Related Benefits
VA NATIONAL CEMETERY BURIALS / HEADSTONES AND MARKERS / PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL CERTIFICATES / BURIAL FLAGS HONOUR GUARD
Chaplain Service
Chaplain Service offers its condolences to you and your family during this difficult time of bereavement. If we can be of assistance to you and the family, please feel free to get in touch with us at the following numbers: during normal business hours phone the Chaplain Service secretary at 708-202-2531; or on off hours and weekends call 708-202-8387 and ask for the paging operator and have them page the chaplain on call. Our Chaplains are on duty seven days per week and coverage is available twenty-four (24) hours a day.

Hines’ Chaplains provide services to patients and families of inpatient, outpatient and community settings. Some of the services provided are chapel worship, hospice support, visitation to newly admitted patients and Sacraments and Rites.

To better support and process your grief, a bi-annual memorial service, held in April and October is available for you and your family to attend at the Hines VA chapel. You will be contacted by way of an official memorial service invitation and follow-up phone call. Hines VA Chaplain services also offers grief groups and bereavement support to facilitate the emotional inner healing of you and your family.

Social Workers
Social Workers are responsible for the coordination and integration of VA and community services and resources. They will help you coordinate alternative based community programs. They can help you with inpatient and outpatient Hospice Care, and coordinate the necessary steps to help with your final plans. You can discuss with them various power of attorney forms for medical purposes when you can no longer make informed decisions for your health care.

They may also help you with the basic survivor benefit information or direct you the Regional Office VA Benefits web site. (www.VA.gov) Social workers can also help you with bereavement counseling.

Contact your social worker if you are in need of Hospice Care or to discuss what options are available to help you and your family during this time. Social workers hours are available 8:00a to 4:30p weekdays, but on weekends and off tour a social worker can be contacted for you. On off tours please call 708-202-8387 and ask for the paging operator to page the social worker on call for off tours and weekends.

Lincoln Memorial Cemetery
On Oct. 3, 1999, Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery was dedicated as the 117th national cemetery within the Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemetery Administration. When fully developed, this 982-acre cemetery will provide 400,000 burial spaces. Initial construction developed approximately 150 acres including 25,000 gravesites and 2,000 lawn crypts for cASKeted remains, 3,000 columbaria niches and 2,300 garden niches for cremated remains; a public information center; four committal service shelters; a memorial walkway; and a carillon and Kiosk grave locator.

Historical Information
The Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery lies in the northwestern area of the former Joliet Army Ammunition Plant, approximately 50 miles south of Chicago. Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery is named after the 16th President of the United States and founder of the National Cemeteries. In the midst of the Civil War, on July 17, 1862 President Lincoln's signature enacted the law authorizing the establishment of national cemeteries "...for the soldiers who die in the service of the country." During the Civil War there were 14 national cemeteries opened pursuant of this legislation. President Lincoln's legacy is especially important to the people of Illinois, where he worked and lived. Lincoln is remembered for his successful law practice and elected service as a resident of Illinois. He served as an Illinois State Assemblyman and an Illinois Representative during the 13th Congress, prior to his election as 16th President of the United States. He is buried in the Oak Ridge Cemetery near the State Capital in Springfield, Illinois, where many additional sites of historical interest are located.

Congressman George E. Sangmeister, a veteran of the Korean War, served as a representative and senator in the state of Illinois, 1973-87, and a U.S. Representative from Illinois, 1988-95. He was instrumental in the acquisition of 982 acres from the former Joliet Arsenal and its redevelopment as Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery.

Monument and Memorials
Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery has a memorial walk that commemorates soldiers of 20th century wars on 11 memorials. An 18-foot granite obelisk crowned by a bronze eagle with outstretched wings commemorates the 2,403 Americans who died in the surprise attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941. It was donated by the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association and dedicated May 12, 2001.

The Blue Star Memorial Marker was donated by the District VIII Garden Club of Illinois and dedicated on September 15, 2000. The marker is a tribute to American men and women who have served, are serving, or will serve their country. Its symbolism dates to World War II when families of servicemen and women displayed a square flag decorated with a blue star in their windows to signify that a loved one was in the armed forces.
What Are VA Burial Allowances?

VA burial allowances are partial reimbursements 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. A FREE flag is given for all honorable discharged veteran burials.

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 deceased veteran's employer, **AND**
- the Veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

*In addition, at least one of the following conditions must be met:*

- 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 or 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. 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 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 a $700.00 plot-interment allowance (if not buried in a national cemetery). For deaths on or after December 1, 2001, but before October 1, 2011, VA will pay up to $300 toward burial and funeral expenses and a $300 plot-interment allowance. The plot-interment allowance is $150 for deaths prior to December 1, 2001. 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.

