



Welcome!

**Delaware Valley Veterans Consortium
Summer Quarterly Meeting
July 21, 2023**



Corporal Michael J Crescenz VA Medical Center

Integrity – Commitment – Advocacy – Respect - Excellence

Veteran Care and Hospice

Deborah Way, MD FAAHPM

Erin Haley, MD PhD

Palliative Care



VA

U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

Veterans Health Administration

Corporal Michael J. Crescenz VA Medical Center

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What is Hospice Care?

- Care for persons with terminal illness
- Two physicians agree that prognosis is 6 months or less
- Person and family agree to comfort directed care
- No active, life prolonging, cure directed treatment

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Hospice Services

- Routine level of care
- General Inpatient level of care
 - Community
 - VA Hospice and Palliative Care Unit (HPCU)
- Respite level of care
- Continuous care

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The VA and Hospice Care

- All enrolled Veterans are entitled to hospice care as part of their health care benefits
- Hospice Care is provided by community hospice agencies who partner with the VA
- Veteran has option for VA to fund their hospice care

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What is Different About VA and Hospice – Part 1

- Routine level of care provided wherever Veteran calls home
- If Veteran not able to stay in their home, VA provides room and board at a community nursing home contracted with VA
 - Office of Community Care
- As long as Veteran meets eligibility guidelines for hospice, VA will provide funding for facility stay and funding for hospice
- No additional services funded, including PT/OT/SLP

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What is Different About VA and Hospice – Part 2

If a Veteran is admitted to a hospital for a reason unrelated to their hospice diagnosis, hospice does not need to discharge.

Caveats:

- If a Veteran is admitted to a VA hospital for five nights or fewer, hospice does not need to discharge
- Hospice agency **MUST** continue to provide care and be able to show documentation of:
 - Visits or phone calls to Veteran
 - Phone calls to family
 - At least twice during stay
 - Case management/collaboration with VA provider and Social Work staff for seamless integration back to their home

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Concurrent Care-Part 1

- Veteran may receive hospice care AND other care provided they are hospice eligible
- VA will not duplicate services that hospice is required to provide
- Examples of appropriate concurrent care:
 - Extra visits by HHA
 - Extra visits for complex wound care needs
 - Simple rehabilitation needs

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Concurrent Care-Part 2

- VA will continue to provide treatments to Veterans who are receiving hospice services:
 - Provider visits
 - Medications that are not covered by hospice
 - Infusions and Transfusions
 - Radiation treatment
 - Procedures such as paracentesis and thoracentesis

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Contact Information

Crescenz VA Medical Center Palliative Care

215-266-6352

during normal business hours – 8 am-4:30 pm

VHAPHIPalliativeCareTeam@va.gov

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PENN MEDICINE HOSPICE

Volunteer Services

Kaelynn R. Williams

Volunteer Coordinator, Penn Medicine at Home

July 21, 2023



The Role of the Hospice Volunteer

VOLUNTEERS WERE RESPONSIBLE FOR FOUNDING HOSPICE CARE AND THEY REMAIN A CORNERSTONE TODAY. VOLUNTEERS CONTINUE TO PLAY AN ESSENTIAL ROLE IN HOSPICE CARE AND MAKE VITAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO PATIENTS AND FAMILIES.

- **Patient Visitors:**
 - Companionship
 - Caregiver relief
 - **Vet-to-Vet visitors**
 - Bakers/Cooks
- Administrative
 - Bereavement
 - Knitting/Crocheting
 - Letters of Hope
 - Reiki Therapy
 - Pet Therapy



What is We Honor Veterans (WHV)?

- National awareness and action campaign
- Developed by National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization (NHPCO)
- In collaboration with Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- Encourage partnerships between community hospices, state hospice organizations and VA facilities

Levels of Commitment:

Recruit: Get oriented and commit

Level 1: Provide Veteran-centric education

Level 2: Build organizational capacity

Level 3: Develop and strengthen relationships

Level 4: Increase access and improve quality

Level 5: Expand partnerships with other organizations in your community and other hospice providers to share knowledge and server as a mentor



WE HONOR VETERANS (WHV)

VETERANS ARE HONORED BY HOSPICE TEAM WITH PRESENTATION OF THE FOLLOWING:



- Certificate of Service
- Service Pin
- Handmade *"thank you for your service card"* created by hospice volunteers
- Red, white, blue blanket knitted by hospice volunteers

Vet-to-Vet Volunteer Program

- *Veteran-Volunteers* are paired with hospice patients who have been identified as Veterans.
- *Veteran-Volunteers* then have the unique ability to relate and connect with the patient-vet to create an environment where life review and healing may occur.



