

Burial Benefits Offered by VA

1. **Eligibility** - Veterans discharged from active military service under “Other than Dishonorable Conditions” may be eligible for VA burial benefits at no cost. National Guard /Reserve personnel with twenty (20) or more years of service are also eligible for burial benefits as are certain civilian personnel. A complete list of eligibility criteria may be found at http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/burial_benefits/eligible.asp. A legible copy of the veteran’s **discharge documents is required** to verify eligibility before any benefits may be provided. Although not immediately required, a copy of the death certificate will also be necessary.

2. **Benefits**

a. Interment at any Veteran’s Cemetery with available space

- (1) Opening and closing of the grave or columbarium
- (2) Perpetual Care
- (3) Gravesite may be shared with eligible dependents:
 - Legal Spouse
 - Single adult child up to age 21 (or age 23 if attending school FT)
 - Single adult child who is permanently disabled & incapable of self- support prior to their 21st birthday (Medical verification is required.)

b. Government Headstone

- (1) Includes engraving, shipping and placement on the grave
- (2) Dependents buried in a veteran’s cemetery **are eligible** for a Government-furnished headstone or marker
- (3) Dependents buried in a private/public cemetery **are not eligible** for a Government-furnished headstone or marker

c. American Flag

- (1) One (1) American Flag is provided to the NOK as a keepsake and may be used to drape the casket or accompany the urn of the veteran.
- (2) Guard and Reserve personnel are also entitled to an American Flag, but only if they completed at least one (1) period of enlistment or died while on active duty for training.

d. Presidential Memorial Certificate

Honors the service of the veteran and bears the stamped signature of the President of the United States

Military Funeral Honors **Provided by the Department of Defense (DOD)**

It is the family’s responsibility to work directly with the Veterans “Branch of Service”. Please contact the specific branch for “Military Funeral Honors Request Assistance”.

For your convenience, I have provided the contact numbers below:

Army - 808-655-5124
Marine Corps – 808-257-7712
Navy – 808-368-3202
Air Force and Space Force – 808-448-0955
Coast Guard – 808-842-2992

Survivor's Benefits Offered by the VA

1. Reporting Death of a Veteran - The surviving spouse of a deceased veteran who was receiving VA compensation or pension benefits at the time of death are responsible for notifying VA of the veteran's death by calling 1-800-827-1000. Upon notification, the VA will discontinue all future monthly payments. The surviving spouse is eligible to receive the veteran's final monthly VA compensation or pension payment. This is called the "Month of Death Benefit". Because VA does not always know if a veteran is survived by a spouse, some surviving spouses will receive the month-of-death benefit automatically while others must submit a paper application (VA Form 21-6898) and a photocopy of the couple's marriage and veteran's death certificate. When calling VA, ask if you may apply over the telephone or if you must submit an application.

2. VA Life Insurance - The VA offers various types of life insurance within which your veteran may have been enrolled. Call the following numbers to find out if your veteran was signed up for any of the insurance programs: Service-Disabled Veterans Life Insurance (1-800-669-8477) and All Others (1-800-419-1473). If covered, they will provide application instructions.

3. Survivor Benefits Eligibility - Survivors of Veterans who were discharged "Under Honorable Conditions" may be eligible to receive death-related benefits from the VA if they meet certain eligibility criteria. The benefits and criteria are:

a. Death (Widows) Pension

Paid to widows and dependent children of honorably discharged veterans who:

- Served a minimum of 90-days of active service AND
- Served at least 1-day during a time of war

NOTE 1: Amount depends on total annual income below established threshold

NOTE 2: There is no time limit to apply

b. Dependency & Indemnity Compensation (DIC)

Paid to widows/dependent children meeting the following criteria:

- Death resulted from VA "service-related" disability **OR**
- Death resulted from a "service connected" disability **OR**
- Vet was 100% VA "s/c" disabled for 10-yrs prior to death

NOTE 2: There is no time limit to apply

c. Burial Allowance - REQUEST VA FORM 21P-530 - Call 808-433-0505.