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/](http://www.va.gov/vaforms/) or you can pick up forms at your nearest VA Facility. Mail completed forms to the Milwaukee Center address listed on the back of this brochure. The address is P.O. Box 342000, Milwaukee, WI. 53234-9907. It may take a few months for you to receive the check. Call 1-800-827-1000 to check the status of your request.

Survivor Benefits

For any and all survivor benefits please call the Regional Office at 1-800-827-1000. They will tell you what you may be entitled to, mail you the proper forms and answer any of your questions. You should call this number to check on the status of any burial benefits or survivor benefits that you have applied for. You may also call one of your near by Veterans Organizations, they can either help you or direct you to a local VA help organization. Remember, *never pay* for anyone to help you fill out the forms, there are people to help you for no charge.

Please note — there are NO Funeral/Burial/Cremation Services within or affiliated with the Veterans Administration. All funeral homes/directors/cremation services are independent of the VA. All up-to-date burial and benefit information can be found at [www.VA.gov](http://www.VA.gov) or contact one of the VA Regional Offices.
Requesting Burial in a VA National Cemetery

No special forms are required when requesting burial in a VA national cemetery. The person making burial arrangements should have their funeral home contact the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at the time of need. Scheduling can be done seven days a week for interments on Mondays through Fridays.

To schedule a burial: Fax all discharge documentation to the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 1-866-900-6417 and follow-up with a phone call to 1-800-535-1117.

If possible, the following information concerning the deceased should be provided when the cemetery is first contacted:

- Full name and military rank;
- Branch of service;
- Social security number;
- Service number;
- VA claim number, if applicable;
- Date and place of birth; Date and place of death; Date of retirement or last separation from active duty; and,
- Copy of any military separation document, such as the Department of Defense Form 214 (DD-214).

The discharge documents must specify active military duty and show that release from active duty was under other than dishonorable conditions.

Viewing facilities are not available and funeral services cannot be held at VA national cemeteries, but a final committal service may be performed. For safety reasons, these committal services are held in committal shelters located away from the gravesite. Burial will take place following the committal service.

Floral arrangements may accompany the casket or urn from the committal shelter and will be placed on the grave after burial.

A headstone or marker will be ordered by cemetery personnel upon inscription approval by the next of kin and a burial flag will be provided. Upright headstones are standard in most national cemeteries, however, some have both upright headstone and flat marker sections. Be sure to discuss these options with the cemetery director prior to burial.

The same procedures are followed if the veteran's eligible spouse or dependent predeceases the Veteran. In most cases, one gravesite is provided for the burial of all eligible family members and a single headstone or marker is provided. When both spouses are Veterans, two gravesites and two headstones or markers may be provided if requested.

The Department of Defense (DOD) is responsible for providing Military Funeral Honors. The DOD program, "Honoring Those Who Served," calls for funeral directors to request military funeral honors on behalf of the Veterans' families. Veterans' organizations may assist in the provision of military funeral honors. In support of this program, VA national cemetery staff may assist to coordinate military funeral honors.

Persons Eligible for Burial in a VA National Cemetery

VA national cemetery directors have the primary responsibility for verifying eligibility for burial in VA national cemeteries. A determination of eligibility is usually made in response to a request for burial in a VA national cemetery. Some family members may also be entitled to be buried with a Veteran. There are NO preapprovals for burial in a VA National Cemetery.

VA Regional Offices will also assist in determining eligibility for burial in a VA national cemetery.

Headstones and Grave Markers

When burial is in a private cemetery, VA Form 40-1330, Application for Standard Government Headstone or Marker must be submitted by the next of kin or a representative, such as funeral director, cemetery official or Veterans counselor, along with Veterans military discharge documents, to request a Government-provided headstone or marker. Do not send original documents, as they will not be returned. Under this new rule, only the following individuals may apply for a headstone, marker or medallion:

1. the decedent's next-of-kin (NOK)
2. a person authorized in writing by the NOK
3. a personal representative authorized in writing by the decedent.

Government-furnished headstones and markers remain the property of the United States Government and cannot be used for any purpose other than to mark the grave and honor the memory of the decedent for whom the headstone or marker is furnished. Mail form to: Memorial Programs, Dept. of VA, 5109 Russell Rd. Quantico, VA 22134-3903 or Fax 1-800-455-7143
ILLINOIS
Abraham Lincoln National Cemetery
20953 W. Hoff Road
Elwood, IL 60421
Phone: (815) 423-9958
FAX: (815) 423-5824

Alton National Cemetery
600 Pearl Street
Alton, IL 62003
Phone: (314) 845-8320
FAX: (314) 845-8355

Camp Butler National Cemetery
5063 Camp Butler Road
Springfield, IL 62707
Phone: (217) 492-4070
FAX: (217) 492-4072

Confederate Mound
Oak Woods Cemetery
1035 E 67th St
Chicago, IL 60637
Phone: (773) 288-3800
(No burials here)