Credit: Coastal Hospice

Why are Veteran Volunteers Important?

- Potential for better match of patients and volunteers based on similar areas of interest and background
- People who have common life experiences usually begin to trust each other
- Veterans can form a camaraderie that can penetrate their civilian social roles
- The culture of stoicism & societal reactions can discourage Veterans from sharing their war experiences
- When one Veteran talks to another, stoicism and secrecy may dissolve
- Veterans share a common language; code of conduct and honor
- Sharing supports life review and healing



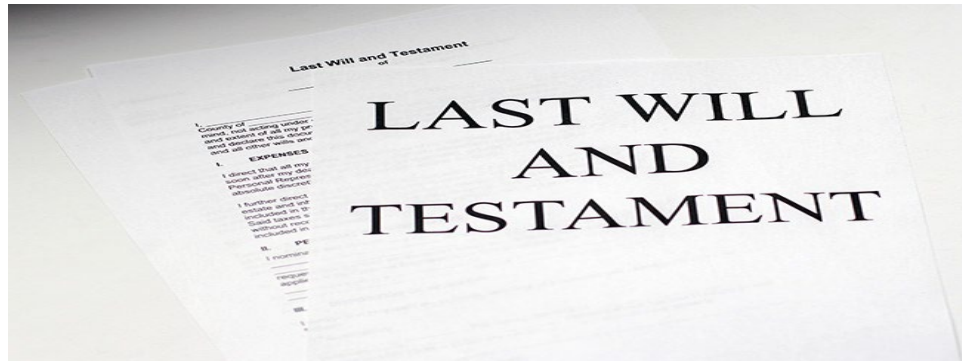
Last Will and Testament

Your Last Wishes



The Last Will and Testament

A Legal document created by you that **communicates your final wishes** to all concerned regarding the transfer of your personally - owned property and the long-term care and custody of your minor children.



Will - Details

- The Will is how property owned “Fee Simple” is transferred
- Names the executor for the probate (transfer) process
- Names the guardian(s) for your minor children
- Establishes a testamentary trust(s) if necessary
- Names legatees and specifies inheritances
- Communicates any special instructions you might have



Will - Preparation

- Should be written in accordance with the laws of your state of residence and updated when necessary.
- Your wishes should be clearly communicated
- Your will should be signed, witnessed, and notarized
- Can be accompanied by a side letter of instruction to explain your intentions



Dying Without a Will

A Judge Decides





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End-of-Life Benefits



FULFILLING OUR PROMISES
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

Philadelphia National Service Office Staff

Supervisor/NAS

Joseph Kauffman

Assistant Supervisor

Tim Alexander

Sr. Associate NSO

Jesse Butler

NSO Apprentice

Leni Komninos

NSO Apprentice

Danny Wyatt Jr.

NSO Apprentice

Casey Maher

Support Staff

Christine McCloskey

Support Staff

Linda Isham



Philadelphia National Service Office

Philadelphia National Service Office

ATTN: DAV

**5000 Wissahickon Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19144**

Phone: 215-381-3065

Email: DAV.VBAPHI@VA.GOV

Introduction

TOPICS

- **Pre-need determination of eligibility for burial in a VA National cemetery**
- **Notification of the claimant's passing**
- **Burial benefits**
- **Potential survivor benefits**

Pre-need Determination for Burial

- **Eligibility:** Any veteran who did not receive a dishonorable discharge, the veteran's legal spouse (widow or widower), unmarried children under the age of 21.
- **VA Form 40-10007 and DD-214.**



Notification of the Claimant's Passing

Veterans and Surviving Spouses in receipt of VA benefits.

