

**Department of Veterans Affairs** **APPLICATION FOR UNITED STATES FLAG FOR BURIAL PURPOSES**

Privacy Act Notice: The VA will not disclose information collected on this form to any source other than what has been authorized under the Privacy Act of 1974 or Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations 1.526 for routine uses (i.e., to determine eligibility for issuance of a burial flag) as identified in the VA system of records, 58VA21/22, Compensation, Pension, Education and Rehabilitation Records - VA, and published in the Federal Register. Your obligation to respond is required to obtain or retain benefits. Giving us your SSN account information is voluntary. Refusal to provide your SSN by itself will not result in the denial of benefits. The VA will not deny an individual benefits for refusing to provide his or her SSN unless the disclosure of the SSN is required by a Federal Statute of law in effect prior to January 1, 1975, and still in effect.

Important Notice About Information Collection: We need this information to gather the necessary information to determine eligibility for issuance of a burial flag to a family member or friend of a veteran (38 U.S.C. 2301 and 38 CFR 1.10). Title 38, United States Code, allows us to ask for this information. We estimate that you will need an average of 15 minutes to review the instructions, find the information, and complete this form. VA cannot conduct or sponsor a collection of information unless a valid OMB control number is displayed. You are not required to respond to a collection of information if this number is not displayed. Valid OMB control numbers can be located on the OMB Internet Page at [www.whitehouse.gov/library/omb/OMBINVC.html#VA](http://www.whitehouse.gov/library/omb/OMBINVC.html#VA). If desired, you can call 1-800-827-1000 to get information on where to send comments or suggestions about this form.

**IMPORTANT - Postmaster or other issuing official: Submit this form to the nearest VA Regional Office. Be sure to complete the stub at the bottom.**

1. LAST NAME - FIRST NAME-MIDDLE NAME OF DECEASED VETERAN ( <i>Print or type</i> )		2. OTHER NAME(S) USED BY THE VETERAN	
3. BRANCH OF SERVICE ( <i>Check box</i> ) <input type="checkbox"/> ARMY <input type="checkbox"/> NAVY <input type="checkbox"/> AIR FORCE <input type="checkbox"/> MARINE CORPS <input type="checkbox"/> COAST GUARD <input type="checkbox"/> SELECTED RESERVE <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER ( <i>Specify</i> )		4. VETERAN'S SERVICE ( <i>Check box</i> ) <input type="checkbox"/> MEXICAN BORDER PERIOD <input type="checkbox"/> WWI <input type="checkbox"/> WWII <input type="checkbox"/> KOREAN WAR <input type="checkbox"/> AFTER 1-31-55 <input type="checkbox"/> VIETNAM WAR <input type="checkbox"/> GULF WAR <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER ( <i>Specify</i> )	
5. CONDITION UNDER WHICH VETERAN WAS RELEASED FROM MILITARY SERVICE ( <i>Check box</i> ) ( <i>See qualifying Military Service Information on reverse</i> )			
<input type="checkbox"/> A. VETERAN OF A WAR, MEXICAN BORDER SERVICE, OR OF SERVICE AFTER 1-31-55, DISCHARGED OR RELEASED FROM ACTIVE DUTY UNDER CONDITIONS OTHER THAN DISHONORABLE  <input type="checkbox"/> B. DISCHARGED FROM OR RELEASED FROM ACTIVE DUTY IN U.S. ARMED FORCES UNDER CONDITIONS OTHER THAN DISHONORABLE, AFTER SERVING AT LEAST ONE ENLISTMENT, OR DISCHARGED FOR DISABILITY INCURRED IN LINE OF DUTY		<input type="checkbox"/> C. BY DEATH IN ACTIVE MILITARY SERVICE AFTER MAY 27, 1941, IF THE DECEASED WAS INTERRED OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES, OR THE REMAINS WERE NOT RECOVERED, OR WHEN A FLAG WAS NOT FURNISHED BY THE SERVICE DEPARTMENT IN TIME FOR THE BURIAL ( <i>Explain in Item 18, Remarks</i> )  <input type="checkbox"/> D. SELECTED RESERVE SERVICE ( <i>As qualified on reverse</i> ) <input type="checkbox"/> E. PHILIPPINE MILITARY SERVICE ( <i>As qualified on reverse</i> )	
6. NAME OF PERSON ENTITLED TO RECEIVE FLAG		7. ADDRESS OF PERSON ENTITLED TO RECEIVE FLAG	
8. RELATIONSHIP TO VETERAN ( <i>See Relationship to Veteran, and Disposition of Flag on reverse</i> )			

**PERSONAL DATA OF DECEASED (Complete as much as possible)**

9. VA FILE NUMBER		10. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER		11. MILITARY SERVICE/SERIAL NUMBER	
12. DATE ENTERED ACTIVE DUTY ( <i>or Selected Reserve</i> )		13. DATE RELEASED FROM ACTIVE DUTY ( <i>or Selected Reserve</i> )		14. DATE OF BIRTH	
15. DATE OF DEATH		16. DATE OF BURIAL		17. PLACE OF BURIAL ( <i>Name of cemetery, city/town, and State</i> )	
18. REMARKS					

**I CERTIFY** that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, the information furnished above are correct and true, the deceased veteran is eligible, in accordance with instructions on the reverse for issue of a United States flag for burial purposes, and such flag has not previously been applied for or furnished.