Danville National Cemetery
1900 East Main Street
Danville, IL 61832
Phone: (217) 554-4550 or 4291
FAX: (217) 554-4803

Mound City National Cemetery
HWY Junction 37 & 51
Mound City, IL 62963
Phone: (314) 845-8320
FAX: (314) 845-8355

North Alton Confederate Cemetery
635 Rozier Street
Alton, IL 62003
Phone: (314) 845-8320
FAX: (314) 845-8355

Quincy National Cemetery
36th and Maine Street
Quincy, IL 62301
Phone: (309) 782-2094
FAX: (309) 782-2097

Rock Island Confederate Cemetery
Rodman Avenue, Rock Island Arsenal
Rock Island, IL 61299
Phone: (309) 782-2094
FAX: (309) 782-2097

INDIANA
Crown Hill Cemetery Confederate Plot
Crown Hill Cemetery
700 West 38th Street
Indianapolis, IN 46208
Phone: (317) 925-8231

Marion National Cemetery
VAMC, 1700 East 38th Street
Marion, IN 46952
Phone: (765) 674-0284
FAX: (765) 674-4521

New Albany National Cemetery
1943 Ekin Avenue
New Albany, IN 47150
Phone: (502) 893-3852
FAX: (502) 893-6612

Woodlawn Cemetery
North 3rd Street & 4th Avenue
Terre Haute, IN 47802
Phone: (812) 877-2531

A couple of State Cemeteries are listed below that may accept Veteran burial sites. You will need to call them individually.

ILLINOIS State Cemeteries
Sunset Cemetery
 Illinois Veterans Home
 1707 N. 12th Street
  Quincy, Illinois 62301
  John Wingerter, Acting Administrator
  Phone: 217-222-8641 x222
  FAX: 217-222-9621

INDIANA State Cemeteries
Indian Soldiers Home State Cemetery
  3851 N. River Road
  W. Lafayette, Indiana 47906-3765
  Antonio Stewart, Superintendent
  Phone: 765-463-1502
  FAX: 765-497-869

Indiana Veterans Memorial Cemetery
  1415 North Gate Road
  Madison, Indiana 47250
  Alan Burnham, Director
  Phone: 812-273-9220
  FAX: 812-273-9221
Burial Flags

**Why Does VA Provide a Burial Flag?**
A United States flag is provided, at no cost, to drape 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 memorialization 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 Receive the Burial Flag?**
Generally, the flag is given to the next-of-kin after its use during the funeral service. When there is no next-of-kin, VA will furnish the flag to a friend making request for it. For those VA national cemeteries with an Avenue of Flags, families of Veterans buried in these national cemeteries may donate the burial flags of their loved ones to be flown on patriotic holidays.

**How Can You Apply?**
You may apply for the flag by completing VA Form 21-2008, Application for United States Flag for Burial Purposes. You may get a flag at any VA regional office or U.S. Post Office. Generally, the funeral director will help you obtain the flag.

**Can a Burial Flag Be Replaced?**
The law allows us to issue one flag for a Veteran’s funeral. We cannot replace it if it is lost, destroyed, or stolen. However, some Veterans’ organizations or other community groups may be able to help you get another flag.

**How Should the Burial Flag Be Displayed?**
The proper way to display the flag depends upon whether the casket is open or closed. VA Form 21-2008 provides the correct method for displaying and folding the flag. The burial flag is not suitable for outside display because of its size and fabric. It is made of cotton and can easily be damaged by weather.

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**New — Regulation Headstone Medallion Application**

A VA furnished medallion is a device made of bronze that can be affixed to an existing privately purchased headstone or marker for veterans interred in a private cemetery. Its purpose is to signify the deceased's status as a Veteran. The medallion is available in three sizes: 5 inches, 3 inches, and 1 ½ inches. Each medallion will be inscribed with the word VETERAN across the top and the branch of service at the bottom. The medallion may be furnished in lieu of a traditional government headstone or marker for all deceased other than dishonorably discharged Veterans that died on or after Nov. 1, 1990, and whose grave in a private cemetery is marked with a privately purchased headstone or marker. VA will furnish the flag to a friend making request for it. For example; use “Medallion 5 inch” to request a 5 inch medallion.

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**Search for Burial Locations of Veterans**
To search for burial locations of veterans, please go to the following web site:

http://gravelocator.cem.va.gov/j2ee/servlet/NGL_v1

Search for burial locations of veterans and their family members in VA National Cemeteries, state veterans cemeteries, various other military and Department of Interior cemeteries, and for veterans buried in private cemeteries when the grave is marked with a government grave marker.

The Nationwide Gravesite Locator includes burial records from many sources. We do not have information available for burials prior to 1997. If your search returns incorrect information about a veteran or family member buried in a national cemetery, please contact the cemetery directly to discuss your findings.