Limited partial reimbursement of burial/funeral expenses if:

- Veteran was rated s/c disabled by the VA **OR**
- Veteran death resulted from a "service related" disability
- Veteran was receiving a VA Pension **OR**
- Death occurred while admitted to a VA medical facility or non-VA medical facility at VA expense

NOTE 1: One-time partial reimbursement of cost incurred by NOK for funeral and mortuary services (Provide itemized contract & paid receipt)

NOTE 2: Reimbursement cannot be made to deceased Veteran

NOTE 3: There is a 2-year time limit to apply

Application - A legible copy of the veteran's Discharge Documents, Death Certificate and proof of relationship is required to verify eligibility before benefits may be paid.

What Is Death Pension ?

Death Pension is a benefit paid to eligible dependents of deceased wartime veterans.

Who Is Eligible ?

You may be eligible if:

- the deceased veteran was discharged from service under other than dishonorable conditions, **AND**
- he or she served 90 days or more of active duty with at least 1 day during a period of war time. However, 38 CFR 3.12a requires that anyone who enlists after 9/7/80 generally has to serve at least 24 months or the full period for which a person was called or ordered to active duty in order to receive any benefits based on that period of service. With the advent of the Gulf War on 8/2/90 (and still not ended by Congress to this day), veterans can now serve after 9/7/80 during a period of wartime. When they do, they generally now must serve 24 months to be eligible for pension or any other benefits. But note the exclusions in 38 CFR 3.12(d), **AND**
- you are the surviving spouse or unmarried child of the deceased veteran, **AND**
- your countable income is below a yearly limit set by law

INCOME LIMITS (EFFECTIVE DECEMBER 1, 2021)	
<i>If you are a...</i>	<i>Your yearly income must be less than...</i>
Surviving spouse with no dependent children	\$ 9,896
Surviving child (no eligible parent)	\$ 2,523
<i>Note: Some income is not counted toward the yearly limit (for example, welfare benefits, some wages earned by dependent children, and Supplemental Security Income)</i>	

How Much Does VA Pay?

VA pays you the difference between your countable income and the yearly income limit which describes your situation (see chart above). This difference is generally paid in 12 equal monthly payments rounded down to the nearest dollar.

<https://www.va.gov/pension/survivors-pension-rates/>



What Is DIC?

DIC is a monthly benefit paid to eligible survivors of a:

- Military service member who died while on active duty, OR
- Veteran whose death resulted from a service-related injury or disease, OR
- Veteran whose death resulted from a non-service-related injury or disease, and who was receiving, or was entitled to receive, VA Compensation for service-connected disability that was rated as totally disabling:
 - * for at least 10 years immediately before death, OR
 - * since the veteran's release from active duty and for at least five years immediately preceding death, OR
 - * for at least one year before death if the veteran was a former prisoner of war who died after September 30, 1999.

Who is Eligible?

The *surviving spouse* if he or she:

- validly married the veteran before January 1, 1957, OR
- was married to a service member who died on active duty, OR
- married the veteran within 15 years of discharge from the period of military service in which the disease or injury that caused the veteran's death began or was aggravated, OR
- was married to the veteran for at least one year, OR
- had a child with the veteran, AND
- cohabited with the veteran continuously until the veteran's death or, if separated, was not at fault for the separation, AND
- is not currently remarried. *

**Note: A surviving spouse who remarries on or after December 16, 2003, and on or after attaining age 57, is entitled to continue to receive DIC.*

The *surviving child(ren)* if he/she is:

- not included on the surviving spouse's DIC AND
- unmarried AND
- under age 18, or between the ages of 18 and 23 and attending school DIC is \$301.74.
- ***Surviving child with no eligible parent or helpless adult children are entitled to DIC at \$607.02.***

The *surviving parent(s)* may be eligible for an income-based benefit.

How Much Does VA Pay?

The basic monthly rate of DIC is \$1,437.66 for an eligible surviving spouse.

Additional compensation may be added depending on circumstances, please refer to webpage for details:

<https://www.va.gov/disability/survivor-dic-rates/>

What Are VA Burial Allowances?

VA burial allowances are a partial reimbursement of an eligible veteran's burial and funeral costs.

Who Is Eligible?

You may be eligible for a VA burial allowance if:

- you are the NOK and paid for the veteran's burial/funeral expenses **AND**
- you have not been reimbursed by any source **AND**
- the veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.

