

How to Request Navy Funeral Honors

Have you thought about your own arrangements for departing on Eternal Patrol? Have you left specific instructions, references, points of contact, etc. for your next of kin? If you've ever had to arrange for services and burial of a loved one, then you already know that it can be an overwhelming task, on top of the grief and mourning with which the loved ones are left.

There are many resources and options out there to deal with these issues, and we'll endeavor to document and communicate as many of those as possible to help you or your loved ones deal with this eventuality.

Commander, Navy Region Mid-Atlantic, is but one option that may be used to render military honors at a Veteran Funeral. While this is not an elaborate ceremony like you may see at Arlington, it is moving nonetheless, and is a service that is free, and can be arranged in short notice. As Veterans, we may see it as a simple ceremony, but I promise you it is moving to the uninitiated, and few can keep a dry eye when Taps sounds. In a recent ceremony two Petty Officers arrived in Dress Blues with a 4-foot by 6-foot flag. With choreographed and precise motions, they unfolded the flag, snapped it to full display, then folded it perfectly, sounded taps, and presented the flag to the next of kin. Simple, but moving!

To request Military Funeral Honors from CNRMA Casualty Assistance/Funeral Honors Support Program Manager Navy Region Mid-Atlantic:

1. Obtain the Honors Request Form CNIC 1770/1, which comes from CNICINST 1770.1B for Navy Honors for the **Mid-Atlantic** region. (The form is attached, but it may be necessary to look for the most updated version). Ensure all fields are completed, ensure the address provided is where the team will be expected to conduct honors. All changes to date, day, time, or location requires a re-submission immediately. It is imperative that they receive this information due to significant distances teams may travel if the service is not in the local area. Any changes received within 24 hours of the service are difficult to communicate.
2. Obtain and provide **Proof of Honorable Service** (DD214, Separation Papers, VA Letter, etc.). This MUST BE submitted with the Honors Request form in order for the request to be processed. The office does not have the ability to verify honorable service. A 48-hour notice is highly recommended, any requests received within 24-hrs of service will NOT be guaranteed.
3. You can contact the following office to request documentation of Honorable Service:
 - a. **VA office: 800-827-1000**
 - b. **National Personnel Records Center: 314-801-0800**
4. Obtain and provide a flag. The **Flag MUST BE** provided by Funeral Home or the Requester. Please retrieve a flag from the Post Office with the DD214 of the deceased. Recently we obtained a 3 x 5 flag that had been flown on a boat, but the honor guard was not prepared to use it because it was not the proper size. There are many ways to request a flag, but if you are requesting it with less than a week's notice, the Post Office is the best route. If you desire to have a flag for your service flown somewhere special, you should probably consider making those arrangements well in advance. To request a flag from the VA, via the Post Office, go to: <https://faq.usps.com/s/article/Burial-Flags> or contact the VA directly.
5. Submit the COMPLETED FORM via the following:
 - a. Email: cnrma_funeral_honors@navy.mil
 - b. Fax: 757-444-2767 For the States of: IL, IN, MI, NC, OH, VA, WI, WV, portions of MD and KY.
 - c. Fax: 860-694-3699 For the States of: CT, DE, ME, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, portions of MD and Canada.
 - d. Norfolk Office Ph: 1-866-203-7791
 - e. Groton Office Ph: 1-800-856-7091

Applicants seeking a burial flag should:

- Visit <https://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-27-2008-ARE.pdf> to fill out VA Form 27-2008, Application for United States Flag for Burial Purposes
- Submit a completed VA Form 27-2008 and attach a copy of the veteran's DD-214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty to your local Post Office™
- Applications can be submitted by family members or a funeral director acting on their behalf
- There is no time limit for requesting a flag

Lastly, don't forget that USSVI, and Hampton Roads Base in particular, are resources that are available to you AND your loved ones in time of need. The Base Chaplain should be well-versed in these procedures, and the Base CoB should be up to speed on Honors and Ceremonies. There are many sources of information out there, and none of us is as smart as all of us. If you have other questions or would like to see more articles related to this subject matter, let the Base Leadership know.

Please note: The two different forms are included below.

From our Base Commander, YNCM(SS/SW/AW) Ted Vorce, U.S.N. (Ret.)

Passing of a Veteran - What do I need to do now?

Checklist in the Event of a Veteran's Death:

IMMEDIATELY REPORT DEATH TO THE FOLLOWING AGENCIES:

VA Pension or Compensation (if veteran was receiving) to avoid an over-payment, you must notify the federal VA immediately at [1-800-827-1000](tel:1-800-827-1000). You will need the veteran's full name, social security number, branch of Service, DOB, and date of death

Social Security Office Bend Phone: [877-405-0302](tel:877-405-0302)

Date _____

DEERS Phone: [800-538-9552](tel:800-538-9552)

Date _____

DFAS (Retired military only) Phone: [888-332-7411](tel:888-332-7411)

Date _____

VA Sponsored Life Insurance Phone: [800-669-8477](tel:800-669-8477)

Date _____

SGLI Life Insurance (retired military only) Phone: [800-419-1473](tel:800-419-1473)

Date _____

VA healthcare (if vet was enrolled) Notify the clinic to which they were assigned. Bend CBOC

Phone: [541-647-5200](tel:541-647-5200)

Date _____

Secure a DD214 (Discharge papers from service)

You will need the veteran's DD214 to obtain a flag from the funeral home and obtain other federal VA benefits. If you do not have a DD214 you may submit an Urgent Request for Military Records to National Personnel Record Center.

To make an urgent burial request, you will need to complete request form SF 180 to the best of your ability.

<https://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/standard-form-180.html>

Please provide the Next of Kin's dated signature and proof of death.

