

**Following Article Reprinted with Corrections in Red**

## Veterans Burial and Plot-Interment Allowances

Source: VA website at <http://www.va.gov>

### **What are VA Burial Allowances?**

VA burial allowances are partial reimbursement of an eligible Veteran's burial and funeral costs. When the cause of death is not service related, the reimbursements are generally described as two payments (1) a burial and funeral expense allowance, and (2) a plot or interment allowance.

### **Who is Eligible?**

You may be eligible for a VA burial allowance if:

- you paid for a Veteran's burial or funeral, and
- you have not been reimbursed by another government agency or some other source, such as the deceased veteran's employer, and
- the Veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

### **In addition, eligible veterans must meet at least one of the following conditions:**

- the Veteran died because of a service-related disability, or
- the Veteran was receiving VA pension or compensation at the time of death, or
- the Veteran was entitled to receive VA pension or compensation, but decided not to reduce his/her military retirement or disability pay, or
- the Veteran died while hospitalized by VA, or while receiving care under VA contract at a non-VA facility, or
- the Veteran died while traveling under proper authorization and at VA expense to or from a specified place for the purpose of examination, treatment, or care, or
- the Veteran had an original or reopened claim pending at the time of death and has been found entitled to compensation or pension from a date prior to the date of death, or
- the Veteran died on or after October 9, 1996, while a patient at a VA-approved state nursing home.

### **How Much Does VA Pay?**

**Service-Related Death.** VA will pay up to \$2,000 toward burial expenses for deaths on or after September 11, 2001. If the Veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased may be reimbursed.

**Non-service Related Death.** For deaths on or after October 1, 2011, VA will pay:

- up to \$700 toward burial and funeral expenses (**if hospitalized by VA at time of death**),  
or
- \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses (**if not hospitalized by VA at time of death, and**
- \$700 **plot-interment** allowance (**if not buried in a national cemetery**).

If the death happened while the Veteran was in a VA hospital or under VA contracted nursing home care, some or all of the costs of transporting the Veteran's remains may be reimbursed.

**How Can You Apply?** You can apply by filling out VA form 21-530, Application for Burial Benefits. You should attach a copy of the veteran's military discharge document (DD 214 or equivalent), death certificate, funeral and burial bills. They should show that you have paid them in full. You may download the form at <http://www.va.gov/vaforms>

**For More Information.** Call Toll-Free 1-800-827-1000 or visit the VA website at <http://www.va.gov>

### **Military Funeral Honor "Honoring Those Who Served"**

The Department of Defense (DOD) is responsible for providing military funeral honors. "Honoring Those Who Served" is

the title of the DOD program for providing *(continued on page 9)* dignified military funeral honors to Veterans who have defended our nation.

-Upon the family's request, Public Law 106-65 requires that every eligible Veteran receive a military funeral honors ceremony, to include folding and presenting the United States burial flag and the playing of Taps.

-The law defines a military funeral honors detail as consisting of two or more uniformed military persons, with at least one being a member of the Veteran's parent service of the armed forces.

-The DOD program calls for funeral home directors to request military funeral honors on behalf of the Veterans' family. However, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemetery Administration cemetery staff can also assist with arranging military funeral honors at VA national cemeteries. Veterans' organizations may assist in providing military funeral honors. When military funeral honors at a national cemetery are desired, they are arranged prior to the committal service by the funeral home.

#### **Who is eligible for Military Funeral Honors?**

-Military members on active duty or in the Selected Reserve

-Former military members who served on active duty and departed under conditions other than dishonorable

-Former military members who completed at least one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service in the Selected Reserve and departed under conditions other than dishonorable

-Former military members discharged from the Selected Reserve due to a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty

#### **Burial Flags**

A United States flag is provided, at no cost, to draped the casket or accompany the urn of a deceased Veteran who served honorably in the U.S. Armed Forces. It is furnished to honor the memory of a Veteran's military service to his or her country. VA will furnish a burial flag for memorization for each other than dishonorable discharged

- Veteran who served during wartime
- Veteran who died on active duty after May 27, 1941
- Veteran who served after January 31, 1955
- peacetime Veteran who was discharged or released before June 27, 1950
- certain persons who served in the organized military forces of the Commonwealth of the Philippines while in service of the U.S. Armed Forces and who died on or after April 25, 1951
- certain former members of the Selected Reserves

**Who is Eligible to Received the Burial Flag?** Generally, the flag is given to the next-of-kin, as a keepsake, after its use during the funeral service. When there is no next-of-kin, VA will furnish the flag to a friend making a request for it.

**How Can You Apply?** The funeral director will help you obtain the flag. You may apply for the flag by completing **VA Form 27-2008, Application for United States Flag for Burial Purposes**. You may get a flag at any VA regional office or U.S. Post Office.

**For More Information Call Toll-Free at 1-800-827-1000**