NOTE: If multiple applicants, payment will go to NOK.

In addition, at least one of the following conditions must be met:

- the veteran died because of a service-related disability **OR**
- the veteran was receiving VA pension or compensation at the time of death **OR**
- the veteran was entitled to receive VA pension or compensation, but decided not to reduce his/her military retirement or disability pay **OR**
- the veteran died in a VA hospital, in a nursing home under VA contract, or while in an approved state nursing home.

How Much Does VA Pay?

Service-Connected Death

- If the Veteran died on or after September 11, 2001, the maximum service-connected burial allowance is **\$2,000**.

Non-Service-Connected Death

- If death occurred on or after October 1, 2021, VA will pay a **\$300** burial allowance. If the Veteran dies while admitted to a VA Medical Facility or while admitted to a non-VA medical facility at VA expense the VA will pay a higher amount of **\$828**.
- Claims must be received by VA within 2 years of the veteran's burial or cremation date.
- Transportation costs may be reimbursed if Veteran passed under VA medical care with official documentation.

Burial Planning at the Kauai Veterans Cemetery

Introduction - Veteran's cemeteries are a place of peace, tranquility and reflection befitting the sacrifices of those who rest there. Across America, these hallowed grounds inspire generations of citizens to understand and appreciate the great personal sacrifice required of military service. Shared by privates and generals alike, these shrines remind us that - as in the beginning - we are all equal in the end.

The Kauai Veterans Cemetery (KVC) and Committal Shelter are government property. Your request to utilize these facilities is with the understanding that you, your family and guests will comply with regulations established by the VA's National Cemetery Administration.

No food or beverages (other than water) are allowed at any KVC Interment Service.

1. Hours of Operation

- Cemetery grounds are open 24-hours a day to visitors and guests.
- "Committal Services" may be scheduled at **9:00am, 11:00am or 1:00pm only**.
Mon – Sat. (No Sunday's or Holidays) Maximum of 3 per day.
- One hour (60 minutes) is the permitted duration of "Committal Services" at KVC.

2. Hawaii Office of Veterans' Services - 808-369-3535

- Provide VA burial/survivors benefits briefings and application assistance.
- Assist family by coordinating cemetery use with the County Parks & Rec Dept.
- No more than 3 services may be scheduled in one day, with one-hour vacant between all scheduled services to permit cemetery staff ample prep time.
- Initiate request for Headstones/Markers/Memorial Certificates.

3. Cemetery Staff Supervisor, Junior (808) 635-0314

- Responsible for the daily operation and maintenance of the Veterans Cemetery.
- Prepares gravesite / committal shelter for scheduled services.
- Functions as on-site Cemetery Coordinator to resolve all conflicts.

4. Mortuary Staff

- Delivers casketed remains to the Veterans Cemetery on the day of burial.
- Ensures casket is sealed prior to arrival at the cemetery.
- Coordinates pallbearers with next-of-kin.
- Provides temporary markers.
- Coordinates Military Funeral Honors with each branch of service.
- Provides Burial Flag.

5. **Gravesite Assignment**

- Casketed and cremated remains may be buried in-ground or urns may be placed in a niche space within the columbarium.
- Advance gravesite selection is not permitted. Gravesite locations are determined based on the next available space in accordance with the established Cemetery Plot Plan.

6. **Columbarium Niche Assignment**

- The inside measurement of each niche is 18in deep, 10in wide and 15in high.
- All niches are the same size.
- The NOK is responsible to confirm the urn will fit into the niche space before the date of the committal.
- Advance Niche selection is not permitted. Niche spaces are determined based on the next available space.
- The Caretaker will notify the Hawaii Office of Veterans' Services of the niche selected.

7. **Committal Shelter Usage**

- The Committal Shelter is available for committal services (30 minutes) and visitation (30 minutes) ONLY.
- V.A. regulations prohibit the consumption of food and beverage (only water).
- Maximum 60 minutes for interment services and visitation, no exceptions.
- No music, instruments, PA system or slide shows are permitted.

8. **Grave Liners / Urn Liners**

- A prefabricated container constructed of heavy-duty plastic is required by the State of Hawaii for all casket burials to reduce gravesite erosion. Casket grave liners are provided at no cost.
- Similar, but much smaller urn sized containers may be used with urn burials; however, they must be purchased commercially and are not provided.

