



**BONNEY
WATSON**

*Celebrating
Lives*

Learn More: *For Veterans*

Bonney-Watson has been honored to serve Seattle-area veterans for nearly six generations. We work diligently to help surviving family members file for all benefits for which the deceased veteran is eligible. Our funeral directors will help you file VA paperwork and notification, apply for benefits, order military honors and arrange for burial at a national cemetery such as Tahoma National Cemetery, at Bonney-Watson Washington Memorial Park, or at another private cemetery.

This document provides helpful information on the following topics:

1. Bonney-Watson's Veteran's Advisory Board
2. Veteran's Administration
3. VA Reimbursement of Burial Expenses
4. Burial in a National Cemetery
5. Burial in Bonney-Watson / Washington Memorial Park
6. Burial with Military Honors
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Bonney-Watson's Veteran's Advisory Board

More than 30 years ago, a group of people from various veterans associations, including Veterans of Foreign Wars and American Legion, agreed to serve on Bonney-Watson's Veteran's Advisory Board. This group is still going strong, providing important input to plan various remembrances and ceremonies throughout the year.

These advisors work to keep Bonney-Watson and families updated on veteran's issues. They also lead the effort to honor service men and women with ceremonies throughout the year.

- For example, observances of National POW/MIA Recognition Day are held across the country each year on the third Friday in September. The Veteran's Advisory Board holds a ceremony at the POW/MIA Living Memorial Plaza at Washington Memorial Park.
- Advisory Board members also manage events at Washington Memorial Park for Memorial Day.

Veterans interested in serving on Bonney-Watson's Veteran's Advisory Board should contact us at (206) 242-1787 or by email at SeaTac@BonneyWatson.com.

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Veteran's Administration

The Veterans Administration provides many benefits and services to veterans throughout Washington State. For more information about the Department of Veterans Affairs for Washington, visit them **online**.

While most VA benefits are the same regardless of whether the service member or veteran died on active duty or later in life, there are some differences. The **VA's website** provides information specific to each situation.

In general, veterans are eligible for:

- Burial in a national cemetery (for veterans, spouses and dependent children)
- \$2,000 burial allowance for veterans who die while on active duty or because of a service-connected injury
- \$300 burial allowance for all other eligible veterans

These benefits are not paid automatically. Your Bonney-Watson funeral director will help you file the necessary paperwork.

VA Reimbursement of Burial Expenses

The VA will pay for burial expenses for veterans in a number of situations:

- VA will pay a burial allowance up to \$2,000 if the veteran's death is service connected.
They will pay the cost of transporting the remains of a service-disabled veteran to the national cemetery nearest the home of the deceased that has available gravesites. In this case, the person who bore the veteran's burial expenses may claim reimbursement from VA.
- VA will pay a \$300 burial and funeral expense allowance for veterans who, at time of death, were entitled to receive pension or compensation or would have been entitled to compensation but for receipt of military retirement pay.
Eligibility also is established when death occurs in a VA facility or a nursing home with which VA contracted. Additional costs of transportation of the remains may be reimbursed.
- There is no time limit for filing reimbursement claims of service-connected deaths. Claims for reimbursement for non-service-related deaths must be filed within two years after permanent burial or cremation.

VA will pay a \$300 plot allowance when the veteran is not buried in a cemetery that is under U.S. Government jurisdiction if:

- The veteran was discharged from active duty because of disability incurred or aggravated in line of duty
- The veteran was in receipt of compensation or pension or would have been in receipt of compensation but for receipt of military retired pay
- The veteran died while hospitalized by VA

The plot allowance is not payable solely on wartime service.

If the veteran is buried without charge for the cost of a plot or interment in a state-owned cemetery reserved solely for veteran burials, the \$300 plot allowance may be paid to the state. Burial expenses paid by the deceased's employer or a state agency will not be reimbursed.

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Burial in a National Cemetery

Burial benefits in a national cemetery include the gravesite, opening and closing of the grave and perpetual care. Many national cemeteries have columbaria for the inurnment of cremated remains or special gravesites for the burial of cremated remains. Headstones and markers and their placement are provided at the government's expense.

Veterans and armed forces members who die while serving on active duty are eligible for burial in one of the VA's 114 national cemeteries. The Tahoma National Cemetery, located in Kent, is located closest to Bonney-Watson.

In order to be buried at any of the national cemeteries, a veteran must:

- Have been discharged or separated from active duty under honorable or general conditions, and
- Have completed the required period of service; persons entitled to retired pay as a result of 20 years creditable service with a reserve component are eligible

A U.S. citizen who served in the armed forces of a government allied with the United States in a war also may also be eligible.

