

**Department of Military and Veterans Affairs
Regulation 290-1**



Cemeteries

**Veterans Memorial
Cemetery of
Western Colorado**

The Adjutant General
Centennial, Colorado
July 2003

UNCLASSIFIED

Department of Military and Veterans Affairs Regulation 290-1

Cemeteries

VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY OF WESTERN COLORADO

By Order of the Governor:

MASON C. WHITNEY, Maj. Gen., COANG
The Adjutant General

Awards and Decorations Purpose: This regulation establishes Colorado Department of Military and Veterans Affairs policy, criteria and administrative instructions concerning interments at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado.

Applicability: This regulation is applicable to all employees of the Cemetery as well as veterans and families of veterans. Use of specific gender in this regulation is for ease of reading. Whenever the masculine or feminine gender is used, either gender is intended.

Proponent: The proponent of this regulation is the Division of Veterans Affairs, Department of Military and Veterans Affairs.

Internal Control System: This regulation is not subject to the requirements of AR 11-2. It does not contain internal control provisions.

EEO Statement: Interments at the Cemetery will be made without regard to race, color, creed, sex, age, or national origin.

Supplementation: Supplementation to this regulation is prohibited unless prior approval is obtained from the Office of The Adjutant General, the State of Colorado.

Suggested Improvements: The proponent of this regulation is the Colorado Adjutant General. Users of this regulation are invited to send comments and suggested improvements directly to DMVA, ATTN: Assistant to the Deputy Director, 6848 South Revere Parkway, Centennial, CO 80112-6703.

Distribution and Restrictions: Approved for public release. Local and electronic reproductions authorized.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER 1 Background	5
1-1 General	5
1-2 The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado	5
CHAPTER 2 Early Registration	6
2-1 General	6
2-2 Needed Information	6
CHAPTER 3 Eligibility Requirements	7
3-1 Persons Eligible for Interment	7
3-2 Colorado Veterans and Members of the Armed Forces	7
3-3 Colorado Members of Reserve Components and Reserve Officers Training Corps	8
3-4 Colorado Commissioned Officers, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	8
3-5 Public Health Service	8
3-6 World War II Merchant Mariners	9
3-7 Spouses and Dependents	9
3-8 Others	10
3-9 Persons Not Eligible for Interment	10
CHAPTER 4 Arranging for Interment	11
4-1 General	11
4-2 At the Time of Need	11
4-3 Funeral Services	12
4-4 Weekend/Holiday Funerals	12
CHAPTER 5 Assignment of Space	12
5-1 General	12
5-2 When Space is Exhausted	12
CHAPTER 6 Burial Benefits	12
6-1 Interment	12
6-2 Burial Flag	13
6-3 Presidential Memorial Certificate	13
6-4 Military Funeral Honors - "Honoring Those Who Served"	14

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CHAPTER 7 Headstones and Markers	15
7-1 General	15
7-2 Eligibility	16
7-3 Ordering a Government Headstone or Marker	16
7-4 Inscriptions	16
7-5 Shipping Government Headstone and Markers	16
7-6 Setting Government Headstones and Markers	17
7-7 Replacement Headstones and Markers	17
7-8 Memorial Headstones and Markers	17
7-9 Inscriptions	17
7-10 Additional Inscriptions	18
7-11 Authorized Emblems of Belief	18
CHAPTER 8 Floral Regulations	18
8-1 Fresh Cut Flowers	18
8-2 Artificial Flowers	18
8-3 Maintenance	19
8-4 Other Items on Gravesites	19
CHAPTER 9 Locating Veterans Gravesites	19
9-1 Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado	19
9-2 Other Veterans Cemeteries	19
CHAPTER 10 Visitors Standards of Conduct	20
CHAPTER 11 Memorial Monuments – Design	21
11-1 General	21
11-2 Specific Design Criteria/Character	21
Stone Drawing/Dimensions	23
CHAPTER 12 Contacting Cemetery Staff	24

Chapter 1 Background

1-1. General

a. In 1862, President Lincoln signed into law legislation authorizing the establishment of national cemeteries “. . . for the soldiers who shall die in the service of the country.” Fourteen cemeteries were established that year. These national cemeteries started what has become the National Cemetery Administration.

b. After the Civil war, search and recovery teams visited hundreds of battlefields, churchyards, plantations and other locations seeking wartime interments that were made in haste. By 1870, the remains of nearly 300,000 Civil War dead were re-interred in 73 national cemeteries.

c. The National Cemetery administration has undergone many changes since its inception. In 1873, Congress extended the right of burial in a national cemetery to all honorably discharged Union veterans of the Civil War. By a 1933 Executive Order, certain national cemeteries were transferred from the War Department (now the Department of the Army) to the National Park service of the Department of the Interior. In June 1973, Public Law 93-43 authorized the transfer of 82 national cemeteries from the Department of the Army to the Veterans Administration, now the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This action combined the 82 Army cemeteries with 21 cemeteries already under the VA’s jurisdiction. With the addition of 18 new cemeteries and the transfer of one historic site to the State of Kentucky, the National Cemetery Administration now comprises 120 national cemeteries. The Department of the Army still administers two national cemeteries, including Arlington National Cemetery, and the Department of the Interior administers 15, for an overall total of 137 national cemeteries.

d. On 1978, Congress established the State Cemetery Grants Program (Public Law 95-476). Administered by the National Cemetery Administration to aid States and U.S. territories in the establishment, expansion and improvement of veterans cemeteries, the State Cemetery Grants Program complements the National Cemetery Administration by providing gravesites for veterans in those areas not adequately served by national cemeteries. State veterans cemeteries enhance VA’s ability to meet the burial needs of America’s veterans.