19. SIGNATURE OF APPLICANT ( <i>Sign in INK</i> )		20. ADDRESS OF APPLICANT ( <i>Number and street (or P.O. box), city, State and ZIP Code</i> )		21. RELATIONSHIP TO VETERAN		22. DATE SIGNED	
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**PENALTY - The law provides that whoever makes any statement of a material fact knowing it to be false shall be punished by a fine, imprisonment, or both.**

**ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF RECEIPT OF FLAG FROM U.S. POST OFFICE OR OTHER ISSUE POINT**

**I CERTIFY** that the flag requested by the applicant will be used to drape the casket of the deceased veteran in whose honor it is issued by the Department of Veterans Affairs; and that the Relationship to Veteran, and Disposition of Flag instructions on the reverse side will be complied with.

SIGNATURE OF PERSON RECEIVING FLAG ( <i>Sign in INK</i> )		DATE FLAG RECEIVED	
NAME AND ADDRESS OF POST OFFICE OR OTHER FLAG ISSUE POINT		<b>FOR VA USE</b>	
		DATE NOTIFICATION FORWARDED TO SUPPLY	INITIALS OF RESPONSIBLE VA EMPLOYEE

VA FORM 21-2008, MAY 2003

SUPERSEDES VA FORM 2008, SEP 1999, WHICH WILL NOT BE USED.

**This stub is to be completed by the POSTMASTER or other issuing official. Upon receipt, the VA Regional Office will detach and forward it to the appropriate Supply Officer.**

**NOTIFICATION OF ISSUANCE OF FLAG**

DATE FLAG ISSUED		SIGNATURE OF POSTMASTER OR OTHER ISSUING OFFICIAL		ADDRESS OF POST OFFICE OR OTHER FLAG ISSUE POINT	
<b>FOR VA USE</b> ▶		DATE OF REPLACEMENT			

VA FORM 21-2008  
MAY 2003

SUPERSEDES VA FORM 21-2008, SEP 1999,  
WHICH WILL NOT BE USED.

(SEE REVERSE)

## INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS

### Qualifying Military Service Information

#### War Periods

- Mexican Border Period: May 9, 1916, through April 5, 1917, for veterans who served in Mexico, on its borders or in adjacent waters.
- World War I: April 6, 1917, through November 11, 1918, and for veterans who served in Russia, April 6, 1917, through April 1, 1920 (extended through July 1, 1921, for veterans who had at least one day of service between April 6, 1917, and November 11, 1918).
- World War II: December 7, 1941, through December 31, 1946.
- Korean War: June 27, 1950, through January 31, 1955.
- Post Korean War: After January 31, 1955.
- Vietnam War: August 5, 1964 (February 28, 1961, for veterans who served "in country" before August 5, 1964), through May 7, 1975.
- Gulf War: August 2, 1990, through a date to be set by law or Presidential Proclamation.

#### Selected Reserve

A member or former member of the Army, Air Force, Coast Guard, Marine Corps, or Naval Reserve; Air National Guard; or Army National Guard who:

- is not otherwise eligible for a VA or Department of Defense burial flag, and
- completed at least one enlistment (in the case of an officer, completed the period of initial obligated service), or
- was discharged before completion of the initial enlistment (in the case of an officer, period of initial obligated service) for a disability incurred or aggravated in line of duty, or
- died while a member of the Selected Reserve.

#### Philippine Military

- A person separated from the Philippine military forces under conditions other than dishonorable (after serving the United States in such forces under the President's Order of July 26, 1941), and died on or after April 25, 1951, or
- A person who served in the Philippine military forces who is eligible for burial in a national cemetery.

### Documentation Required

One of the lettered conditions listed in Item 5 on the reverse must be evidenced by a copy of the veteran's discharge (or release from active duty) paper that documents service dates and character of service, such as a DD Form 214, or verification from the veteran's service department or VA.

When the applicant is unable to furnish documentary proof, such as for character of service under honorable conditions ("Honorable" or "General"), an application may be accepted and a flag issued when a statement is made by a person of established character and reputation that he/she personally knows the deceased to have been a veteran:

- of a war, the Mexican Border Period, or of service after January 31, 1955, and discharged or released from active duty under honorable conditions; or
- discharged from or released from active duty in the United States Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard under honorable conditions after serving at least one complete peacetime enlistment before June 27, 1950; or
- who incurred a disability in the line of duty; or
- who was in active service at the time of death and a flag was not obtainable from a military or naval establishment in time for burial.

