

Military Veterans



Timber Pines



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To honor, educate, and assist all US Military veterans, men and women by providing social opportunities, information on veterans' entitlements, and outreach activities that address needs beyond the scope of other support groups

## WHEN A VETERAN PASSES

This document is intended as an overview to assist Timber Pine's Veterans and their families to prepare for and to process VA benefits upon the passing of the Veteran. For detailed information, please contact the content sources identified in this document. This document only addresses VA estate planning activities.

## PREPARATION

### Important VA Documents

Families should have access to these papers and documents:

- Veteran's service discharge paper (DD-214)
- GI/Veterans insurance policy
- VA claim number
- Marriage certificate(s) and divorce decree(s)
- Death certificate

### Important VA Addresses and Phone Numbers

#### VA Central Office

810 Vermont Ave.  
Washington, DC 20420  
800-827-1000

#### Regional Office

St. Petersburg RO  
9500 Bay Pines Blvd.  
St. Petersburg, FL 33708  
800-827-1000

#### VA Medical Center

James A. Haley VA Hospital  
13000 Bruce B. Downs Blvd.  
Tampa, FL 33612  
813-972-2000

#### VA Outpatient Clinic

New Port Richey OPC  
9912 Little Rd.  
NewPort Richey, FL 34654  
727-869-4100

#### VA Outpatient Clinic

Brooksville OPC  
14540 Cortez Blvd. #108  
Brooksville, FL. 34613  
352-597-8287

#### VA National Cemetery

Bushnell National Cemetery  
6502 SW 102nd Ave.  
Bushnell, FL 33513  
352-793-7740

#### VA Life Insurance Ctr.

1-800-419-1473 7479

#### Hernando County Veterans Services

Forest Oaks Blvd. Spring Hill, FL 34606  
352-754-4033

# **Benefits**

## **Burial Benefits**

**National Cemeteries:** Any veteran discharged under conditions other than Dishonorable is entitled to burial in any National Cemetery, provided space is available. Burial in a National Cemetery may be arranged through the funeral home or by contacting the superintendent of the cemetery. Family members eligible for burial in a VA cemetery include the spouse or minor child of an eligible veteran or service member. There is no charge for burial, but the government does not pay the cost of transportation for the family members who will attend the funeral.

**Burial Flags:** VA provides an American flag to drape the casket of a veteran. Arrangement to receive a flag is made by the funeral home or by contacting the superintendent of the cemetery. After the funeral service, the flag is usually given to the next of kin.

**Headstones and Markers:** The VA will provide a government headstone or marker for a veterans' grave. The VA will inscribe free of charge the name of the deceased, the years of birth and death, the highest rank held, and the branch of service. The VA will ship the headstone or marker anywhere in the world. There cannot be any headstone or marker already on the grave. Setting it in place is the responsibility of the family. When burial is in a National Cemetery, the grave marker is provided and set in place by the government. Arrangement to receive a headstone or marker is made by the funeral home or by contacting the superintendent of the cemetery.

**Presidential Memorial Certificates:** These certificates, signed by the President, are issued upon request to recognize the United States military service of an honorably discharged deceased Veterans. Assistance to complete the required request form can be provided by the funeral home or County Veterans Service Office.

**Military Funeral Honors:** Upon request, DoD will provide military funeral honors consisting of folding and presentation of the United States flag and the playing of "Taps." A funeral honors detail consists of two or more uniformed members of the armed forces, with at least one member from the deceased's branch of service. Veterans Service Organizations or volunteer groups may also help provide the honors. Family members should inform their funeral director if they want military funeral honors. Requests can also be made to the National Cemetery Superintendent, County Veterans Service Office or a Veterans Service Organization.

**Reimbursement of Burial Expenses:** If the veteran's meets defined eligibility requirements, the VA currently will pay limited fees for burial expenses and for transportation of the veteran's body to the nearest National Cemetery. The funeral home or County Veterans Service Office can assist determining eligibility and processing the necessary paperwork.

## Insurance

If the veteran has any GI/Veteran Insurance policies, the necessary forms to process a claim can be obtained through the County Veterans Service Office or by calling the VA Insurance Life Insurance Center. All insurance companies will require a death certificate.

## Benefits for Survivors of Veterans

Benefit eligibility for survivors of Veterans is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. However, family members who usually are eligible for benefits include spouses, children, and in some cases, parents. A surviving spouse remains eligible for most monetary survivor benefits as long as they remain unmarried, or remarry after the age of 57. Children may be eligible for monetary benefits until age 18, or 23 if they are attending an approved school. Disabled surviving children may also be eligible for long-term benefits. Some funeral home will provide assistance completing the required paperwork to request survivors benefits. The family may also contact the County Veterans Service Office to determine eligibility and to process the necessary paperwork.

