

Veterans of Foreign Wars Mighty 1st District



**A GUIDE FOR BURYING YOUR VETERAN
AT OUR NATIONAL CEMETERIES**

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CHECK LIST FOR BURIAL SERVICE AT NATIONAL CEMETERY

Introduction

The easiest and most efficient way to bury your beloved Veteran is to ensure you select a Mortuary that is familiar with veteran burials. All you then need to do really is provide the Mortuary of your choice the Veteran's DD214 and the information requested. Which by the way, will be the below information. For those families who cannot afford full Mortuary services, the below is provided to assist you in ensuring, that your beloved veteran is properly buried and honored. A Request for Burial Form that you need to fill out to send to the National Cemetery Administration is provided on the last page.

List of Required Documents

The below are the documents that are required and supportive of your request for burial with the National Cemetery Administration (NCA);

1. The Veteran's DD214
2. Marriage Certificate – To verify marital status
3. Burial of a Disabled Child; Birth Certificate, Marriage Certificate if applicable and Doctor Statement showing illness and the lack of self-support capability.
4. Death Certificate of Veteran or Spouse

Information Required

The below information should be gathered prior to filling out the request for burial or calling the NCA for scheduling the Veteran's burial:

1. Funeral Home – address and email
2. Next of Kin – address and Social Security Number
3. Religious Affiliation if applicable

The National Cemetery Scheduling Office is opened 7 days a week, from 7:00 am to 6:30 pm Central Time. It is closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day and New Year's Day.

Procedures for Burial (For Families not using a Funeral Home to make arrangements)

Either fax the provided form and Veteran DD214 to 1-866-900-6417 or fax the Veteran DD214 to the fax number and provide the VA Scheduler, over the phone, the required information obtained from the above documents and gathered information 1-800-535-1117.

Note; If you do not have the DD214 the VA Scheduling Office can assist you with obtaining this **vitaly important document**. DO YOU KNOW WHERE YOUR OR YOUR SPOUSE'S DD214 IS?

To attain a DD214 yourself online go to; <https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records>.

Make sure you know whether your veteran is qualified for full military honors and what that entails.

Steps to Take When Your Veteran (Retired Military) Dies

Eligibility to receive a veteran's retirement pay ends with the death of the veteran. Prompt reporting of a deceased veteran's death can help avoid delay and possible financial hardship to surviving family members or executors, who will be required to return any unearned payments of the decedent's retirement pay. Follow the steps to report the death of veteran.

Step 1 Call DFAS at 1-800-321-1080 to report the death of the annuitant.

Step 2 Send a copy of the veteran's death certificate (showing cause of death) to:

DFAS U.S. Military Annuitant Pay

P.O. Box 7131; London, KY 40742-7131

Fax: 1-800 982-8459

Step 3 Inform the financial institution receiving payments about the death of the veteran.

Contact the following agencies/departments as soon as possible:

- Social Security Administration: 1-800-772-1213, www.ssa.gov
- Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System: 1-800-538-9552
- Department of Veterans Affairs: 1-800-827-1000 for surviving spouse receiving Dependency Indemnity Compensation or SBP, www.va.gov

Survivor Benefit Plan (If Eligible)

Once a retired veteran's death has been reported to DFAS, the beneficiary will receive a Verification for Survivor Annuity form (DD 2656-7) at the address DFAS has on record. A surviving spouse is only eligible to receive SBP if the Retired Veteran and the Spouse elected to take SBP at the end of the veterans service. The beneficiary must complete the form and return it to DFAS. When DFAS receives the completed form, they will begin the SBP annuity.

It is extremely important for the beneficiary to notify DFAS immediately after the death of a retired veteran!

Late notification of a veteran's death could result in burdensome consequences for survivors, including delays in finalizing the veteran's account, paying the Arrears of Pay, and establishing a Survivor Benefit Plan annuity.

Steps to Take When a Veteran (Non Retired) Dies

- Contact funeral home and make burial and funeral arrangements
- Start claim process for applicable benefits (e.g, SBP/Retired Veteran VA life insurance, Social Security, etc.)
- Obtain multiple certified death certificates (6-12 copies)
- Gather important documents for claims processing (e.g., birth certificate, will, etc.)
- Determine immediate and short-term financial needs and income sources
- Arrange for help with legal affairs of the deceased
- Notify joint account agencies (credit cards, banks, auto registration home/auto insurance, brokers, etc.)

