|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **STATE OF VERMONT OFFICE OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  ***118 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05620-4401***  ***Toll Free: (888) 666-9844; Phone: (802) 828-3379 OR 1211; Fax: (802) 828-5932***  ***Operating Hours: Monday – Friday, 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.***  [***www.veterans.vermont.gov***](http://www.veterans.vermont.gov/) |

# Customer Guidelines Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery

**487 Furnace Road, Randolph Center, VT 05061**

## The following is a summary of the official policies of the Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery (VVMC). For more complete information or questions, please contact the office.

**ELIGIBILITY**

Burial in the VVMC is open to all members of the armed forces who have met a minimum active duty service requirement and were discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. A veteran’s spouse, widow or widower, minor dependent children, and under certain conditions, unmarried adult children with disabilities may also be eligible for burial. National Guard and Reserve members with 20 years of service (retirement letter) are also eligible. The OVA will determine eligibility using the veteran’s DD214 discharge record or retirement letter.

**COST**

There is no cost for the veteran to be buried in the government issued marker sections of the cemetery. There is an opening/closing fee for a spouse or minor child. Please contact the OVA for current fees. These fees may be paid to the VVMC in advance.

**CAPACITY**

The VVMC has a large capacity for future interments. There 110 acres at the VVMC. The 12-acre expansion funded by the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) at the VVMC, includes a new Public Information Center (PIC) (1,230 SF), a new Maintenance Facility (2,652 SF), new burial plots to include; 410 pre-placed crypts for in-ground casket burials, 390 in-ground cremains plots, and 840 columbarium niches, for a total of 1,640 additional burial plots. This new expansion will allow year- round operations at the VVMC. **The expansion was done within the guidelines of the National Cemetery Administration. Those guidelines do not include a safe way for numerous cars to park at the graveside, or for groups of people to walk to these expansion sites (Sections H, I and J).** The VVMC currently has 30 acres out of a total of 110 acres developed into burial grounds. This expansion, coupled with the new master plan, will ensure that the VVMC will be active for the next 100 years.

## PRE-NEED ELIGIBILITY

Although we work with families at the time of need, we highly encourage veterans to submit a pre-need application in advance. In the pre-need application process, the OVA will verify and document eligibility. A letter of eligibility will be issued.

Please note that a pre-need application does not guarantee a specific lot or section in the cemetery. This application will help the family during its time of need to know that the veteran is eligible based on the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) eligibility standards. Once this step is accomplished, nothing else needs to be done until a burial is scheduled through the OVA.

**SELECTING A SECTION**

The family will be able to select a section at the time of need based on availability. This process will be accomplished at the time of scheduling a burial with the OVA. The VVMC is organized into a variety of sections based on the type of marker selected. We have five different marker types to choose from:

**Upright Granite** - ***Section H (urns only – no urn vaults).***

**Flat Granite** – ***Section C (caskets or urns) or J (Crypts – Caskets only)***

**Flat Marble** – ***Section C***

**Upright Marble** - ***Section*** ***D***

**\*Granite Facia – *Section I (Columbarium – Urns only)***

**Flat Granite or Marble – *Memorial Garden (MG) (No remains interred)***

### \*Columbarium dimensions: single urn – 8” deep x 11” high x 8” wide

***double urn – 17” deep x 11” high x 8” wide***

It may be helpful to visit the VVMC to decide which section a veteran would prefer. Again, we cannot guarantee a specific lot or section at the VVMC, but we will make every effort to honor a veteran’s preference at the time of need. **Specific lots or plots at the VVMC *may not* be reserved.** Sections with government markers are filled sequentially, using the next available lot within the chosen section at the time of burial. If an eligible spouse or unmarried minor child is still living, the plot or plots adjacent to the deceased will be reserved for them.

**LOT SHARING**

## Sections H, I, and J are all shared lots. The burials must be the same; for example, both caskets or both urns.

Historically, most cemetery lots in the original section of the VVMC have accommodated one urn or one casket. Changes in the VVMC regulation in 2009 allow us to offer the additional option of having two people interred in a single shared lot if the second burial is an urn. We are encouraging this choice to share a lot as it offers more efficient use of our space, allowing us to serve more veterans.

