



U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs
Veterans Benefits Administration

Burial and Plot Interment Allowance

What Are VA Burial Allowances?

VA burial allowances are flat-rate monetary benefits. They help cover eligible Veterans' burial and funeral costs. Generally, they are paid at the maximum amount allowed by law.

A 2014 VA regulation change helped simplify the program. Eligible surviving spouses are now paid automatically. This happens upon notification of the Veteran's death. There is no need to submit a claim.

However, VA may grant additional benefits after receiving a claim. These include plot or interment allowance and transportation allowance.

Who Is Eligible?

If the surviving spouse has not been automatically paid, VA will pay whomever files a claim first of the following:

- The Veteran's surviving spouse
- The Veteran's children, regardless of age
- The Veteran's parents
- The executor or administrator of the estate
- The survivor of a legal union with the Veteran. This applies to formal relationships that continued up until the Veteran's death. The couple needs to have formalized the relationship under the law of the state. There should be state-issued documentation of the relationship.

The Veteran must have a discharge other than dishonorable. The Veteran must also have met one of the following conditions:

- Death as the result of a service-connected disability

- Receiving VA pension or compensation at time of death
- Entitled to receive VA pension or compensation at time of death, but instead received full military retirement or disability pay
- Died while hospitalized by VA or while receiving care under VA contract
- Died while traveling under the following circumstances:
 - Under proper authorization and at VA expense
 - To or from a place for the purpose of examination, treatment or care
- Had an original or reopened claim for VA compensation or pension pending at the time of death
 - Only if the Veteran would have been entitled to benefits from a date prior to the death date
- Died on or after Oct. 9, 1996, while a patient at a VA-approved state nursing home

How Much Does VA Pay?

For service-connected deaths:

- If the Veteran died on or after Sept. 11, 2001: maximum \$2,000
- If the Veteran died before Sept. 11, 2001: maximum \$1,500
- If the Veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery: some or all of the costs of transporting remains

For non-service-connected deaths:

- If the Veteran died on or after Oct. 1, 2017: \$300 burial allowance; \$762 for a plot
- If the Veteran died on or after Oct. 1, 2016, but before Oct. 1, 2017: \$300 burial allowance; \$749 for a plot
- If the Veteran died on or after Oct. 1, 2015, but before Oct. 1, 2016: \$300 burial allowance; \$747 for a plot

Effective Oct. 1, 2011, non-service-connected death rates have changed. Payable rates are higher if the Veteran was hospitalized by VA at time of death.

- If the Veteran died on or after Oct. 1, 2017: \$762 burial allowance; \$762 for a plot
- If the Veteran died on or after Oct. 1, 2016: \$749 burial allowance; \$749 for a plot

- If the Veteran died on or after Oct. 1, 2015, but before Oct. 1, 2016: \$747 burial allowance; \$747 for a plot
- If death occurred while the Veteran was hospitalized by VA: some or all costs of transporting remains
 - This also applies to VA-contracted nursing home care.

Note: If the Veteran dies while traveling at VA expense, VA will pay burial, funeral, plot or interment allowances. VA will also pay transportation expenses. The traveling must have been for the purpose of an exam, treatment or care.

For unclaimed remains:

- If Veteran remains are unclaimed, the entity responsible for burial can receive a \$300 burial allowance.
- If buried in a VA national cemetery, VA may reimburse:
 - The cost of transporting remains
 - The cost for a plot

How Can You Apply?

Apply by filling out VA Form 21P-530, "Application for Burial Benefits." You can find the form at <https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-21p-530-ARE.pdf>. Attach a copy of the deceased's discharge document and a death certificate. Attach a receipt if you are claiming transportation expenses.

Mail your application to the VA regional benefit office in your state. You can find your office location by visiting <https://www.benefits.va.gov/benefits/offices.asp>.

For more information, call 800-827-1000, or contact your local VA regional benefit office.