## Things To Do When The Veteran Passes

- 1. THE FUNERAL** – Your first decision may be the most difficult: burial or cremation. Local funeral homes offer both services. Choose your own funeral home or cremation company. They will help you with all the details, such as viewing, religious service, obituary, funeral notice, pallbearers, flowers, music, and shipping, if desired. The funeral home will also assist in the completion required government paperwork, such as Social Security and veterans benefits. The family need to be aware that some funeral homes will charge for processing government paperwork.
- 2. NATIONAL AND PRIVATE CEMETERIES** – The funeral home will contact and make arrangements with the National Cemetery or private cemetery of your choice. The family can also contact the cemetery directly. A list of Florida National Cemeteries is listed at the end of this document.
- 3. VA BURIAL BENEFITS** – Most funeral homes are knowledgeable about VA burial benefits. The family may also contact the County Veterans Service Office or VA Regional Office to determine eligibility and to process required paperwork.

### Reimbursement of Burial Expenses Summary

<b>Death in a VA facility (Non-Service Connected)</b>	VA will pay up to \$300 for burial allowance. VA will pay up to \$300 for plot allowance.
<b>Community Deaths</b>	Must file a claim with Veterans Benefit Administration to determine eligibility within 2 years.
<b>Service Connected Deaths</b>	VA will pay up to \$2000 for burial allowance.

**Service Connected Veterans** VA will pay transportation cost to the nearest National Cemetery.  
VA will pay up to \$300 for plot allowance.  
VA will pay up to \$300 for burial allowance

**4. CERTIFIED COPIES OF DEATH CERTIFICATES** – Copies of the death certificates are usually available within a week to ten days following a death. Your funeral director will advise you on how many to order and will obtain them for you. You may also obtain them from the Health Dept. of Vital Statistics, 4175 East Bay Drive, Largo, FL 33764, (727) 507-4330 ext. 1200. You will need a death certificate for cars, residences, mobile homes, stocks and bonds, etc., private pensions, VA insurance (2), and bank accounts (some will accept a certified copy).

**5. BENEFITS FOR SURVIVORS OF VETERANS** - Benefit eligibility for survivors of Veterans is evaluated on a case-by-case basis. However, family members who usually are eligible for benefits include spouses, children, and in some cases, parents. A surviving spouse remains eligible for most monetary survivor benefits as long as they remain unmarried, or remarry after the age of 57. Children may be eligible for monetary benefits until age 18, or 23 if they are attending an approved school. Disabled surviving children may also be eligible for long-term benefits. Contact the County Veterans Service Office to determine eligibility and to process the necessary paperwork.

**6. DISCONTINUATION OF VA COMPENSATION** - In the event that the deceased veteran was receiving monthly monetary compensations from the VA, the compensation ends with the veterans passing. The family should contact the County Veterans Office or the Regional Office to initiate the notification of death process. The VA will request reimbursement for any compensation sent to the veteran after the date of the veterans passing.

**7. INSURANCE** - If the veteran has any GI/Veteran Insurance policies, forms can be obtained through the County Veterans Service Office or by calling the VA Insurance Life Insurance Center. All insurance companies will require a certified copy of the death certificate.

**8. VA ISSUED PROSTHETIC EQUIPMENT** - If the VA issued the Veteran prosthetic devices such as hearing aids, wheelchairs and hospital beds, etc., the family may wish to return the device(s) to the VA. To arrange for pickup of equipment, call the VA hospital or Outpatient Clinic Prosthetic Department.

**9. CANCELLATION OF APPOINTMENTS, PRESCRIPTIONS AND PROCEDURES** - As part of the death notification process, the VA Hospital and Outpatient Clinic will eventually be notified to the Veterans' death, but this process will take time. If the Veteran has pending appointments, prescriptions or procedures, the family may want to contact the VA health facility and cancel all pending activities.

**Florida National Cemeteries:**

**Barrancas National Cemetery**

80 Hovey Road  
Pensacola, Florida 32508  
(850) 453-4108

**Jacksonville**

4083 Lannie Road  
Jacksonville, FL 32218  
(904) 358-3510

**Bay Pines**

10000 Bay Pines Boulevard  
Bay Pines, Florida 33744  
(727) 398-9426

**S. Florida Nat'l Cemetery**

6501 South State Road 7  
Lake Worth, FL 33449  
(561) 649-6489

**Bushnell**

6502 Southwest  
102nd Avenue  
Bushnell, Florida 33513  
(352) 793-7740

**St Augustine Nat Cemetery**

104 Marine Street  
St. Augustine, FL 32084  
(352) 793-7740

**Sarasota National Cemetery**

9810 State Road 72 Sarasota, FL 34241  
(941) 922-7200 or (877) 861-9840