**How to Access National Cemeteries**

**What:** Access to National Cemeteries

**Service Officer Notes:** One of the frequent questions I get is how to intern a loved one at either a National Cemetary or a State Cemetary. The Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) National Cemetery Administration maintains 136 national cemeteries in 40 states (and Puerto Rico) as well as 33 soldier's lots and monument sites. Please note that there is not a VA national cemetery in every state.

Many states have established state veterans’ cemeteries. Eligibility is similar to Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries, but may include residency requirements. Even though they may have been established or improved with Government funds through VA's [Veterans Cemetery Grants Program](https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/grants/), state veterans cemeteries are run solely by the states.

**Web Sites:**

[**https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/index.asp**](https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/index.asp)

**Who Qualifies:**

<https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/burial_benefits/eligible.asp>

**Information:**

National Cemeteries located in Michigan

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| Cemetery | Address | Contact | [Burial Space](https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/state.asp?State=MI#open) |
| [Fort Custer National Cemetery](http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/ftcuster.asp) | 15501 Dickman Rd. Augusta, MI 49012 | Phone: 269-731-4164 FAX: 269-731-2428 | Open |
| [Great Lakes National Cemetery](http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/nchp/greatlakes.asp) | 4200 Belford Road Holly, MI 48442 | Phone: 248-328-0386 Or 866-348-8603 FAX: 248-328-0612 | Open |
| [Fort Mackinac Post Cemetery](https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/lots/fort_mackinac.asp) | Mackinac State Park Mackinac Island, MI 49757 | Phone: 248-328-0386 FAX: 248-328-0612 | Closed |
| [Lakeside Cemetery Soldiers' Lot](https://www.cem.va.gov/cems/lots/lakeside.asp) | 3781 Gratiot Street Port Huron, MI 48060 | Phone: 248-328-0386 FAX: 248-328-0612 | Closed |

**To schedule a Burial**

Gravesites in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries cannot be reserved in advance. You should advise your family of your wishes and where your [discharge papers](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records/)\* are kept. These papers are very important in establishing your eligibility. Upon request, VA will make eligibility determinations for burial in a VA national cemetery [in advance of need](https://www.cem.va.gov/cem/pre-need/).

At the time of need your family would contact a funeral home who will assist them with making burial arrangements at the national cemetery. You may wish to make pre-need arrangements with a funeral home.

To schedule a burial in all Department of Veterans Affairs National Cemeteries, please contact the National Cemetery Scheduling Office by following the instructions listed below:

**Step 1: Submit Eligibility Documentation**

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

**Fax Eligibility Documentation to 1-866-900-6417 or Scan and Email to** [**NCA.Scheduling@va.gov**](mailto:NCA.Scheduling@va.gov).

It is important to have all eligibility documentation available prior to calling the Scheduling Office. Burial in a national cemetery is based on military service. A copy of an official [military discharge document](https://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/hmm/discharge_documents.asp) bearing an official seal or other supporting documentation is usually sufficient to determine eligibility for burial. The document must show release from service was under conditions other than dishonorable. Discharge documentation is not usually needed for scheduling when a Veteran or eligible dependent is already interred in a national cemetery.

**If you have no eligibility documentation...**  
Scheduling Office agents will assist you with the verification process. Requests for eligibility determination when no military discharge documents are available may require 48 hours or more for verification. Scheduling Office personnel will contact you within 48 hours of the initial process with verification results or an explanation of the delay.

**Step 2: Call 1-800-535-1117**

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**To assist you, please have the following information readily available:**

* Cemetery of choice
* First or subsequent burial (Veteran or dependent already buried)
* If subsequent interment, who is already interred, section and site number (if known)
* Decedent's full name, gender, SSN, date of death, date of birth and relationship (Veteran or dependent)
* Contact Info (funeral director's name as well as the name, address, and E-mail address of the funeral home)
* Next of kin information (name, relationship to deceased, SSN, phone number, address)
* Type of religious emblem for headstone (if known)
* Did the decedent reside within 75 miles of requested cemetery?
* ZIP code of decedent at time of death
* County of decedent at time of death
* Type of burial (casket or cremation)
* Marital status of deceased (if Veteran is buried in a private cemetery, must provide documentation of marital status of spouse at time of death)
* Casket size/liner size/urn size/urn vault size
* Is surviving spouse a Veteran?
* Any disabled children for future interment (must provide name and date of birth). If requesting immediate interment (must provide marital status, doctor's statement stating type of illness, date of onset of illness and capability of self-support).
* Military Honors requested

**Scheduling Office Hours**

The National Cemetery Scheduling Office is open 7 days a week from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Central Time. The Scheduling Office is closed Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, and New Year’s Day. Interments at national cemeteries are conducted Monday thru Friday. When a federal holiday falls on a Monday or Friday, cemeteries will open for interments for one day over the holiday weekend as a service to Veterans and their families. The Scheduling Office will have the most current schedule of available interment times for each cemetery.

**When do I contact the National Cemetery directly?**

There are instances when you should contact a [national cemetery](https://www.cem.va.gov/CEM/cems/listcem.asp) directly for scheduling support. They are:

* Active duty interment scheduling
* Interment cancellation or rescheduling
* Change to information initially provided to Scheduling Office
* Request for disinterment and/or relocation to another national cemetery
* Information pertaining to headstones, floral policy, hours of operation or other items unique to that cemetery.

*Information gathered will only be used to determine eligibility and the National Cemetery Administration will, as needed, only disclose Personal Identifying Information to Department of Defense entities to determine eligibility for the coordination and conducting of interment honor ceremonies. The National Cemetery Administration will not give, sell or transfer any personal information outside the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Department of Defense.*

**POCs:** NA