

Contra Costa County Veterans Service Office

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Burial Benefits

What is a VA Burial Allowance?

A VA Burial Allowance is a partial reimbursement of an eligible Veteran's burial and funeral costs. When the cause of death is not-service related, the reimbursement is generally described as two payments: (1) a burial and funeral expense allowance, and (2) a plot 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's discharge was under condition other than dishonorable. In addition, at least one of the following conditions must be met:
 - The Veteran died because of 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 dies in a VA hospital or while in a nursing home under VA contract.

How Much Does the VA Pay?

Service-related death – VA will pay up to \$2,000 toward burial expenses, VA will pay up to \$1,500 for deaths prior to September 10, 2001. If the Veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some of all of the cost to move the deceased may be reimbursed.

Non service-related death – For deaths on or after October 1, 2011, VA will pay up to \$745 toward burial and funeral expenses (if hospitalized by VA at the time of death), or \$300 toward burial and funeral expenses (if not hospitalized by VA at the time of death), and a \$745 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 for transporting the Veteran's remains may be reimbursed. An annual increase in burial and plot allowances, for deaths occurring after October 1, 2011, begins in the fiscal year 2013 based on the Consumer Price Index for the preceding 12-month period.

What the VA Cannot Do?

- Gravesites in a National Cemetery cannot be reserved.
- The National Cemeteries normally do not conduct burials on weekends.
- National Cemeteries cannot place headstones or markers from outside sources.
- The National Cemetery system cannot enter into contracts or agreements with local Funeral Directors or Mortuaries.

- The National Cemetery Administration cannot endorse local mortuaries or offer any discounts through a local Funeral Director or Mortuary.
- The veteran and/or family can purchase a prepaid burial plan through any organization of their choice. No Funeral Director or Mortuary can claim that they have any contract or agreement with the National Cemetery Administration

Please report any questionable claims or advertisements to your local VA or National Cemetery Office.

Related Benefits

Burial in VA National Cemeteries Headstones and Markers
Presidential Memorial Certificates Burial Flags

What Do I Need To Apply?

Veterans Service Representatives are available to assist you with burial, survivors' or to discuss any veterans' benefit with you. You should bring proof of the veteran's military service (discharge or DD 214), a death certificate, and copies of funeral/burial contracts and receipts for expenses paid by you.

How Do I Get Help Or More Information?

Veterans Service Representatives are available to discuss this or any Veterans issue with you.