9. Headstone / Niche Marker

- The Hawaii Office of Veterans' Services will order the headstone/marker with a signed application, approved by the family.
- A short personal inscription or words of endearment may be added at no cost, but decisions on the wording must not delay the timely processing of the application.
- Upon delivery, the Cemetery Staff are responsible for temporary storage and timely installation.
- The Cemetery Staff provides a temporary marker for all urn (wall) committals.
- The Mortuary provides temporary markers for all in-ground burials.

10. American Flag

- The VA provides one (1) burial flag to the veteran's family at no cost.
- The Mortuary will distribute the burial flag for casketed and cremated remains.

11. Flower Vase

- One (1) permanent in-ground Flower Vase is provided per headstone/niche at no cost and is installed when the headstone/niche marker arrives.
- NOTE: Until 2013, gravesites were permitted a second vase, however that policy has since been changed and additional containers are no longer available. Previously purchased containers may remain.

General Information and Restrictions

Introduction - Veteran's cemeteries are national shrines displaying a lasting tribute to America's Veterans and their families inspiring visitors to understand and appreciate military service and personal sacrifice.

Since its opening in 1945, Kauai's Veterans Cemetery has served the needs of more than 2,000 veterans and their families. While the VA, State OVS and Kauai County Council share oversight responsibility, the tasks of day-to-day operations, maintenance and policing of the cemetery rests with the **Director, County Parks & Recreation Department: 241-4456**.

In addition to the 136 National Cemeteries in 40 states, there are hundreds of State Veteran's Cemeteries conveniently located within close proximity of loved ones and friends. All veteran's cemeteries are government property and certain restrictions apply. (See: National Cemetery Administration Directive (M40-2).) Requesting interment in a Veteran's Cemetery implies your agreement to conform to these restrictions. While no list can be all inclusive, cemetery guests are expected to use good common sense and to display the highest level of respect and decorum while visiting the cemetery.

GENERAL INFORMATION

1 – Maintenance of the cemetery grounds is the sole responsibility of the cemetery staff. They will cut the grass, trim around headstones, remove withered flowers and provide gravesite maintenance as required. For related concerns and questions, please contact the **Cemetery Supervisor, Junior (808) 635-0314**. Grass-cutting will be accomplished regularly by the caretaker, dependent upon weather. Accordingly, all withered flowers and unauthorized items will be removed and discarded.

2 - Potted plants and artificial flowers will be permitted **ONLY** during the period ten (10) days before and ten (10) days after Easter Sunday, Christmas Day, "Hana Matsuri" (April 8), and from July 12 – August 15 in observance of "Obon".

3 - The religious convention of placing fruits, beverages and religious artifacts on the graves is permitted. Due to limited space in the columbarium, such items should be kept to a minimum.

4 - The American Flag is flown each day during prescribed hours of operation. The Flag will be flown at half-staff on the morning of Memorial Day and during interment services and wreath-laying / memorial ceremonies.

5 - Each Memorial Day, the cemetery is decorated with multiple American flags. These flags are government property and may only be removed by cemetery staff.

NOT PERMITTED

- 1 - Inappropriate and/or disrespectful conduct, **music, instruments, PA system, alcohol or food consumption are NOT permitted on cemetery grounds at any time.** Violators will be asked to immediately leave the premises and law enforcement will be contacted as needed.
- 2 - Items which are not permitted will be removed and discarded by cemetery staff.
- 3 - Potted plants, permanent planting, statues, vigil lights, glass objects of any kind, and similar commemorative items – including toys (pin wheels, balloons, stuffed animals or any similar articles) are not permitted.
- 4 - Painting or oiling headstones is not permitted.
- 5 - Non-government headstones and memorial plaques and niches are not permitted.
- 6 - Removing government provided headstones, memorial plaques and niches is not permitted.
- 7 - Attaching floral items and other types of decorations, pictures, labels, etc. to headstones, plaques or niches is not permitted.
- 8 - Grass cutting or trimming by anyone other than cemetery staff is not permitted.
- 9 - Cemetery staff are not permitted to accept tips or gratuities of any kind.