



Alabama National Cemetery

3133 Highway 119
Montevallo, AL 35115

Phone: 205-665-9039/205-665-1755

Fax: 205-665-7790

National Cemetery Administration Website:

www.cem.va.gov

This information is furnished for veterans and family members for the purpose of answering questions about Alabama National Cemetery. If you have questions please call us at one of the above numbers.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Who is eligible to be buried in the National Cemetery?

- Most veterans who have been discharged from active duty military service under other than dishonorable conditions are entitled to burial in a National Cemetery.
- There are time restrictions for enlisted personnel who began their active service after September 7, 1980 and officer personnel who entered service after October 17, 1981. They must have completed 24 months of continuous service or the full period for which called to active duty, whichever is shorter.
- Veterans discharged due to a hardship discharge or a service-connected disability prior to completing 24 months of continuous service
- Any member of the US Armed Forces who dies while serving on active duty
- Any person who has retired from the Army or Air National Guard or from the Reserves
- The spouse of an eligible active duty member or veteran, even if the veteran or active duty member is not interred in a National Cemetery

Minor dependent children of an eligible active duty member or veteran who are unmarried and under age 21 have entitlement to National Cemetery burial. A dependent child who has reached age 21 and is pursuing a course of instruction in an approved educational institution retains their eligibility until they reach age 23. The veteran's or active duty member's unmarried adult children who are incapable of self-support due to a permanent disability sustained prior to reaching age 21 can be buried in the National Cemetery. The adult child's next of kin must provide the following documents to the cemetery at the time of burial: (a) a statement of the decedent's marital status, (b) a statement of the degree of dependency; and (c) a statement from the attending physician as to the nature and duration of the disability.

Can the spouse be interred before the veteran at a National Cemetery?

If the spouse of an eligible veteran passes away before the veteran, the spouse may be interred at a National Cemetery. Space for the veteran will be reserved in the same site.

What is inscribed on the marker?

Mandatory items on the marker for a veteran are: name of decedent, branch(es) of service, years of birth and death. Optional items inscribed at Government expense may include: religious emblem, grade, rate or rank and war service(s). Space permitting, an additional inscription is available at government expense.

How does one arrange for burial in the National Cemetery?

Because there are no advanced arrangements to be made, when death occurs the next of kin of the decedent should contact a funeral home, providing a copy of the veteran's discharge document or whatever military service-related documents are available. To schedule an interment the funeral director will contact the National Cemetery Scheduling Office. First, fax all discharge documentation to 1-866-900-6417 and follow-up with a phone call to 1-800-535-1117. The complete name of the veteran, along with military rank, service and social security numbers and any VA Claim number; dates of service; date and place of birth and death should also be furnished. If all of this information is not available, as much as possible should be provided. Because the military service of each veteran must be verified, failure to provide the required data may result in a delay of burial.

A tentative date for the interment may be set pending verification of military service. Verification of military service is usually accomplished within two work days; however, some cases may take longer. When verification is complete, the cemetery staff will notify the funeral director that burial is authorized. The proposed date and time for the interment should not be announced nor should the decedent be transported to the National Cemetery until the funeral director has been notified that the interment is authorized.

What are the floral regulations at the National Cemetery?

Fresh cut flowers may be placed on the graves at any time. Flowers will be removed from graves and disposed of by cemetery personnel when they become unsightly. Artificial flowers will be permitted on graves during the period from October 1 through April 1. Artificial flowers and potted plants are permitted on graves 10 days before through 10 days after Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, and Veterans Day. During the Christmas season, Christmas wreaths, potted plants, and floral blankets will be permitted from December 15 through January 20. Unauthorized decorations such as permanent plantings, statues, vigil lights, upright metal grave markers (flag holders), breakable objects of any kind and similar commemorative items are not permitted on graves. Floral attachments to headstones will be removed.

Where are the interment services held in the National Cemetery?

All funeral services will be held at a permanent committal shelter, located away from the gravesite. The shelter affords the family an intimate setting for the funeral service. When the committal service is over, cemetery personnel will transport the deceased to the actual gravesite for immediate burial.