If a veteran chooses to inter two people in one *shared lot* with a standard government marker, there will be either one upright marker with information on each side, or a flat marker, depending on the type of marker and/or section chosen. Please contact our office for further details and the shared lot application.

**PLANNING A BURIAL**

Once a veteran’s eligibility has been determined, either the family or the funeral director can call our office to schedule a burial. We will ask the family or funeral director to select a specific section of the cemetery and ask if there is preference for sharing a lot with a family member or two separate lots. The OVA will review other details using a worksheet as well as an estimate of approximately how many people will be attending the burial service to help us manage traffic and planning.

The VVMC is open for burials from early May through early December, weather permitting, and is closed to burials December through April for the original section of the cemetery (Sections A- F). **In sections H, I, and J burials are available year-round**. Burials are conducted Monday through

Friday except state or national holidays. When a family member or funeral director calls to schedule a burial, the OVA will advise them of the available time choices.

**Families and/or funeral directors will have a maximum of 30 minutes from the scheduled start time to complete their committal, including the ten minutes needed for the Military Honors presentation.** It is the responsibility of the family to provide clergy and to plan the service. The service may be held at the graveside OR in the chapel. Observing the 30-minute time limit is out of respect for other services scheduled that day as well as the work of the VVMC ground/maintenance crew.

**MILITARY HONOR GUARD**

The OVA staff will request an honor guard detail representing the veteran’s branch of service. The honor guard team will provide the most appropriate services possible given the military requirements and their resources. The honor guard team may provide honors at the beginning of a committal service, if necessary, to accommodate their schedule and other commitments. For services held in the chapel, the honor guard will provide honors at the chapel.

**DAY OF THE BURIAL**

A representative from the OVA will attend all committal services to collect the required paperwork. **We prefer all fees be paid prior to committal. The family and/or funeral director are responsible for providing clergy and pall bearers. At the end of the 30-minute time allotment, the cemetery staff will proceed with burial of the remains.**

**PARKING**

When arriving at the VVMC, please make every effort to park all vehicles facing downhill. Do not double park vehicles since all roadways must be open for cemetery personnel and emergency vehicles. Parking on both sides of the road is allowed if the road is kept open for other vehicles to pass. The OVA staff member will direct traffic and parking.

**MEMORIAL GARDEN**

Those eligible for burial in the VVMC whose remains have been scattered, buried at sea, or are unavailable for any reason, may have a flat government marker placed in the Memorial Garden. Please contact the OVA for more information.

**VISITING THE CEMETERY**

The Cemetery Superintendent will open and close the cemetery according to winter weather conditions. The cemetery is always open to the public. However, during the winter months, snow will be removed only to the Circle of Flags.

**FLORAL DISPLAYS**

Up to three floral arrangements may be displayed on a grave after burial. Floral arrangements should not be left at any other location in the cemetery, including the Chapel. Floral arrangements will be removed when they wilt, deteriorate or become unsightly. Please, no glass containers.

Cut natural flowers may be placed on a grave at any time. A cutting garden is available for visitors to use. In-ground flower vases may be purchased from the OVA at any time. No flowers, trees, shrubs or other plants may be planted anywhere in the cemetery. Artificial flowers, lights, spinning wheels, individual flags, plants, etc. are not allowed at any time at the VVMC and will be removed by VVMC personnel. Natural Christmas wreaths may be placed near graves from November through March if they are free-standing and not attached to grave markers. Christmas trees are not allowed.

**PERPETUAL CARE**

The State of Vermont holds title to all grave lots and provides perpetual care of the gravesites without charge.

**MEMORIAL DAY CEREMONY**

The state has held an annual Memorial Day ceremony at the Veterans Cemetery since it opened in 1993. This event recognizes the sacrifice of those men and women who have paid for our freedom with their lives. Although the federal standard of observing Memorial Day is on the last Monday in May, the VVMC will conduct its ceremony on the traditional Memorial Day, which is May 30. The ceremony will begin promptly at 3:00 p.m. Call the OVA for additional information.

## COMMENTS/QUESTIONS

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the office of Veterans Affairs at 802 828-3379.

July 2020