### Veterans Not Eligible for a Burial Flag

- Persons not included in the qualifying information on this form; or
- a person who was convicted of a Federal capital crime and was sentenced to death or life imprisonment, or was convicted of a State capital crime and was sentenced to death or life imprisonment without parole, or was found to have committed a Federal or State capital crime but was not convicted by reason of not being available for trial due to death or flight to avoid prosecution; or
- a discharged or rejected draftee, or a member of the National Guard, who reported to camp in answer to the President's call for World War I service but who, when medically examined, was not finally accepted for military service; or
- a person who was discharged from World War I service prior to November 12, 1918, on his/her own application or solicitation by reason of being an alien, or any person discharged for alienage during a period of hostilities; or

- a person who served with any of the forces allied with the United States in any war, even though a United States citizen, if he/she did not serve with the United States armed forces; or
- a person inducted for training and service who, before entering upon such training and service, was transferred to the Enlisted Reserve Corps and given a furlough; or
- a former temporary member of the United States Coast Guard Reserve.

### **Relationship to Veteran, and Disposition of Flag**

When actually used to drape the casket or accompany the urn of the veteran, the flag must be delivered to the next of kin (or to a close friend or associate when no claim is made by the next of kin) following interment or inurnment. If there is no living relative or one cannot be located, and no friend or associate requests the flag, it must be returned to the nearest VA facility.

For the purpose of disposing of the flag, the term "next of kin" is defined as follows, with entitlement priority in the order listed:

- widow or widower;
- children, according to age (minor child may be issued a flag on application signed by guardian);
- parents, including adoptive, stepparents, and foster parents;
- brothers or sisters including brothers or sisters of half blood;
- uncles or aunts;
- nephews or nieces; and
- others - cousins, grandparents, etc.

The term "close friend or associate" means any person who establishes by evidence that he/she was a close friend or associate of the deceased.

### **Flag Limitations and Exception**

- Only one flag may be issued for each deceased veteran.
- Damaged, destroyed, lost or stolen flags may not be replaced.
- A flag may not be issued after burial except when it was impossible to obtain a flag in time to drape the casket or accompany the urn of the veteran before burial. The applicant must personally sign the application and include under "Remarks" a statement explaining the reason that prevented timely application for a burial flag.

### **To Apply for a Burial Flag**

Use VA Form 21-2008 (on reverse side), and submit it to a funeral director, a representative of the veteran or other organization having charge of the funeral arrangements, or other person having knowledge of the facts and acting in the interest of the veteran or his/her family.

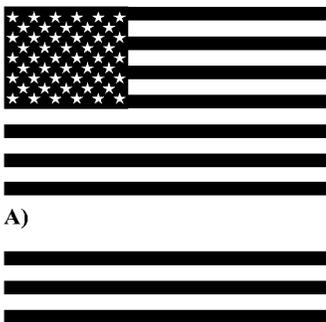
Burial flags may be obtained at VA regional offices, national cemeteries, and most local U.S. post offices. No flag may be issued unless a completed application has been received (38 U.S.C. 2301).

## ISSUING OFFICIAL WILL DETACH THIS SHEET AND PRESENT IT TO THE RECIPIENT OF THE FLAG

### USE OF THE FLAG

1. This flag is issued on behalf of the Department of Veterans Affairs to honor veterans who have served our country.
2. When used to drape the casket, the flag should be placed as follows:
  - (a) **Closed Casket** - Drape the casket with the flag so that the union (blue field) is at the head and over the left shoulder of the veteran.
  - (b) **Half Couch (Open)** - Drape the closed half of the casket with the flag in three layers. The blue field should be the top fold, next to the open portion of the casket on the veteran's left.
  - (c) **Full Couch (Open)** - Fold the flag in a triangular shape and place it on the center part of the head panel of the casket cap, just above the left shoulder of the veteran.
3. During a military commitment ceremony, the flag which was used to drape the casket is held waist high over the grave by the pallbearers and, immediately after the sounding of "Taps," is folded in accordance with the illustration below.
4. Folding the flag (see illustration below):
5. The flag should not be lowered into the grave or allowed to touch the ground. When taken from the casket, it should be folded as shown (see illustration).
6. The flag should form a distinctive feature of the ceremony of the unveiling of a statue or monument, but it should never be used as a covering for the statue or monument.
7. The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stowed in such a manner as will permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.
8. The flag should never have placed upon it, nor any part of it, nor attached to it, any mark, insignia, letter, word, figure, design, picture, or drawing of any nature.
9. The flag should never be used as a receptacle for receiving, holding, carrying, or delivering anything.
10. The flag, when badly worn, torn, or soiled should no longer be publicly displayed, but privately destroyed by burning in such a manner as to convey no suggestion of disrespect or irreverence.

### CORRECT METHOD OF FOLDING THE UNITED STATES FLAG



A)

(a) Straighten out the flag to full length and fold lengthwise once, folding the lower striped section of the flag over the blue field.



B)

(b) Fold it lengthwise a second time to meet the open edge, making sure that the union of stars on the blue field remains outward in full view.



C)

(c) A triangular fold is then started by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to the open edge.



D)

(d) The outer point is then turned inward, parallel with the open edge to form a second triangle.



E)

(e) The diagonal or triangular folding is continued toward the blue union until the end is reached, with only the blue showing and the form being that of a cocked (three corner) hat.

