

HONORING SERVICE AND SACRIFICE

A reference for End-Of-Life Professionals who support Veterans and their families



Funeral Directors serve a vital role as a liaison between Veterans and their families and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration (NCA). Use this reference to help guide the journey for families, either during their time of need or while planning in advance. Thank you for supporting those who served.

Eligibility for burial in a VA national cemetery

Veterans, service members, spouses, and dependents may be eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery, as well as other benefits, if they meet certain requirements.

Visit va.gov/burials-memorials/eligibility/ to review the latest eligibility criteria.

At the time of need: Scheduling an interment at a VA National Cemetery

How can Funeral Directors assist those seeking interment at a VA National Cemetery?

- » **Connect and Care:** Gather client information, explain your role, and share VA Burial and Memorial benefits information.
- » **Understand and Respond to Needs:** Review interment details and offer assistance with discharge documents.
- » **Guide the Journey:** Contact NCA and follow through.

Get step-by-step guidance on how to request and apply for a burial in a VA national cemetery, or in a state or tribal government Veterans cemetery at va.gov/burials-memorials/schedule-a-burial/.

Funeral Directors can also help families complete the Before You Call Checklist at cem.va.gov/pdf/NCA_NCSO_BeforeYouCallChecklist.pdf.

HOW CAN YOU HELP EXPEDITE THE PROCESS?

- ☐ Meet with the family prior to gather details on decedent and Veteran (if not the decedent).
- ☐ Collect military service records and send prior to contacting the Scheduling Office.
- ☐ Obtain death certificates to confirm spousal relationships if necessary.
- ☐ Provide details on immediate family members previously interred in a national cemetery.
- ☐ Communicate special situations: (Is spouse also a Veteran, any aliases used, oversized containers, unique remains).
- ☐ Provide multiple preferred days and times for scheduling of burial.

NCA Services

Burial services in VA national cemeteries

- » Assist Veterans and families who do not have discharge documents.
- » Coordinate the scheduling of the final service at the cemetery.
- » Provide the family contact information for military honors.
- » Inscription and ordering of the headstone (with Emblem of Belief and inscription).
- » Care of the gravesite in perpetuity.

Veteran support for private cemetery burials

- » VA issued headstone or marker, or a medallion for private headstone.

Pre-Need eligibility determinations for planning your legacy

- » Apply in advance to determine eligibility for burial in a VA Cemetery.
 - Apply online va.gov/burials-and-memorials/pre-need/form-10007-apply-for-eligibility/.
 - Questions, please call 1-800-535-1117, Option 4.

Collect the following information:

About the deceased:

- ☐ Name (First, MI, Last)
- ☐ Social Security number and/or Military Service number (Veteran ID)
- ☐ Date of birth
- ☐ Relationship to the service member or Veteran whose military service will be used to decide eligibility
- ☐ Marital status
- ☐ Date of death (and zip code and county at the time of death)
- ☐ Place of birth

About the next of kin:

- ☐ Name
- ☐ Relationship to the deceased
- ☐ Social Security number
- ☐ Phone number
- ☐ Address
- ☐ Email Address (optional)

When you are ready to contact NCA:

Fax all discharge documentation to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 1-866-900-6417 or scan and email the documentation to NCA.Scheduling@va.gov with the name of the decedent in the subject line.

Follow-up with a phone call to: 1-800-535-1117, Option 1.

Office hours:

Monday - Friday: 7:00am - 6:30pm CT | **Saturday:** 8:00am - 4:30pm CT

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Can families get help paying for burial costs?

Spouses of record (the legally recognized spouse) or a designated (legally chosen) family member of a Veteran, may be able to get financial help for burial and funeral costs. Find out how to apply for a Veterans burial allowance at va.gov/burials-memorials/veterans-burial-allowance/.

How do families get military funeral honors?

The NCA Scheduling Office can provide contact information for military honors available locally. Scheduling of honors is the responsibility of the funeral home and families. For more information on military honors: militaryonesource.mil/leaders-service-providers/sp-l-casualty-assistance/funeral-directory-and-planner-resources/.

What about burial in Arlington National Cemetery?

VA can't determine eligibility for burial in Arlington National Cemetery because the United States Army maintains this cemetery. Funeral Directors may contact Arlington National Cemetery at 877-907-8585 or visit arlingtoncemetery.mil/Funerals/Scheduling-a-Funeral/Establishing-Eligibility.