- Review survivor's own legal documents for possible revision
- REPORT the death to DFAS at 1-800-321-1080 or (216) 522-5955 (press 3) to stop retirement pay to avoid indebtedness. If the retired veteran was receiving pay from another source due to a disability from the VA or civil service retirement from the Office of Personnel Management, contact that agency to return the payment. If you fail to do this, you will have to repay it later. You may also report the death online at www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/forms.html. Additional information from DFAS is available at www.dfas.mil/retiredmilitary/survivors/Retiree-death.html.
- REPORT Survivor Benefit Plan election. Designated annuitants will receive notification from DFAS if the deceased retired Veteran elected SBP. If you are uncertain of whether an election was made, call DFAS at 1-800-321-1080.
- UPDATE your military identification card. As the survivor of a deceased Retired Veteran, your ID card must be updated to reflect the change in your status due to the Veteran's death. You may access your nearest ID site; <http://www.dmdc.osd.mil> under Beneficiaries.
- NOTIFY the Social Security Administration. Call 1-800-SSA-1213 (www.ssa.gov) to apply for the \$255 death benefit, if applicable.
- CONTACT the VA for burial and other benefits. The VA does not provide burial benefits for annuitants; however, the annuitant may be eligible for burial in a military cemetery. You will need to provide a copy of the DD 214. Call the VA at 1-800-827-1000 or visit www.va.gov.

RECEIVING CIVIL SERVICE PAY? U.S. Office of Personnel: 1-888-767-6738, (202) 606-0500

RECEIVING VA PAY? DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS: 1-800-827-1000

ADDITIONAL AGENCIES PROVIDING AID & ASSISTANCE TO SURVIVING SPOUSES:

- Arlington National Cemetery: (703) 607-8000
- Gold Star Wives of America: 1-888-751-6350, www.goldstarwives.org
- Military Funeral Honors: 1-866-826-3628 or (703) 432-9524
- Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society: (703) 696-4904, www.nmcrs.org
- National Military Families Association: 1-800-260-0218, www.nmfa.org
- Society of Military Widows: 1-800-842-3451, www.militarywidows.org
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors: 1-800-959-8277, www.taps.org

Military Funeral Honors (Brief description)

ARE THERE ANY DOCUMENTATION REQUIREMENTS?

- FORM DD214 For active duty or reserve components OR
- FORM NGB 22 For National Guard soldiers OR Certificate of Honorable Discharge

Who is eligible for Military Funeral Honors?

- Military members who died while on active duty or in the Selected Reserve
- Former military members who served on active duty or in the Selected Reserve and were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions
- Former military members who completed at least one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service in the Selected Reserve and were discharged under other than dishonorable conditions
- Further clarification on eligibility is available on our DoD Policy page.

Who is NOT eligible for Military Funeral Honors?

- Any person separated from the Armed Forces under dishonorable conditions or whose character of service results in a bar to veteran's benefits
- Any person who was ordered to report to an induction station, but was not actually inducted into military service
- Any person discharged from the Selected Reserve prior to completing one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service for reasons other than a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty
- Any person convicted of a Federal capital crime and whose conviction is final (other than a person whose sentence was commuted by the President)
- Any person who has been convicted of a State capital crime and whose conviction is final (other than a person whose sentence was commuted by the Governor of a State)
- Any person who
 - a.is found to have committed a Federal capital crime or a State capital crime, as set forth in section 2411(c) of title 38, but,
 - b.has not been convicted of such crime by reason of such person not being available for trial due to death or flight to avoid prosecution

Is anyone else eligible to receive Funeral Honors?

Yes, members of the Commissioned Officer Corps of the Public Health Service (PHS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA). Certain Civilian or Contractual Groups who have been given Active Duty Service Determinations are eligible as well as National Guard members.

How is PHS eligibility for Funeral Honors established?

For PHS Personnel, Funeral Honors eligibility is established by submitting PHS Form 1867, Statement of Service (equivalent to the DD Form 214). If the family does not have a copy of the Statement of Service, it may be obtained by contacting the Privacy Coordinator for the Commissioned Corps at (240) 453-6041 or by writing:

Division of Commissioned Corps Officer Support
Attention: Records Officer
1101 Wootton Parkway
Plaza Level, Suite 100
Rockville, MD 20857

How is NOAA eligibility for Funeral Honors established?