Spouses and minor children of eligible veterans and of armed forces members also may be buried in a national cemetery. The surviving spouse of an eligible veteran who married a nonveteran, and whose remarriage was terminated by death or divorce, is eligible for burial in a national cemetery.

Gravesites in national cemeteries may not be reserved. Bonney-Watson's funeral director will help you apply for a gravesite at the time of death.

Burial in Bonney-Watson / Washington Memorial Park

Washington Memorial Park offers a complete range of funeral and burial benefits for veterans and their families, including:

- Two cemetery gardens designed specifically for veterans
- Options for both in-ground burial and above-ground urn placements
- A grave for the Veteran gratis in a designated area our veterans' garden and other special cemetery savings

One of the advantages of Washington Memorial Park's Veteran's Program is that the family members of the Veteran can also make arrangements for placement in the same area. Placement in a National cemetery is limited to veterans, their spouses, and dependent children.

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Burial with Military Honors

Eligible veterans may have a military funeral honors ceremony, which includes the playing of ‘Taps’ plus folding and presentation of the United States flag to the family. In many cases, Bonney-Watson can work to arrange for a 21-gun salute and military pall bearers. The ceremony is performed by a military funeral honors detail consisting of two or more uniformed military persons and at least one person who is a member of the veteran’s branch of the Armed Forces. Bonney-Watson works with local veterans organizations to provide this service. Ask your funeral director for details.

Burial Flags from the VA

The VA provides an American flag to drape the casket of a veteran or person entitled to retired military pay. After the funeral service, the flag may be given to the next of kin or a close associate. The VA also will issue a flag on behalf of a service member who was missing in action and later presumed dead. Flags are issued at VA regional offices, national cemeteries, and post offices.

Headstones and Markers from the VA

VA provides headstones and markers for the unmarked graves of veterans anywhere in the world as well as for eligible dependents of veterans buried in national, state veteran or military cemeteries.

Flat bronze, flat granite, flat marble, upright granite and upright marble types are available to mark the grave in a style consistent with the place of burial. Niche markers also are available to mark columbaria used for inurnment of cremated remains.

Headstones and markers are inscribed with the name of the deceased, the years of birth and death, and branch of service. Optional items that also may be inscribed at VA expense are:

- Military grade, rank or rate
- War service such as World War II
- Months and days of birth and death
- An emblem reflecting one’s beliefs
- Valor awards
- Purple Heart

Additional items may be inscribed at private expense.

When burial is in a national, state veteran or military cemetery, the headstone marker is ordered through the cemetery. Inscription, shipping and placement can also be obtained from the cemetery.

When burial occurs in a cemetery other than a national, military post or state veterans cemetery, you must apply for the headstone marker from VA. It will be shipped at government expense. VA, however, does not pay the cost of placing the headstone or marker on the grave.

To apply for a headstone marker from the VA, complete Form 40-1330 and forward it to Director, Office of Memorial Programs (403A), National Cemetery System, Department of Veterans Affairs, Washington DC 20420. Your Bonney-Watson funeral director can help you make these arrangements.

VA cannot issue a headstone or marker for a spouse or child buried in a private cemetery. Twenty-year reservists without active duty service are eligible for a headstone or marker, if they are entitled to military retired pay at the time of death.

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Headstones or Markers for Memorial Plots

To memorialize an eligible veteran whose remains are not available for burial, VA will provide a plot and headstone or marker in a national cemetery. The headstone or marker is the same as that used to identify a grave except that the mandatory phrase “In Memory of” precedes the authorized inscription.

The headstone or marker is available to memorialize eligible veterans or deceased active-duty members whose remains were not recovered or identified, were buried at sea, donated to science, or cremated and scattered.

The memorial marker may be provided for placement in a cemetery other than a national cemetery. In this case, VA supplies the marker and pays the cost of shipping, but does not pay for the plot or the placement of the marker. Only a relative recognized as the next of kin may apply for the benefit.

Presidential Memorial Certificates

The Presidential Memorial Certificate is a parchment certificate with a calligraphic inscription expressing the nation’s recognition of the veteran’s service. The veteran’s name is inscribed and the certificate bears the signature of the President.

- Certificates are issued in the name of honorably discharged, deceased veterans.
- Eligible recipients include next of kin, other relatives and friends.
- The award of a certificate to one eligible recipient does not preclude certificates to other eligible recipients.
- The veteran may have died at any time in the past.

Our local VA regional office generally originates the application for a Presidential Memorial Certificate. The next of kin also may request a certificate; ask your Bonney-Watson funeral director for assistance. Requests should be accompanied by a copy of a document such as discharge papers to establish honorable service.