For more complete information concerning individual records, we suggest you contact the cemetery or local officials.
Funeral Homes

The following Funeral Directors have indicated their willingness to do basic funeral services for the basic VA burial benefits. You will need to contact them yourself to discuss if they can accommodate your wishes at the VA burial benefits. Some of these funeral homes have agreed to apply for the burial benefits instead of the family. There are other Funeral Directors that are willing to do the VA basic funeral services, but are not on this list, and have not given us their names. Do not hesitate to call Funeral Directors in your area and ask them if they are willing to do the VA basic burial services. The funeral director can help you with the forms, get the American flag and order headstone markers, burial in a military cemetery and ordering death certificates. (*This listing is not a guarantee that they will perform these services at the VA burial cost, but the below have all stated that they will.)*

- *Brust Funeral Home*
  135 So. Main St.
  Lombard, IL 60148  Ph. 630-629-0094
- *Golden Gate Funeral Home*
  2036 West 79th Street
  Chicago, IL 60620 Ph. 773-846-7900
- *Kopicki’s Heritage Funeral Home*
  3117 South Oak Park Ave.
  Berwyn, IL 60402  Ph. 708-788-7775
- *Parkwyn Funeral Home*
  6901 West Roosevelt Rd.
  Berwyn, IL  Ph. 708-788-0904
- *Ridgemoor Chapels*
  7751 West Irving Park Rd.
  Chicago, IL 60634  Ph. 773-736-2693
- *Travis Funeral Home*
  14338 So. Indiana
  Riverdale, IL 60827 Ph. 708-849-2900
- *W. W. Jackson Funeral Home*
  2701 West 63rd. St.
  Chicago, IL 60629  Ph. 773-434-2400
- *West Suburban Funeral and Cremation Services*
  39 No. Cass Ave.
  Westmont, IL 60559 Ph. 630-852-8000
- *W. W. Jackson Funeral Home*
  2036 West 79th Street
  Chicago, IL 60629  Ph. 773-849-2900
- *W. W. Jackson Funeral Home*
  2701 West 63rd. St.
  Chicago, IL 60629  Ph. 773-434-2400
- *Kopicki’s Heritage Funeral Home*
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  6901 West Roosevelt Rd.
  Berwyn, IL  Ph. 708-788-0904
- *Ridgemoor Chapels*
  7751 West Irving Park Rd.
  Chicago, IL 60634  Ph. 773-736-2693

Military Funeral Honors

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 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.

The Department of Defense began the implementation plan for providing military funeral honors for eligible Veterans as enacted in Section 578 of Public Law 106-65 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2000 on Jan. 1, 2000. Questions or comments concerning the DOD military funeral honors program may be sent to the address listed below.

The military funeral honors Web site is located at [www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil](http://www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil). Department of Defense, Directorate for Public Inquiry and Analysis Room 3A750, The Pentagon, Washington, DC 20301-1400. To arrange military funeral honors, contact your local funeral home or a local Veteran’s organization.
A Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) is an engraved paper certificate, signed by the current President, to honor the memory of honorably discharged deceased Veterans. This program was initiated in March 1962 by President John F. Kennedy and has been continued by all subsequent Presidents. 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. Eligible recipients include the next of kin of honorably discharged deceased Veterans. More than one certificate may be provided. Application

Eligible recipients, or someone acting on their behalf, may apply for a PMC in person at any VA regional office or by U.S. mail or toll-free fax. Requests cannot be sent via email. Please be sure to enclose a copy of the Veteran’s discharge and death certificate to verify eligibility, as we cannot process any request without proof of honorable military service. Please submit copies only, as we will not return original documents. If you would like to apply for a Presidential Memorial Certificate, or if you have already requested one more than sixteen (16) weeks ago and have not received it yet, please call 1-202-565-4964 to find out the status of your request. Please do not send a second application unless we request you to do so.

Obtaining Military Records and Medals - General Information

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) does not retain Veteran's military service records. Military service records are kept by the National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) which is under the jurisdiction of the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA). To request military service records, complete Standard Form 180, Request Pertaining to Military Records. Fill in as much information as possible, check the boxes of information you want and send it to the correct address listed on the form by U.S. mail. Please note that it may take up to 3 months for a reply from NPRC after your written request is received. If you need this for burial benefits you should specify this on the request and follow-up with a call to NARA. Contact NARA Customer Service at 1-314-801-0800 or the VA Regional Office at 1-800-827-1000 for further information.

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Survivor Benefits

For any and all eligible survivors for benefits, they should contact the nearest Regional Office, or call 1-800-827-1000 for information. You may visit the VA’s web site at www.va.gov to see the list of requirements to see if you are eligible. There are local Veteran’s organizations that might assist you with filling out the forms and filing the application for survivor benefits. A special note—there is no reason to pay anyone for filling out these forms.