

VA Burial Benefits FAQ

1. *What are VA Burial Benefits?*

- Burial benefits may include the following: gravesites for casket or cremation remains, headstones or makers, opening and closing of the graves, and continued perpetual care. Burial of eligible veteran and dependents is at a no cost when interred at a national cemetery. Associated funeral expenses are the responsibility of the veteran and/or family.

2. *Who is eligible 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 one of the requirements listed below.

One of these must be true. The person qualifying for burial benefits is:

- A veteran who didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, or
- A service member who died while on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty for training, or
- The spouse or minor child of a Veteran, even if the Veteran died first, or
- In some cases, the unmarried adult dependent child of a Veteran

3. *Which individuals are not eligible for VA Burial Benefits?*

- Veterans with a certain character of discharge
- Individuals who were drafted but then discharged before entering military service
- Veterans found guilty of a capital crime
- Veterans convicted of certain sex offenses
- Veterans convicted of subversive activities.
- Certain family members: a former spouse who isn't also a veteran whose marriage to an eligible veteran or service member ended by annulment or divorce, family members of a veteran convicted of subversive activities, and other family members who don't meet eligibility requirements.

4. *What does burial in a VA National Cemetery include?*

- When a Veteran, service member, or family member qualifies for burial in a VA national cemetery, they receive certain burial benefits at no cost to their family. These burial benefits include:
 - A gravesite in any of VA 138 national cemeteries with available space
 - Opening and closing of the grave
 - A burial liner provided by the government
 - A headstone or marker provided by the government
 - Perpetual care of the gravesite
- At the time of need, the person planning the burial can also request other VA memorial items as well as military funeral honors provided by the Department of Defense. These items and honors have other eligibility requirements.

5. *Can I plan ahead for my burial in a VA National Cemetery?*

- Yes. You can plan ahead to make the process of applying for a burial in a VA national cemetery easier for your family members in the event of your death. To do this, you'll need to apply for a pre-need eligibility determination [VA Form 40-10007](#).

Please note: The pre-need eligibility determination is only for VA national cemeteries. If you want to be buried in a state or tribal Veterans cemetery, check the site you want ahead of time, since some state Veterans cemeteries require that you live in that state or have other rules around eligibility.

6. *Can I get assistance with planning for my burial?*

- Yes, VA has a survivor and burial benefit kit available to help guide in planning.

7. *For additional information regarding VA Burial Benefits, please follow link below.*

- va.gov/burials-memorials/eligibility

Burial Allowance FAQ

1. *Am I eligible for allowances to help pay for a Veteran's Burial and Funeral cost?*

- You may be eligible for Veterans burial allowances if you're paying for the burial and funeral costs and you won't be reimbursed by any other organization, like another government agency or the Veteran's employer. You must also meet all of the requirements listed below.
- One of these relationships or professional roles describes your connection to the Veteran.
You're:
 - The Veteran's surviving spouse (**Note:** VA recognize same-sex marriages.), **or**
 - The surviving partner from a legal union (a relationship made formal in a document issued by the state recognizing the union), **or**
 - A surviving child of the Veteran, **or**
 - A parent of the Veteran, **or**
 - The executor or administrator of the Veteran's estate (someone who officially represents the Veteran)
- The Veteran must not have received a dishonorable discharge, and one of these circumstances must be true. The Veteran died:
 - As a result of a service-connected disability (a disability related to service), **or**
 - While getting VA care, either at a VA facility or at a facility contracted by VA, **or**
 - While traveling with proper authorization, and at VA's expense, either to or from a facility for an examination, or to receive treatment or care, **or**
 - With an original or reopened claim for VA compensation or pension pending at the time of death, if they would've been entitled to benefits before the time of death, **or**
 - While receiving a VA pension or compensation, **or**
 - While eligible for a VA pension or compensation at time of death, but instead received full military retirement or disability pay
- Or the Veteran:
 - Had been getting a VA pension or compensation when they died, **or**
 - Had chosen to get military retired pay instead of compensation
- Note: VA also provide an allowance for the cost of transporting a Veteran's remains for burial in a national cemetery.
- You can't get burial allowances for certain individuals
 - VA don't provide burial allowance if the individual died: on active duty, **or** while serving as a member of Congress, **or** while serving a federal prison sentence.

2. *Is there a time limit for filing burial allowance?*

- You must file a claim for a non-service-connected burial allowance within 2 years after the Veteran's burial or cremation. If a Veteran's discharge was changed after death from dishonorable to another status, you must file for an allowance claim within 2 years after the discharge update.
- There's no time limit to file for a service-connected burial, plot, or interment allowance.

3. *What kind of burial benefits allowance can I get?*
 - For burial in a national cemetery, you'll receive an allowance for:
 - Burial and funeral cost
 - The plot (gravesite) or interment
 - Transporting the veteran's remains for burial
 - ***Note:** The veteran's family will need to cover the cost of the funeral director services, like cremation.
4. *What documents do I need to send with my application for Burial allowance?*
 - VA Form 21P-530
 - Veteran Social security number or VA file number
 - Date and place of birth of veteran
 - Date and place of death of veteran
 - Military and status and history of veteran
 - Copy of veteran DD214 or other separation documents
 - Copy of veteran death certificate
 - Documents for transportation cost (if you are claiming cost for the transportation of the Veteran's remains)
5. *As a surviving spouse, do I need to file a claim for burial cost?*
 - No, you don't need to file a claim as a surviving spouse, as long as you're listed as the Veteran's spouse on the Veteran's profile. When we receive notice of the Veteran's death, we automatically pay a set amount to those eligible surviving spouses to help pay for the plot, the cost of interment, or transportation of the remains to the cemetery.
6. For more information regarding Burial Allowance go to va.gov/burials and memorials.