

# VETERAN FUNERAL ARRANGEMENTS GUIDE

## For Surviving Spouses and Families

Florida-Focused

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### IMMEDIATE STEPS AFTER DEATH

- Locate the veteran's **DD Form 214**, will, and funeral/burial instructions.
  - Obtain legal pronouncement of death.
  - Notify family, friends, and the veteran's employer (if applicable).
  - Contact a funeral director and clergy (if desired).
  - Contact the service branch Casualty Assistance Office and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) at **(800) 827-1000**.
  - If the veteran was a MOAA member, contact MOAA at **(800) 234-6622**.
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### WORKING WITH FLORIDA FUNERAL HOMES

Florida funeral homes (regulated under Chapter 497, Florida Statutes) must:

- File the death certificate within five (5) days.
- Indicate veteran status on the death certificate.
- Make reasonable efforts for unclaimed cremated remains of veterans to be buried in a national cemetery.

### Recommendation

Provide the veteran's **DD Form 214** to the funeral director as early as possible. Funeral directors typically coordinate:

- Military Funeral Honors
  - VA Burial Flag
  - National Cemetery Arrangements
  - Required Veterans Documentation
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### MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS

#### Standard Honors (Guaranteed)

- Two or more service members
- Folding and presentation of the United States flag

- Playing of Taps

## **Enhanced Honors (When Available)**

- Rifle volley (21-gun salute)
- Full honor guard
- Military pallbearers

**Request military honors through the funeral director and provide a copy of the DD Form 214.**

**Allow at least 48–72 hours advance notice whenever possible.**

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## **VA BURIAL FLAG**

### **VA Form 27-2008**

Eligible veterans are entitled to one United States burial flag at no cost.

The flag may be requested through:

- Funeral Director
- Department of Veterans Affairs
- United States Post Office

A copy of the veteran's DD Form 214 is generally required.

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## **VA BURIAL BENEFITS**

Eligible veterans may qualify for:

- Burial in a National Cemetery
  - Gravesite, opening, and closing of the grave at no cost
  - Government-furnished headstone or marker
  - Presidential Memorial Certificate
  - United States Burial Flag
  - Burial Allowance (service-connected or non-service-connected, as applicable)
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## **KEY DOCUMENTS NEEDED**

- DD Form 214 (or equivalent military discharge document)
- Death Certificate (10–15 certified copies recommended)
- Marriage Certificate
- Veteran's Military Records
- Proof of Relationship

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## **COST INFORMATION**

Many veteran burial benefits are provided at no cost, including:

- Military Funeral Honors
- United States Burial Flag
- National Cemetery Plot
- Government Headstone or Marker

The VA may provide a burial allowance depending on eligibility and circumstances.

Funeral home charges for services, caskets, transportation, and related expenses vary by provider.

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## **KEY CONTACTS**

<b>Resource</b>	<b>Phone Number</b>
VA Burial Hotline	(800) 535-1117
National Cemetery Scheduling Office	(800) 535-1117
Department of Veterans Affairs	(800) 827-1000
MOAA Survivor Assistance	(800) 234-6622
Florida Department of Veterans' Affairs	Contact Local Office

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## **HELPFUL TIP**

Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) such as the DAV, VFW, American Legion, and County Veterans Service Offices provide free assistance with burial benefits, survivor claims, and veterans-related paperwork.

**Prepared as a general guide for surviving spouses and families. Always verify current eligibility requirements, forms, benefits, and procedures directly with official agencies.**