http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/burial\_benefits/index.asp

Burial Benefits

**For Burial in a National Cemetery**  
Burial benefits available include a gravesite in any of our [135 national cemeteries](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/cems/listcem.asp) with available space, opening and closing of the grave, perpetual care, a [Government headstone or marker](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/hmm/), [a burial flag,](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/burial_benefits/burial_flags.asp) and a [Presidential Memorial Certificate](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/pmc.asp), at no cost to the family. Some Veterans may also be eligible for [Burial Allowances](http://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/burials/Burial.pdf). Cremated remains are buried or inurned in national cemeteries in the same manner and with the same honors as casketed remains.

Burial benefits available for spouses and dependents buried in a national cemetery include burial with the Veteran, perpetual care, and the spouse or dependents name and date of birth and death will be inscribed on the Veteran's headstone, at no cost to the family. Eligible spouses and dependents may be buried, even if they predecease the Veteran.

The Veterans family should make funeral or cremation arrangements with a funeral provider or cremation office. Any item or service obtained from a funeral home or cremation office will be at the family's expense.

**Preparing in Advance**Gravesites in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries cannot be reserved in advance.

You should advise your family of your wishes and where your [discharge papers](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/)\* are kept. These papers are very important in establishing your eligibility.

At the time of need your family would contact a funeral home who will assist them with making burial arrangements at the national cemetery.  You may wish to make pre-need arrangements with a funeral home.

To schedule a burial, first 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](mailto: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 and have the following information readily available when you call:

* Cemetery of choice
* First or subsequent burial (Veteran or dependent already buried)
  + If subsequent interment, who is already interred, section and site number (if known)
* Decedent's:
  + Full name;
  + Gender;
  + Social Security Number (SSN);
  + Date of death;
  + Date of birth; and
  + Relationship (Veteran or dependent)
* Funeral director's contact information:
  + Funeral director's name;
  + Funeral home’s name;
  + Address; and
  + Email address of the funeral home
* Next of kin information:
  + Name;
  + Relationship to deceased;
  + SSN;
  + Telephone number; and
  + Address
* Type of religious emblem for headstone (if known)
* Did the decedent reside within 75 miles of requested cemetery?
* ZIP code of decedent at time of death
* County of decedent at time of death
* Type of burial:
  + Casket;
    - Casket size/liner size
  + Cremation
    - Urn size/urn vault size
* Marital status of deceased (if Veteran is buried in a private cemetery, must provide documentation of marital status of spouse at time of death)
* Is surviving spouse a Veteran?
* Any disabled children for future interment (must provide name and date of birth). If requesting immediate interment (must provide marital status, doctor's statement stating type of illness, date of onset of illness and capability of self-support).
* Military Honors requested

**Donating Burial Flags in National Cemeteries**  
Most of the Department of Veterans Affairs national cemeteries display an Avenue of Flags on patriotic holidays and during special events. The Avenues consist of burial flags donated by the families of deceased Veterans and provide a unique visible tribute to all of our Nation's Veterans.

A Certificate of Appreciation is presented to the donor for providing their loved ones' burial flag to a national cemetery.

Please contact the [cemetery](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/cems/listcem.asp) of your choice for information on how to donate a Veteran's burial flag.

**For Burial in a Private Cemetery**  
Burial benefits available for Veterans buried in a private cemetery may include a [Government headstone, marker or medallion](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/hmm/), a [burial flag,](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/burial_benefits/burial_flags.asp) and a [Presidential Memorial Certificate](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/pmc.asp), at no cost to the family. Some Veterans may also be eligible for [Burial Allowances](http://www.benefits.va.gov/BENEFITS/factsheets/burials/Burial.pdf). There are not any VA benefits available to spouses and dependents buried in a private cemetery.