1-2. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado

a. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado was authorized by the Colorado Legislature in 1999 to honor Colorado veterans. Construction began in June 2001 and was completed in September. The Cemetery opened on September 5, 2002 and interred its first veteran on that date.

b. The Cemetery is located on ~ 25 acres at 2830 D Road, Grand Junction, Colorado, just east of the Grand Junction Regional Center. It has a capacity of 3,337 units, including 1,758 units for casketed remains and 1,579 units for cremated remains (of which 861 are columbarium wall niches). Additionally, there are 775 memorial garden

plots available for veterans whose remains were not recovered or were donated to science or are otherwise unavailable for interment. The Cemetery's capacity can be expanded, as necessary, in the future to accommodate an estimated 12,000 to 14,000 sites. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado is intended to be a dignified final resting place for Colorado's veterans of the armed services, their spouses and eligible dependents. It has been designed to provide a place of meditation and quiet contemplation for veterans, their families and friends. There are memorial walks on either side of the creek running northeast to southwest through the Cemetery. These walks pass by each of the five columbaria in front of which are benches for visitors' convenience. There are landscaped areas for in-ground interments, which are characterized by thoughtful placement of trees, shrubs, and other plantings. These areas provide additional places for individual reflection.

c. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado conveys the appreciation of the people of Colorado to its veterans for answering the call of duty and faithfully and honorably serving the United States of America and the State of Colorado.

Chapter 2

Early Registration

2-1. General

Early registration for interment at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado is encouraged. While it does not guarantee a specific gravesite location, it can help avoid confusion and possible delays at the time of need. Early registration can be accomplished in person, at the Cemetery during normal work hours, or by mail.

2-2. Needed Information: The following information about the veteran is needed:

- a. Full Name
- b. Rank
- c. Branch of Service
- d. Social Security Number
- e. Service/Serial Number
- f. VA Claim Number (if applicable)
- g. Date & Place of Birth
- h. Date & Place of Entry into Service
- i. Date & Place of Death
- j. Date & Place of Retirement/Last Separation from Service
- k. *Copies* of any military separation documents, such as the Department of Defense Form 214 (DD-214) showing the character of service, e.g., Honorable.
- l. *Copies* of any documents used to establish Colorado residency, e.g., driver's license, utility bill, tax return, etc.
- m. *Copies* of any documents used to establish spouse's* and/or dependents' eligibility, if applicable.
 - * Generally, if the veteran is eligible, the spouse is eligible *unless* the spouse's marriage to the veteran was dissolved by divorce or annulment *or* the widowed spouse is remarried to a non-veteran *or* the widowed spouse was remarried to a non-veteran and that remarriage was terminated on or after November 1, 1990.
- n. Persons desiring early registration must understand that:

- (1) while eligibility can be established *prior* to the time of need, it will have to be reconfirmed *at* the time of need as well;
- (2) it is the veteran or his/her next-of-kin who is responsible for notifying the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado of any changes to the information provided; and
- (3) copies of any documents used to establish eligibility and residency will be kept on file at the cemetery.

Chapter 3

Eligibility Requirements

3-1. Persons Eligible for Interment in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado (VMC)

a. Eligibility for burial in the cemetery is the same as for Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) national cemeteries but includes a residency requirement. Even though the Cemetery has been established, and may be expanded or improved, with Government funds through the VA's State Cemetery Grants Program, it is operated solely by the State of Colorado.

b. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado Administrator has the primary responsibility for verifying eligibility for interment in the Cemetery. A determination of eligibility is usually made in response to a request for interment.

3-2. Colorado Veterans and Members of the Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard, Air Force)

a. any Colorado member of the Armed Forces of the United States who dies on active duty.

b. any Colorado veteran who was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable. With certain exceptions, service beginning after September 7, 1980, as an enlisted person, and service after October 16, 1981, as an officer, must be for a minimum of 24 months or the full period for which the person was called to active duty. (Examples include those serving less than 24 months in the Gulf War or Reservists who were federalized by Presidential Act). Undesirable, bad conduct, and any other type of discharge other than honorable may or may not qualify the individual for veterans benefits, depending upon a determination made by a VA Regional Office. Cases presenting multiple discharges of varying character are also referred for adjudication to a VA Regional Office.

c. any citizen of the United States and Colorado who, during any war in which the United States has been or may hereafter be engaged, served in the Armed Forces of any Government allied with the United States during that war, whose last active service was terminated honorably by death or otherwise, and who was a citizen of the United States and Colorado at the time of entry into such service and at the time of death.

