



**Funeral
Consumers**
ALLIANCE

Veterans' Funeral and Burial Benefits (what you get, and what you don't)



First Things First

- These benefits apply to any veterans who are **other than dishonorably discharged**. If the veteran is dishonorably discharged, these benefits are not available.
- Veterans and families will need to provide their DD214 (discharge papers) in order to claim any benefits. If you cannot find these, you need to contact the Veterans' Administration directly. Preferably ahead of time.
- These benefits are also available to spouses of veterans, and minor/dependent children

Who is NOT eligible

- Divorced (former) spouses
- Adult children (unless dependent under the law)
- Parents and siblings (even if they're dependent, they do not get benefits)
- Those with a dishonorable discharge
- Those convicted of subversive activities or capital crimes

What **EVERY** honorably discharged veteran gets

- Plot and burial in a *national* veterans' cemetery (check state veterans' cemeteries for their offerings)
- Any vault/outer burial container the national cemetery requires
- The opening and closing of the grave in a national cemetery
- A flag
- NOTE! The gov't will install your gov't marker in a private cemetery if you choose to be buried there.

What EVERY honorably discharged veteran gets

- An honor guard to perform a military funeral. Ask the funeral home to arrange this, or contact the Veterans' Administration directly

What veterans do NOT get

- *“I’m a vet so the military will pay for my funeral.”* Nope. Not usually. Your family is responsible for all *funeral home/crematory* expenses.
- A lump-sum “death benefit.” Only a few categories of veteran families will receive a death benefit pay-out.

Special categories: Death During Active Duty

- The military will pay all funeral, burial, cremation, or cemetery expenses. In addition, the family will receive a \$100,000 “death gratuity”.

Special categories: Death Due to a Service-Related Injury

- The military will pay the family \$2,000 that can be used to defray burial and funeral costs.
- If the veteran is buried in a national cemetery, the VA *may* pay some or all costs to transport the body. This is decided case-by-case.
- If the burial is in a private (non-VA) cemetery, the family will receive \$300 toward these costs.

Special categories: Non Service-Related death, in a VA facility

- The military will pay \$722 toward funeral or burial costs.
- If the burial is in a private (non-VA) cemetery, the military will pay an *additional* \$722 toward cemetery costs

Special categories: Non-service-related death outside a VA facility, when collecting VA pension or disability

- The VA will pay the family \$300 toward funeral or burial costs

Who else is eligible for veterans' burial benefits

- Spouses and dependents are entitled to burial in a national cemetery, and to a marker, even if the veteran is not buried there.
- Spouses receiving military pay, **and** who die in a military medical facility, are eligible for body transport by the military to the nearest VA cemetery.
- Adult children—**only if they are dependent**—are entitled to burial in a VA cemetery.

Who else is eligible for veterans' burial benefits

- There are some other categories of person entitled to some burial benefits. These include, but are not limited to, members of the National Guard and Reserves with 20 years of service, for example.

The list is too long to reproduce here. Contact the VA for specific questions.

Who is NOT eligible

- Divorced spouses
- Adult, non-dependent-under-law children
- Parents, siblings, or any other family members
- Veterans with a dishonorable discharge
- Those convicted of subversive activities or capital crimes

Markers and headstones

- Veterans, spouses, and dependent children are entitled to a government marker free of charge. If burial happens in a VA cemetery, installation is free.
- When burial happens outside a VA cemetery, the family must pay for installation.
- Expect it to take at least 90 days to receive a government headstone.

Burial at Sea

- Cremated remains of veterans, spouses, and dependents can be scattered at sea by the Navy or Coast Guard.
- Whole bodies of the same class of people, in a casket, can be buried at sea.
- Understand that sea burials are scheduled at the convenience of the service, and will be done on their schedule, not based on the family's preferences.

Other Information (these are samples, not a complete list)

- You may not reserve a particular grave ahead of time.
- National cemeteries do not generally bury on weekends
- Only select former military members may be buried at Arlington National Cemetery.
- The National Cemetery System can do a search for you to locate the grave of a veteran buried in a national cemetery.

VETERANS' SCAMS!

Dignity Memorial® • P.O. Box 8068 • Van Nuys, CA 91499-4274



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YOUR NEW BURIAL BENEFITS

Dear [REDACTED]

Recently, the U.S. government changed your veterans burial benefits.

**What you don't know could impact your funeral service
AND your expectations of the military burial benefits you deserve.**

Dignity Memorial® providers have helped thousands of veterans and families get their full military funeral benefits. You'll find everything you need to know in your FREE copy of the *Veterans Planning Guide* available at VetsBurialBenefits.com or by mail.

You may be eligible for an extra \$400 burial allowance

Get the benefits
you deserve

Request a copy
of our FREE
*Veterans
Planning Guide.*



Go to VetsBurialBenefits.com
or mail the enclosed form.

Dignity Memorial
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SUNSET HILLS MEMORIAL PARK
OR
6801 SW SUNSET HWY
PORTLAND OR 97225-3701

VETERANS' SCAMS!

REMEMBER!—only trust veterans' burial information that comes directly from the VA or from an actual **government-run** veterans' cemetery.

- Just because a burial ground is **called** a “veterans’ cemetery”, or has the word “veteran” in the name, doesn’t mean it’s an actual military cemetery. Check.
- Many for-profit cemeteries make their properties **seem** like government cemeteries through words and iconographic images
- Government veterans’ cemeteries will **never try to sell you something.**

More Information

- The Veterans Administration—www.va.gov/burials-memorials/
- Or call **800-827-1000**