VA | U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration

PLAN WITH CONFIDENCE:
UNDERSTANDING THE COSTS OF BURIAL

Eligible Veterans have earned VA burial benefits for themselves, their spouses, and qualifying family members at VA national cemeteries. ***These benefits can provide peace of mind and reduce the financial burden of burial costs on families.***

Here's a look at some of the costs associated with burial at a private cemetery that are covered at a VA national cemetery*:

- Burial site (cost of a single plot depends on cemetery and region):
  - Rural (nonprofit cemetery): **$500+**
  - Urban (for-profit cemetery): **$5,000 - $10,000**
- Grave liner: **$700+**
- Opening and closing of the grave: **$300 - $1,500**
- Headstone or marker with installation: **$1,000+**
- Perpetual care of the burial site and cemetery grounds: **5% to 15% of plot cost**

Spouses and dependents

Burial benefits available for spouses and qualifying family members interred at a VA national cemetery include:

- Burial site
- Burial of a casket or urn
- Headstone or marker inscription
- Perpetual care of the burial site and cemetery grounds

Eligible spouses and dependents may receive these benefits even if they predecease the Veteran.

"The ability to review benefits now and help my family plan ahead is important because it is not a question of whether decisions will need to be made but when."

— Thurraya Kent, U.S. Navy Veteran

* Funeral Consumers Alliance

Honoring your legacy

Preserve your legacy of service and rest in dignity, honor, and respect. These benefits are available to all Veterans regardless of where they are interred:

- Government headstone or marker (installation costs at a private cemetery not included)
- United States burial flag
- Presidential Memorial Certificates
- Veterans Legacy Memorial (VLM) profile page
- Military funeral honors (provided by the military services)

Burial allowance

Family members of some Veterans may also be eligible for burial, plot, and transportation allowances for the Veteran, helping you cover burial, funeral, and transportation costs.

Preparing for funeral costs

While VA burial benefits can save you and your family thousands of dollars, there are some additional end-of-life costs to consider as you plan ahead.

The following common funeral expenses are not covered by VA burial benefits:

- Funeral home services
- Casket or urn
- Cremation or burial preparation

Together, these funeral costs can add up to a median total of **$8,300** for casketed burial or **$6,280** for cremation.†

Planning in advance

For Veterans and spouses who want to be buried in a VA national cemetery, you can apply to find out in advance if you are eligible by completing the simple, online pre-need burial eligibility application.

You will then receive a pre-need decision letter notifying you of your eligibility, which you should save with your will and other estate plan documents.

"As a mom and Veteran, my young kids are just learning about the version of me in uniform and what that experience meant to me. Being buried in a VA national cemetery will preserve that experience and leave a legacy for my children."

— Zaira Martinez, U.S. Air Force Veteran

Learn more about your VA burial benefits: ***www.cem.va.gov/veterans-and-families***

† National Funeral Directors Association

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