For NOAA personnel, eligibility is established by submitting NOAA Form 56-16, Report of Transfer or Discharge. If the family does not have a copy of the NOAA Form 56-16, it may be obtained by contacting the Chief, Officer Services Division, NOAA Commissioned Personnel Center at (301) 713-7715 or by writing:

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
Commissioned Personnel Center
Chief, Officer Services Division (CPC1)
8403 Colesville Rd.
Suite 500
Silver Spring, MD 20910

How does a family request Funeral Honors for NOAA / PHS decedents?

The families of PHS and NOAA decedents request Funeral Honors through their funeral director. The funeral director will contact the applicable points of contact at PHS or NOAA to arrange the Funeral Honors detail.

Military Funeral Honors for PHS or NOAA decedents is provided by the Coast Guard.

Types of Honors

Basic Honors

Designated for eligible deceased veterans. Ceremony may consist of three (3) personnel to conduct military flag folding, presentation of the flag to the next of kin, and the sounding of TAPS.

Ceremonial Rifle Volley and/or Pall Bearers Honors

Designated for eligible deceased retired service members and a deceased service member not killed in action. Ceremony may consist of nine (9) personnel to conduct basic honors, rifle volley, and/or pall bearers.

Full Honors

Designated for a service member killed in action, a Medal of Honor recipient, a General officer, Chief Warrant 5, and CSM/SGM. Ceremony may consist of twenty-one (21) personnel to conduct basic honors, ceremonial rifle volley, pall bearers, color guard, and Chaplain.

THERE IS NO COST FOR MILITARY HONORS

Information to provide the following Service Honors Centers;

- Where will honors be performed? (Name & Address of Cemetery)
- Actual Time and Date for Military Honors.

DoD Honors Hotline: 1 (877) 645-4667

Army: 1 (800) 248-0759

Air Force: 1(661) 275-2583

USMC, (All Calif): Fax: 1(866) 826-3628

Coast Guard: Fax: 1(310) 521-6094, phone: (310) 521-6082

Navy/Merchant Marines: 1(800) 326-9631

National Guard: 1(866) 900-6417, and follow up: 1 (800) 535-1117

Riverside National Cemetery Military Honor Detail (MHD) Dispatch: 1(951) 300-3216

For Veterans not buried at a National Cemetery

If you are or have buried your veteran in a private cemetery, he or she is still eligible for a Flag and Headstone. There is no time limit on ordering your veteran's headstone. You can always do so. To order the Headstone, use the VA Form 40-1330. Eligibility for a VA Headstone or marker is the same as for burial at a national cemetery. VA cannot issue a headstone or marker for a spouse or dependent buried in a private cemetery. Twenty-year reservists without active-duty service are eligible for a headstone or grave marker, if they are entitled to military retired pay at the time of death.

Copy of the Request for Burial Form is on page 7.

This brief was put together and updated by Bud Lichtenstern, District 1 Service Officer.

Request for Burial Form

Name of Veteran/Spouse/Disabled Child (last, first, middle)		Gender	
Service History of Veteran or Veteran Spouse Branch: Rank: Active: Retiree: Veteran: Years of Svc:			
Address including Zip Code of Veteran/Spouse/Disabled Child			
Cemetery of choice:			
Marital Status of Veteran (if burial in private cemetery, must provide marriage certificate if applicable):			
Is Surviving Spouse a Veteran? Yes No			
Military Honors Requested Yes No			
First or Subsequent Interment? (Veteran or Dependent already buried)			
If Subsequent Interment, who is already interred with Cemetery Name, Section and Site Nr if known:			
Date of Death of Veteran or Spouse:	Zip Code at time of Death:	County at time of Death	
SSN of Veteran or Spouse		DOB of Veteran or Spouse	
Verify/Fax DD214:	Yes	No	
Name and address of Next of Kin			
Next of Kin SSN	Relationship of Next of Kin:	Next of Kin Phone Nr	
Name of and address/phone Nr/Email of Mortuary including Director's Name			
Type of Religious Emblem for Headstone (if known)			
Decedent resides within 75 miles of requested cemetery? Yes: No:			
Type of burial (casket/cremation/memorial svc):			
Casket Size	Liner Size	Urn Size	Urn Vault Size
Name or Name of Mortuary/Person who will receive the Flag:			