

## § 12.5

### § 12.5 Interments.

(a) *Who may be interred.* A person's eligibility for burial in a national cemetery is determined in accordance with the provisions of Federal statutory law. Interments are conducted in accordance with NPS policy and VA Policy.

(b) *Burial permit.* (1) A burial permit is required in accordance with the laws and regulations of the State and local municipality within whose boundaries the cemetery is located.

(2) The remains of a member of the Armed Forces who dies on active duty may be interred prior to receipt of a burial permit.

(3) The superintendent shall process a burial permit in accordance with VA Policy.

(c) *Gravesite assignment.* (1) Gravesite assignment and allotment are made according to VA Policy which specifies that only one gravesite is authorized for the burial of an eligible member of the Armed Forces and eligible immediate family members. Exceptions to this practice may be approved only by the Director.

(2) The superintendent is responsible for the actual assignment of a gravesite.

(3) The superintendent may not accept a new gravesite reservation. A gravesite reservation granted in writing prior to the adoption of the one-gravesite-per-family-unit restriction shall be honored as long as the person remains eligible.

(d) *Burial sections.* (1) The superintendent of each national cemetery shall develop an interment plan for burial sections in keeping with the historic character of the national cemetery, to be approved by the Regional Director.

(2) The superintendent shall specify gravesite dimensions that conform to the historic design of the national cemetery.

(3) Expansion of a burial section is prohibited without the approval of the Regional Director.

(4) An interment is authorized only within a burial section; the superintendent may not authorize an interment within a memorial section.

(5) Cremated remains may be scattered in a national cemetery in con-

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formance with the provisions of § 2.62 of this chapter and applicable State laws.

(6) Expansion of a national cemetery outside the confines of its historic enclosure is prohibited.

### § 12.6 Disinterments and exhumations.

(a) Interment of an eligible person's remains is considered permanent. Disinterment and removal of remains are allowed only for the most compelling of reasons and may be accomplished only under the supervision of the superintendent.

(b) Except for a directed exhumation conducted pursuant to paragraph (f) of this section, a disinterment is allowed only pursuant to the terms and conditions of a permit issued by the superintendent.

(c) A disinterment shall be accomplished at no cost to the National Park Service. The superintendent shall establish a fee designed to recover the costs associated with supervising and administering a disinterment, including the costs of opening and closing the grave and redressing any disturbed graves or headstones.

(d) The next-of-kin is responsible for making all arrangements and incurring all financial obligations related to a disinterment. These arrangements and obligations include, but are not limited to the following:

(1) Compliance with State and local health laws and regulations;

(2) Engaging a funeral director;

(3) Recasketing the remains;

(4) Rehabilitation of the gravesite according to conditions established by the superintendent;

(5) Providing the superintendent a notarized affidavit by each living close relative of the deceased and by the person who directed the initial interment, if living, and even though the legal relationship of such person to the decedent may have changed, granting permission for the disinterment; and

(6) Providing the superintendent a sworn statement, by a person having first hand knowledge thereof, that those who supplied such affidavits comprise all the living close relatives of the decedent, including the person who directed the initial interment.

(e) The following are prohibited:

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(1) Failure to obtain a permit required pursuant to this section;

(2) Violation of a condition established by the superintendent or of a term or condition of a permit issued in accordance with this section; or

(3) Failure to pay a fee prescribed by the superintendent in accordance with this section.

(f) The directed exhumation of an eligible person's remains shall be accomplished upon receipt by the superintendent of an order issued by a State or Federal court of competent jurisdiction. The superintendent shall retain court orders and other pertinent documents in the national cemetery files as a permanent record of the action.

(g) To the extent practicable, a directed exhumation shall be accomplished without expense to the National Park Service and without direct participation by national cemetery employees.

(h) The superintendent shall coordinate a directed exhumation with the ordering court, assure compliance with all State and local laws and supervise disinterment activities on site.

(i) If reinterment of exhumed remains is to be elsewhere, the superintendent may reassign the gravesite for use in connection with another interment.

### § 12.7 Headstones and markers.

(a) Government headstones and markers authorized to be furnished at government expense are provided in accordance with NPS Policy and VA Policy.

(b) The erection of a marker or monument at private expense to mark a grave in lieu of a government headstone or marker is allowed only in certain national cemetery sections in which private headstones and markers were authorized as of January 1, 1947, and only with the prior approval of the Director. The name of the person(s) responsible for the purchase and erection of the private headstone or marker may not appear on the headstone or marker or be identified elsewhere in the cemetery as the donor(s) of the private headstone or marker.

(c) A person who requests authorization to erect a private headstone or

marker shall provide the following information:

(1) A list of the names of each person to be inscribed upon the private headstone or marker;

(2) The written approval of the next-of-kin and the person who directed the burial of each person whose name is to be inscribed; and

(3) A scale plan depicting the details of design, materials, finish, carving, lettering and arrangement of the inscription and the foundation of the proposed private headstone or marker.

(d) The Director's approval of a request is conditioned upon the applicant's granting to the National Park Service the substantive right to remove and dispose of the private headstone or marker if, after it is installed, the applicant fails to maintain the private headstone or marker in a condition specified by the Director.

(e) When a private headstone or marker has been erected at a veteran's grave in a national cemetery, and the next-of-kin desires to inscribe thereon the name and appropriate data pertaining to an eligible family member of the deceased whose remains will not be interred, such inscription may be accomplished with the prior approval of the superintendent. Appropriate commemorative data may be inscribed when space permits. The words "In Memoriam" or "In Memory Of" are mandatory elements of such an inscription.

(f) Except as may be authorized by the Director or by Federal statutory law for making a group burial, the erection of a mausoleum, an overground vault or a headstone or marker determined by the superintendent not to be in keeping with the historic character of the national cemetery is prohibited. An underground vault may be placed at the time of interment at no expense to the National Park Service.

### § 12.8 Memorial headstones and markers.

(a) *Who may be memorialized.* (1) A person's eligibility for memorialization in a national cemetery is determined in accordance with the provisions of Federal statutory law.

(2) The superintendent may authorize the installation of a memorial headstone or marker of an eligible person