



Veterans Affairs

Frank Guevara
Director

Burial Allowance

Fact Sheet #3
Rev 9/24/18

VA burial allowances are flat-rate monetary benefits that are generally paid at the maximum amount authorized by law for an eligible Veteran's burial and funeral costs. Eligible surviving spouses of record are paid automatically upon notification of the Veteran's death, without the need to submit a claim. VA may grant additional benefits, including the plot or interment allowance and transportation allowance, if it receives a claim for these benefits.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

If the burial benefit has not been automatically paid to the surviving spouse, VA will pay the first living person to file a claim of those listed below:

- Veteran's surviving spouse; **OR**
- The survivor of a legal union* between the deceased Veteran and the survivor; **OR**
- The Veteran's children, regardless of age; **OR**
- The Veteran's parents or surviving parent; **OR**
- The executor or administrator of the estate of the deceased Veteran.

*Legal union means a formal relationship between the decedent and the survivor that existed on the date of the Veteran's death, which was recognized under the law of the State in which the couple formalized the relationship and evidenced by the State's issuance of documentation memorializing the relationship.

The Veteran must also have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. In addition, at least one of the following conditions must be met:

- the Veteran died as a result of a service-connected 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 instead to receive his or her full 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 for VA compensation or pension pending at the time of death and would have been entitled to benefits 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-Connected Death

- If the Veteran died on or after September 11, 2001, the maximum service-connected burial allowance is \$2,000.
- If the Veteran died before September 11, 2001, the maximum service-connected burial allowance is \$1,500.
- If the Veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, VA may reimburse some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased Veteran's remains.

Non-Service-Connected Death

- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2017, VA will pay a \$300 burial allowance and \$762 for a plot.
- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2016, but before October 1, 2017, VA will pay a \$300 burial allowance and \$749 for a plot.
- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2015, but before October 1, 2016, VA will pay a \$300 burial allowance and \$747 for a plot.

Effective October 1, 2011, there are higher non-service-connected death rates payable if the Veteran was hospitalized by VA when he or she died.

- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2017, VA will pay a \$762 burial allowance and \$762 for a plot.
- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2016, VA will pay a \$749 burial allowance and \$749 for a plot.
- If the Veteran died on or after October 1, 2015, but before October 1, 2016, VA will pay a \$747 burial allowance and \$747 for a plot.
- If the death occurred while the Veteran was properly hospitalized by VA, or under VA contracted nursing home care, some or all of the costs for transporting the Veteran's remains may be reimbursed.

Note: If the Veteran dies while traveling at VA expense for the purpose of examination, treatment or care, VA will pay burial, funeral, plot or interment allowances, and transportation expenses.

Unclaimed Remains

- If a Veteran dies and their remains are unclaimed, the entity responsible for the burial of the Veteran would be entitled to a \$300 burial allowance.
- If the Veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, VA may reimburse the cost of transporting the deceased Veteran's remains. VA may also reimburse for the cost of a plot.

WHAT THE VA CANNOT DO

- Gravesites in a National Cemetery cannot be reserved.
- 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.

Note: 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.***

HOW CAN YOU APPLY?

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

San Bernardino County Veterans Affairs Office Locations:

- 222 W. Hospitality Ln., 3rd Fl., San Bernardino, CA 92415-0470 (909) 382-3290
- 15900 Smoke Tree St., Hesperia, CA 92345 (760) 995-8010
- 8575 Haven Ave., Ste. 160, Rancho Cucamonga, CA 91730 (909) 948-6470