

Burial Arrangements in a VA National Cemetery

No special forms are required when requesting burial in a VA national cemetery. The person making burial arrangements should have their funeral home contact the national cemetery in which burial is desired at the time of need. Scheduling can be done seven days a week for interments on Mondays through Fridays.

If possible, the following information concerning the deceased should be provided when the cemetery is first contacted:

- Full name and military rank;
- Branch of service;
- Social security number;
- Service number;
- VA claim number, if applicable;
- Date and place of birth;
- Date and place of death;
- Date of retirement or last separation from active duty; and,
- [Copy of any military separation documents](#), such as the Department of Defense Form 214 (DD-214).

The discharge documents must specify active military duty and show that release from active duty was under other than dishonorable conditions.

Viewing facilities are not available and funeral services cannot be held at VA national cemeteries, but a final committal service may be performed. For safety reasons, these committal services are held in committal shelters located away from the gravesite. Burial will take place following the committal service.

Floral arrangements may accompany the casket or urn from the committal shelter and will be placed on the grave after burial.

A headstone or marker will be ordered by cemetery personnel upon inscription approval by the next of kin and a burial flag will be provided.

Upright headstones are standard in most national cemeteries, however, some have both upright headstone and flat marker sections. Be sure to discuss these options with the cemetery director prior to burial.

The same procedures are followed if the veteran's eligible spouse or dependent predeceases the veteran. In most cases, one gravesite is provided for the burial of all eligible family members and a single headstone or marker is provided. When both spouses are veterans, two gravesites and two headstones or markers may be provided if requested.

The Department of Defense (DOD) is responsible for providing [Military Funeral Honors](#). The DOD program, "Honoring Those Who Served," calls for funeral directors to request military funeral honors on behalf of the veterans' families. Veterans' organizations may assist in the provision of military funeral honors. In support of this program, VA national cemetery staff may assist to coordinate military funeral honors.