



**Department of California
Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation
June Bulletin**

A big thank you to the Unit and District chairmen who provided input for year-end reporting in the Veterans Affairs and Rehabilitation program! Your written contributions provided invaluable information for my reports to Convention and National.

As the year comes to a close I would like to share with you some information on Veteran Burials and Memorials that was provided to me by Western Division VAR Chairman, Theresa Montoya.

Can you prepare for the death of a loved one?

No matter how well prepared you think you are, you are never prepared for the overwhelming loss when it happens. For most of us, no amount of preparation will ever be enough to adequately cover the transition over the territory of loss. To be known, the death of a loved one must be experienced, and only then can we say how we feel and what we will do for ourselves as we move forward.

VA Medical Benefits

Currently, the VA meticulously maintains 155 VA national cemeteries in 44 states and Puerto Rico, and is working to increase access to accommodate Veterans and eligible family members close to home. At this time more than 94 percent of Veterans have a burial option in an open VA, state or tribal veteran's cemetery located within 75 miles of their home. It should be noted that most, if not all of these benefits, may be provided for veterans who are interred in a State, Territorial or Tribal Veterans cemetery. Check with the cemetery to ensure coverage. Some benefits are also available for Veterans who choose burial in a private cemetery.

To determine eligibility before the time of need:

1. Submit VA Form 40-10007 along with a copy of the DD-214 (do not send originals) or supporting documentation of military service if readily available by:
Toll-free fax at 1-855-840-8299

Mail to: National Cemetery Scheduling Office, P.O. Box 510543, St. Louis, MO 63151

- VA will review pre-need burial applications and provide written notice of a determination of eligibility.
- VA will store the pre-need application, supporting documentation, and the decision letter to expedite burial arrangements at the time of need.

2. To request burial at the time of need when eligibility has been determined:

- At the time of need family members should contact the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at [1-800-535-1117](tel:1-800-535-1117).
- VA will locate your pre-need decision letter and validate the determination.
- VA will verify pre-need decisions in accordance with the laws in effect at that time.

3. To establish eligibility at the time of need:

- At the time of need, family members should scan and email the DD-214 form or other discharge papers if readily available to NCA.Scheduling@va.gov or fax them to 1-866-900-6417 and follow up with a phone call to [1-800-535-1117](tel:1-800-535-1117).
- Make arrangements with a funeral home, National Cemetery Scheduling Office or directly with a VA national cemetery.
- Although burial plots cannot be reserved, you can plan by safeguarding military discharge papers and discussing end-of-life planning with loved ones.

For more information visit <https://www.choose.va.gov/burials-memorials>.

The Visalia Convention is just a few weeks away and I hope to see many of you there. My thanks to the Convention Committee members who have worked so hard this year to ensure that attendees have both a positive and memorable time. And special thanks to "Governor" Glenda Schultz for her exemplary leadership this year. Congratulations on a job well done!

United We Stand...



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