- **The VA must be notified as soon as possible of the claimant's passing to avoid possible overpayment.**
- **A family member can contact DAV or the VA directly at 800-827-1000. You will need the veteran's claim number or social security number to accomplish this.**

Burial Benefits

- **The cause of the veteran's passing is related to a service connected disability: \$2,000.00**
- **The cause of the veteran's passing not related to a service-connected disability, or was hospitalized by the VA at the time of their passing: \$893.00**
- **Headstones, grave markers, Presidential memorial certificates.**

Potential Survivor Benefits

- **Two types of benefits: Dependency Indemnity Compensation (DIC), Survivors pension.**
- **The surviving spouse must have been married to the veteran for one year prior to this passing.**
- **DIC basic qualifications:**
 - **The veteran died on active duty, active-duty training, or inactive-duty training**
 - **Passed away from a service-connected disability (primary or contributing factors)**

Potential Survivor Benefits

- **DIC basic qualifications (cont.):**
 - The veteran was in receipt of 100% disability compensation, or a total disability based on individual unemployability (TDIU) for at least 10 years.
 - If the surviving spouse remarried on or after December 16, 2003, and was 57 years of age or older, he/she can qualify for the benefit.
 - If the surviving spouse remarried on or after January 5, 2021, and was 55 years of age or older, he/she can qualify for the benefit.

Potential Survivor Benefits

- **Survivors pension:**
 - **The surviving spouse must have been married to the veteran for one year prior to this passing.**
 - **Before September 7, 1980, the veteran must have served at least 90 days of active duty with one day of wartime service.**
 - **After 7, 1980, the veteran must have served at least 24 months on active duty, or the full period they were called to active duty with at least one day of wartime service.**

Potential Survivor Benefits

- **Survivors pension (cont.):**
 - **Additionally, surviving children under the age of 18, or under the age of 23 and attending a VA approved school, or who were unable to care for themselves due to a disability before the age of 18, are potentially eligible.**
- **This is an income and net worth needs-based program.**
- **Net worth cannot exceed \$150,538.00, does not include primary residence and one vehicle.**

Potential Survivor Benefits

- **Survivors pension (cont.):**
 - **Annual income from all sources (pension, social security, annuities, IRA; etc.) cannot exceed \$16,037.00.**
 - **Out of pocket medical expenses can be taken into consideration to reduce annual income.**
 - **Three-year look back: Ensure assets were not transferred for less than fair market value to reduce overall net worth.**

Potential Survivor Benefits

- **Aid and Attendance and Housebound**
 - **This is not a stand-alone benefit.**
 - **The surviving spouse must be eligible for either the DIC or survivors' pension to apply.**
 - **Pays additional money each month to cover the cost of in-home health service, assisted living facility, or nursing home costs.**

Questions?



WASHINGTON CROSSING NATIONAL CEMETERY



NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON CROSSING **ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL IN A VA NATIONAL CEMETERY**

- **Who's eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery?**
- Veterans, service members, spouses, and dependents may be eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery, as well as other benefits, if they meet one of the requirements listed below.
- **One of these must be true. The person qualifying for burial benefits is:**
- A Veteran who didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, **or**
- A service member who died while on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty for training, **or**
- The spouse or minor child of a Veteran, even if the Veteran died first, **or**
- In some cases, the unmarried adult dependent child of a Veteran

WASHINGTON CROSSING ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL IN A VA NATIONAL CEMETERY



- U.S. citizen who served in the armed forces of a U.S. ally during wartime may be eligible if they meet both of the requirements listed below.
- **Both of these must be true. The service member:**
- Ended their last active service honorably by death or otherwise, **and**
- Was a U.S. citizen at the time they entered their last active service and at the time of their death

WASHINGTON CROSSING ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL IN A VA NATIONAL CEMETERY

- **National Guard and Reserve members**
- A National Guard or Reserve member may be eligible if they meet any of the requirements listed below.
- **At least one of these must be true. The National Guard or Reserve member:**
- Met their legal minimum active-duty service requirements, was called up to active duty and served their full term of service, and didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, **or**
- Was entitled to retirement pay at their time of death, or would have been entitled to retirement pay if they weren't under 60 years of age at the time of death, **or**
- Died while hospitalized or getting treatment at the expense of the U.S. for an injury or illness that occurred while they were performing active-duty services for training or inactive-duty training under honorable conditions, **or**
- Became disabled or died from a disease or injury caused—or made worse—by their active-duty service during a period of active duty for training, **or**
- Became disabled or died from an injury or certain cardiovascular disorders caused—or made worse—by their active-duty service during a period of inactive-duty training



