



Veterans

Funeral Planning Guide

*Proudly serving those who have dedicated
their lives to serving us.*



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At Johnson-Taylor Funeral Home and Cremation, we take great pride in serving our community's veterans. We promise our absolute best efforts and unparalleled attention to detail in honoring the life of your loved one.

We are here to assist you by providing education and understanding of what benefits and services are available to you and your family.

Remembering Your Story

We all plan for the important events in our life – from college and weddings to vacations and birthdays to moving and retirement. So, why not plan how you want to be remembered? We can help you plan a memorable service that reflects your legacy.

Pre-Planning Your Military Funeral

Pre-planning your funeral allows us to get to know the person you are while your story is being told. As you begin pre-planning, it is crucial that you secure your military benefits through your discharge papers.

To ensure you receive benefits, make sure your family is aware of where your discharge papers are now. Once you have this taken care of, we will be able to help you pre-plan a special ceremony.

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How Will a Loved One be Honored and Remembered?

Depending on your loved one's eligibility, they can receive a variety of veteran burial and death benefits. At an eligible veteran's funeral, they are entitled to the folding and presenting of the American flag to the next of kin and the playing of the song "Taps" by a bugler or recording.

An honor guard detail that includes at least two members of the Armed Forces performs these specific honors. One of the members needs to be a representative from the military branch the veteran served in. This will be the person who presents the flag at the service.

Additional Honors May Include:

- A three-volley rifle salute representing duty, honor, and country
- Draping of the U.S. flag over the casket
- A final salute at the cemetery



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How a Veteran Qualifies for Military Funeral Honors:

As determined by their DD-214 or discharge papers, some candidates may receive military funeral honors free of charge.

The following may qualify 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 honorable conditions.
- Former military members who completed at least one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service in the Selected Reserve and departed under honorable conditions.
- Former military members who have been discharged from the Selected Reserve due to a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

All active service members and veterans, regardless of rank (with exception to those who received a dishonorable discharge), are eligible to receive military honors with no personal cost.

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Military Benefits

Along with coordinating veteran funeral services and the military funeral honors that come along with them, we are also willing to help you contact the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to arrange for:

A Presidential Memorial Certificate

This certificate expresses our country's recognition of the veteran's service. The veteran's name is inscribed on the certificate and it bears the President's signature.

Headstones or Markers

Veterans and their eligible dependents may qualify for headstones or markers provided by the VA.

Memorial Plots

Sometimes the veteran's remains are not available for burial. In these cases, the VA can provide a plot and a headstone or marker in a national cemetery. If you want to memorialize the veteran in a different cemetery, the VA will provide the headstone or marker but not the plot.

Burial in a VA National Cemetery

This includes the gravesite, opening and closing of the grave, a burial vault, and perpetual care.

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Veteran Burial Benefits

Some families may receive a reimbursement of burial expenses. To see if you qualify, and to learn more about the different levels of potential reimbursement, please review the **Guide to VA Burial Allowances on** the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs website.

The VA is able to provide a veteran's headstone and a grave marker to the applicant, regardless of burial site, for the unmarked grave of any eligible deceased veteran in any cemetery in the world, no matter the date of death. For those who already have a privately purchased headstone, a Government-furnished headstone can be provided.

Note: When placing headstone or marker in a private cemetery, the applicant is responsible for all placement costs as a private expense.



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How to Receive a Presidential Memorials Certificate

A Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) is an engraved paper certificate, signed by the current President, to honor the memory of deceased Veterans who are eligible for burial in a national cemetery.

History of the Presidential Memorials Certificate

This program was initiated in March 1962 by President John F. Kennedy and has been continued by all subsequent Presidents.

Eligibility

To be considered for eligibility to request a PMC, you must be one of the following:

- Next of kin
- Friend upon request
- An authorized service representative acting for the benefit of a relative or friend

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Application Process

If eligible, or acting on behalf of an eligible party, the recipient should first apply in-person at any regional VA office, via mail, or through toll-free fax. Applications via email will not be accepted. The application must include discharge and death certificates for proof of military service. It is advised that the sender does not send their original copies of their certificates, as they will not be returned.

Administration

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) administers the PMC program by preparing the certificates which bear the current President's signature expressing the country's grateful recognition of the Veteran's service in the United States Armed Forces.



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Burial and Memorial Options

VA National Cemeteries

Some veterans may be entitled to free burial in any VA national cemetery. Benefits of being buried in a national cemetery include:

- The opening and closing of the burial site
- A specialized headstone
- Eternal care of your gravesite

Private or State Veteran Cemeteries

With enough preparation time and full benefits, we can arrange for a burial in a private or state veterans cemetery. We do recommend that you ensure that the cemetery will allow a government-furnished headstone or marker.

Once that is confirmed you will need to complete a VA Form 40-1330, Claim for Standard Government Headstone or Marker for Installation in a Private or State Veterans' Cemetery.

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