Fax the request form to the urgent fax line which is [\(314\) 801-0764](tel:(314) 801-0764).

Make the fax to ATTN: URGENT BURIAL, and please provide the date and time needed for burial/memorial service. Be sure to include a good phone number so they can call if any questions arise and a return fax number with the name the fax is to be addressed.

Emergency requests are usually completed within 72 hours after receiving a faxed request. You can send a written request that includes the above information. That request can be faxed or mailed.

National Personnel Records Center
1 Archives Drive
St. Louis, MO63138

Make Funeral Arrangements (work with your funeral home):

National Cemetery Option (casket and cremated remains)

Veterans who die on active duty, or with discharges that are other than dishonorable, are entitled by law a grave-site in any national cemetery with available space, opening and closing of the grave. Additional burial benefits include perpetual care, a Government headstone or marker, a burial flag, and a Presidential Memorial Certificate, at no cost to the family.

Step 1: Fax Eligibility Documentation to 1-866-900-6417 *or* Scan and Email to NCA.Scheduling@va.gov

Step 2: Call 1-800-535-1117

It is encouraged that you visit the National Cemetery benefits page at

https://www.cem.va.gov/burial_benefits/need.asp where you will find useful information related to any burial requests and benefits.

BURIAL at SEA [1-866-787-0081](tel:1-866-787-0081)

Death Certificates on average run about \$25.00 each and the funeral home often talks people into buying more than they need. BE ADVISED most agencies, other than insurance companies, will accept a copy of the death certificate.

Burial at Sea

Burial at Sea is a means of final disposition of remains that is performed on United States Navy vessels. The committal ceremony is performed while the ship is deployed. **Therefore, family members are not allowed to be present.** The commanding officer of the ship assigned to perform the ceremony will notify the family of the date, time, and longitude and latitude once the committal service has been completed. The average amount of time, for burial at sea, is 12 to 18 months, once the remains/cremains are received at the port of embarkation.

Eligibility: Individuals eligible for this program are: (1) active duty members of the uniformed services; (2) retirees and veterans who were honorably discharged. (3) U.S. civilian marine personnel of the Military Sealift Command; and (4) dependent family members of active duty personnel, retirees, and veterans of the uniformed services.

How to get started: After the death of the individual for whom the request for Burial at Sea is being made, the Person Authorized to Direct Disposition (PADD) should contact the Navy and Marine Corps Mortuary Affairs office at 1-866-787-0081 to request a packet and for additional information.

Supporting documents which must accompany this request are:

- (1) a photocopy of the death certificate
- (2) the burial transit permit or the cremation certificate
- (3) a copy of the DD Form 214, discharge certificate, or retirement order.

The Burial at Sea Request Form and the three supporting documents listed above make up the Burial at Sea Request package.

Burial Flag: A Burial Flag is required for all committal services performed aboard United States Naval vessels, except family members, who are not authorized a burial flag. Following the services at sea, the flag that accompanied

the cremains/remains will be returned to the PADD. If the PADD does not wish to send a burial flag for the service, a flag will be provided by the Navy for the committal service, but will not be sent to the PADD.

Cremated Remains (Cremains): Cremains must be in an urn or temporary container (preferably Bio-degradable) to prevent spillage in shipping. Recent changes in law prohibit the discharge of plastics at sea. Families are encouraged to have the cremains inurned directly, or transferred to a sturdy biodegradable urn at their local funeral home to facilitate burial at sea. Burial at Sea Coordinators at the ports of embarkation are available to field any questions regarding the urns. The cremains, along with the completed Burial at Sea Request package should be forwarded to the Burial at Sea Coordinator at the desired port of embarkation (listed below). Prior to shipment, it is recommended that a phone call be made informing the coordinator of the pending request. ONLY Priority Mail Express Service is authorized when shipping cremains and it is recommended that that Tracking and Signature On Delivery is used to ensure the package is delivered to the correct individual in a timely manner.

Intact Remains (Casketed): Specific guidelines are required for the preparation of casketed remains. All expenses incurred in this process are the responsibility of the PADD, who will select a funeral home in the area of the port of embarkation. After this selection has been made and notification has been provided to the coordinator, the casketed remains, the request form, supporting documents, and the burial flag are to be forwarded to the receiving funeral home. The coordinator will make the inspection and complete the checklist for the preparation of casketed remains. It is recommended that funeral homes responsible for preparing and shipping intact remains contact the Mortuary Services office at Navy Casualty in Millington, TN to receive the preparation requirements.

POR TS OF EMBARKATION / COORDINATORS

Questions concerning Burial-at-Sea?

Please call Monday - Friday, 0730-1600 Central Time

Toll Free: (866) 787-0081

Norfolk, VA

Commander, Naval Medical Center
ATTN: Code 0210C
620 John Paul Jones Cir.
Portsmouth, VA 23708-5100
Phone: (757) 953-2617 or 2618

Everything locally goes through the Office of
Decedent's Affairs at NMC-Portsmouth

Jacksonville, FL

Officer in Charge
Naval Hospital Branch Clinic
P. O. Box 280148
Naval Station
Mayport, FL 32228-0148
Phone: (904) 270-4285

San Diego, CA

Commanding Officer
Naval Medical Center
Decedent Affairs Code: 09OASan Diego, CA 92134-
5000
Phone: (800) 290-7410

Bremerton, WA

Commanding Officer
Naval Hospital Bremerton
Code 015-BAS/HPO1 Boone Road
Bremerton, WA 98312-1898
Phone: (360) 475-4313

Honolulu, HI

Navy Liaison Unit
Tripler Army Medical Center
Tripler AMC, HI 96859-5000