WASHINGTON CROSSING ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL IN A VA NATIONAL CEMETERY

- **Certain family members**
- These family members aren't eligible:
- A former spouse who isn't also a Veteran whose marriage to an eligible Veteran or service member ended by annulment or divorce
- Family members of a Veteran convicted of subversive activities (unless the Veteran receives a pardon from the President of the United States)
- Other family members who don't meet the eligibility requirements



WASHINGTON CROSSING **PRE-NEEDS**

- You can apply to find out in advance if you can be buried in a VA national cemetery. This is called a pre-need determination of eligibility—and it can help make the burial planning process easier for your family members in their time of need. Follow the steps below to apply. [Download VA Form 40-10007 \(PDF\)](#)
- **What information do I need to apply?**
- To apply, you'll need your (or your sponsor's):
 - Social Security number
 - Date and place of birth
 - Military status and service history (like service dates, discharge character, and rank—commonly found on the DD214 or other separation documents)
 - Discharge papers (DD214 or other separation documents)
Note: If you don't have discharge papers, [find out how to request the DD214](#).
- **If you're applying as a spouse, surviving spouse, or unmarried adult child**, you'll also need your personal information, including your Social Security number.
- **If you're applying on behalf of someone else**, you'll also need supporting documents showing you have the authority to apply for that person. You'll need to fill out one of these forms:

WASHINGTON CROSSING SCHEDULE A BURIAL FOR A VETERAN OR FAMILY MEMBER

- **How do I schedule a burial for a Veteran or other family member?**
- **If you have a pre-need decision letter that confirms eligibility**
- To start, you may want to choose a funeral director to help you plan the burial. Then either you or the funeral director can call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at [800-535-1117](tel:800-535-1117) to request a burial.
- Keep in mind that the pre-need decision letter doesn't identify a specific cemetery or gravesite, since it's not possible to reserve these in advance. In some cases, we may review your eligibility again at your time of death, as laws and circumstances may have changed since your pre-need application.
- You don't need to do anything else except prepare yourself and your family for the funeral.
[Find out what to expect at a military funeral or memorial service](#)
- **If you don't have a pre-need decision letter**
- To start, you may want to choose a funeral director to help you plan the burial. Then either you or the funeral director will need to take these 3 steps to schedule the burial.
- **Gather the information and documents you'll need to identify the deceased when you call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office**
- You'll need the DD214 or other discharge documents of the Veteran or service member whose military service will be used to determine eligibility for burial in a VA national cemetery. Their discharge from service needs to have been under conditions other than dishonorable.
- We may also need other documents to verify a relationship to a Veteran or the status of a dependent. These may include a death certificate, letters from your doctor, a divorce decree, a statement from the Social Security Administration, or other documents to support your claim.
- [Find out which discharge documents we accept along with your application](#)
[Find out how to request the Veteran's DD214](#)
[Use this helpful checklist to help you organize your documents \(PDF\)](#)

WASHINGTON CROSSING TYPES OF BURIALS

- Casket Burials.
- Preplaced crypts.
- Crypts hold two caskets.
- Upright headstone.



WASHINGTON CROSSING TYPES OF BURIALS

- Columbarium Wall
- Niche Dimension (18" deep 12" high 7 ½" wide)
- Marble niche cover with veteran, spouse information.



WASHINGTON CROSSING COMMITTAL SERVICE

- Every family is entitled to a 30-minute committal service.
- Military honors (flag folding, taps & rifles)
- Military branch folds flag.
- Guardian of the National Cemetery perform taps and Riffls salute.



WASHINGTON CROSSING TYPES OF BURIALS

- Cremains In Ground
- Upright Headstone



WASHINGTON CROSSING QUESTIONS

