, along with a wealth of other information, can be found on CFB's website at **www.cfb.ca.gov**[1].

[1] *The state of California does not license cemeteries operated by religious organizations, cities, counties, or cemetery districts, the military, Native American tribal organizations, or other groups.*

2015–2018
CEMETERY AND FUNERAL BUREAU STRATEGIC PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS

CFB accomplished the following goals since the adoption of the previous 2015–2018 Strategic Plan:

1) **Cemetery and Funeral Practice Act—**
The two separate practice acts (Cemetery Act and Funeral Directors and Embalmers Law) were merged into one practice act known as the Cemetery and Funeral Act.

2) **Cemetery and Funeral Fund—**
The two separate funds (Cemetery Fund and State Funeral Directors and Embalmers Fund) were merged into one fund now known as the Cemetery and Funeral Fund.

3) **Cemetery Citation and Fine Regulations—**
CFB adopted regulations that amended the cemetery citation and fine table to allow for issuance of an administrative citation and/or monetary fine for any violation of the statutes or regulations applicable to cemetery practice.

4) **2017 Endowment Care Fund Sufficiency Report—**
CFB, in collaboration with a 55-member stakeholder group, completed a study on the sufficiency of endowment care funds for future maintenance of cemeteries and identified a statutory change is needed to increase endowment care fees in addition to other recommendations.

5) **2016 Fee Audit Report—**
CFB contracted to perform a fee study to evaluate its current fee structure and determined the necessary changes to assure long-term sustainability.

6) **Business Modernization Plan—**
CFB, in collaboration with the Department, developed a project charter in support of CFB 's transition to a new information technology platform to modernize business practices.

7) **Organizational Effectiveness—**
To enhance efficiency, CFB's organizational structure now includes additional managerial oversight and three limited-term auditors to assist with its fiduciary responsibilities.

8) **Licensing Performance Measures—**
In accordance with the governor's budget, CFB implemented, and currently adheres to, targeted timeframes for processing licensing applications.

9) **Military Information—**
CFB dedicated a web page, linked from its home page, that includes specific information for veterans, active duty military, and their spouse/domestic partners for easy access.

10) **Consumer Video—**
In collaboration with the Department's Office of Public Affairs, CFB created an educational video providing consumers information on options for selecting cemetery and funeral goods and services.

MISSION

The Cemetery and Funeral Bureau advocates consumer protection and licensee compliance through proactive education and consistent interpretation and application of the laws governing the death care industry.

VISION

Empowering California consumers to make informed end-of-life decisions in a fair and ethical marketplace.

VALUES

Accountability
We accept personal responsibility for our actions, exemplifying high ethical standards, and always strive to improve our effectiveness.

Collaboration
We value partnerships. We foster the public's trust through open communication and work in a cooperative, respectful, and courteous manner.

Fairness
We treat people equally and make decisions without favoritism or prejudice.

Trust
We communicate with credibility and truthfulness. Our communications are open and authentic with all stakeholders.

Compassion
We employ empathy, integrity, respect, and understanding when serving consumers.

STRATEGIC GOALS

Licensing
CFB administers licensing standards to protect consumers and help ensure qualified applicants enter the profession.

Enforcement
CFB protects consumers through the enforcement of the laws and regulations governing the profession.

Legislation, Regulation, and Policy
CFB administers statutes, pursues regulations, and develops policies that strengthen and support its mission and mandate.

Outreach
CFB informs consumers, licensees, and stakeholders about the practice and regulation of the profession.

Administration
CFB builds an excellent organization through proper governance, effective leadership, and responsible management.

Goal 1: Licensing

CFB administers licensing standards to protect consumers and help ensure qualified applicants enter the profession.

1.1 Implement a credit card payment option for license renewals to increase the efficiency of the renewal process.

1.2 Assess business processes for transitioning to online licensure to streamline the application process.

1.3 Promote increased licensee participation in examination development to help ensure CFB develops relevant examinations.

Goal 2: Enforcement

CFB protects consumers through the enforcement of the laws and regulations governing the profession.

2.1 Assess the feasibility of implementing a case management system to increase staff effectiveness and efficiency.

2.2 Evaluate and address audit staffing needs to effectively protect consumer trust funds.

2.3 Encourage communication and collaboration within CFB to increase consistent interpretation and application of the Cemetery and Funeral Act.

Goal 3: Legislation, Regulations, and Policy

CFB administers statutes, pursues regulations, and develops policies that strengthen and support its mission and mandate.

3.1 Review and update CFB's disciplinary guidelines to strengthen consistency of enforcement actions and align with the Cemetery and Funeral Act.

3.2 Implement regulations for alkaline hydrolysis and the unitrust distribution method to comply with statutory mandates.

3.3 Review, evaluate, and revise regulations as needed for clarity and consistency.

Goal 4: Outreach

CFB informs consumers, licensees, and stakeholders about the practice and regulation of the profession.

4.1 Communicate with external stakeholders to promote collaborative efforts to facilitate consumer protection.

4.2 Collaborate with the Department's Office of Public Affairs to develop a multifaceted outreach plan.

4.3 Communicate with licensees to increase knowledge and compliance with the Cemetery and Funeral Act.

Goal 5: Administration

CFB builds an excellent organization through proper governance, effective leadership, and responsible management.

5.1 Collaborate with the Department to evaluate CFB's technology needs to modernize business practices.

5.2 Advance the needs identified by the fee study to help ensure CFB solvency.

5.3 Explore staffing needs to increase CFB's efficiency and effectiveness to support its mandate.

5.4 Explore alternatives for records management to modernize and improve accessibility of records.

STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

To understand the environment in which CFB operates and identify factors that could impact CFB's success, the Department's SOLID unit conducted an environmental scan of the internal and external environments by collecting information through the following methods:

- **Interviews** were conducted with all Advisory Committee members as well as the outgoing CFB chief, during the months of October 2018 through January 2019, to assess the challenges and opportunities CFB is currently facing or will face in the upcoming years.

- **Two focus groups**, one with CFB staff and one with CFB management, were held between October and December of 2018 to identify the strengths and weaknesses of CFB from an internal perspective. Eight employees and all three managers participated.

- **Online surveys** were sent to external CFB stakeholders in October of 2018 to identify the strengths and weaknesses of CFB from an external perspective. A total of 140 stakeholders completed the survey.

The most significant themes and trends identified from the environmental scan were discussed by CFB's incoming chief and management team during a strategic planning session facilitated by SOLID on March 27, 2019. This information guided CFB and its new chief in the development of its mission, vision, and values while directing the strategic goals and objectives outlined in this 2019–2023 plan.

CEMETERY & FUNERAL BUREAU

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA
dca
DEPARTMENT OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS
SOLID TRAINING AND PLANNING SOLUTIONS

This strategic plan is based on stakeholder information and discussions facilitated by SOLID for the Cemetery and Funeral Bureau from October 2018 through April 2019.

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