3-3. Colorado Members of Reserve Components and Reserve Officers Training Corps

a. Colorado Reservists and National Guard members who, at time of death, were entitled retired pay under Chapter 1223, title 10, United States Code, or would have been entitled, but for being under the age of 60. Specific categories of persons eligible for retired pay are delineated in section 12731 of Chapter 1223, title 10, United States Code.

b. Colorado member of reserve components who die while hospitalized or undergoing treatment at the expense of the United States for injury or disease contracted or incurred under honorable conditions while performing active duty for training or inactive duty training, or undergoing such hospitalization or treatment.

c. Colorado members of the Reserve Officers Training Corps of the Army, Navy, or Air Force who die under honorable conditions while attending an authorized training camp or on an authorized cruise, while performing authorized travel to or from that camp or cruise, or while hospitalized or undergoing treatment at the expense of the United States for injury or disease contracted or incurred under honorable conditions while engaged in one of those activities.

d. Colorado members of reserve components who, during a period of active duty for training, were disabled or died from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty or, during a period of inactive duty training, were disabled or died from an injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

3-4. Colorado Commissioned Officers, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

a. A Colorado Commissioned Officer of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (formerly titled the Coast and Geodetic Survey and the Environmental Science Services Administration) with full-time duty on or after July 29, 1945.

b. A Colorado Commissioned Officer who served before July 29, 1945; and,
(1) was assigned to an area of immediate military hazard while in time of war, or of a Presidentially declared national emergency as determined by the Secretary of Defense;
(2) served in the Philippine Islands on December 7, 1941, and continuously in such islands thereafter; or,
(3) transferred to the Department of the Army or the Department of the Navy under the provisions of the Act of May 22, 1917 (40 Stat. 87; 33 U.S.C. § 885).

3-5. Public Health Service

a. A Colorado Commissioned Officer of the Regular or Reserve Corps of the Public Health Service who served on full-time duty on or after July 29, 1945. If the service of the particular Public Health Service Officer falls within the meaning of active duty for training, as defined in section 101(22), title 38, United States Code, he or she must have been disabled or died from a disease or injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

b. A Colorado Commissioned Officer of the Regular or Reserve Corps of the Public Health Service who performed full-time duty prior to July 29, 1945;

- (1) in time of war;
 - (2) on detail for duty with the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard, or Air Force;
- or,
- (3) while the Service was part of the military forces of the United States pursuant to Executive Order of the President.

c. A Colorado Commissioned Officer serving on inactive duty training as defined in section 101(23), title 38, United States Code, whose death resulted from an injury incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.

3-6. World War II Merchant Mariners

a. United States Merchant Mariners with oceangoing service during the period of armed conflict, December 7, 1941, to December 31, 1946. Prior to enactment of Public Law 105-368, United States Merchant Mariners with oceangoing service the period of armed conflict of December 7, 1941, to August 15, 1945, were eligible. With enactment of Public Law 105-368, the service period is extended to December 31, 1946, for those dying on or after November 11, 1998. A DD-214 documenting this service may be obtained by submitting an application to Commandant (G-MVP-6), United States Coast Guard, 2100 2nd Street, SW, Washington, DC 20593. Notwithstanding, the Mariner's death must have occurred after the enactment of Public Law 105-368 and the interment not violate the applicable restrictions while meeting the requirements held therein.

b. United States Merchant Mariners who served on block ships in support of Operation Mulberry during World War II.

3-7. Spouses and Dependents

a. The spouse or un-remarried surviving spouse of an eligible person, even if that person is not buried or memorialized in the VMC or a national cemetery, is eligible for interment in the VMC. In addition, the spouse of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States lost or buried at sea, or officially determined to be permanently absent in a status of missing or missing in action, or whose remains have been donated to science or cremated and the ashes scattered is also eligible for burial.

b. The surviving spouse of an eligible decedent who remarries an ineligible individual and whose remarriage is void, terminated by the ineligible person's death, or dissolved by annulment or divorce is eligible for burial in the VMC. The surviving spouse of an eligible decedent who remarries an eligible person retains his or her eligibility for interment in the VMC.

c. The minor children of an eligible person. For purpose of interment in the VMC, a minor child is a person who is unmarried and:

- (1) who is under the age of 21 years; or,

(2) who is under 23 years of age and pursuing a course of instruction at an approved educational institution.

d. An unmarried adult child of an eligible person if the child is physically or mentally disabled and incapable of self-support before reaching the age of 21 years. Proper supportive documentation must be provided.

3-8. Others

Such other persons or classes of persons as designated by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs (38 U.S.C. § 2402(6)) or the Secretary of the Air Force (Public Law 95-202, ss 401), or (38 CFR § 3.7(x)).

3-9. Persons Not Eligible for Interment in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado

a. Remarried Surviving Spouses Married to a Non-Veteran

A surviving spouse of an eligible decedent who marries an ineligible person and predeceases that person.

b. Former Spouse

A former spouse of an eligible person whose marriage to that person has been terminated by annulment or divorce, if not otherwise eligible.

c. Widowed Spouse

A widowed spouse who was re-married to a non-veteran and that re-marriage was terminated on or after November 1, 1990.

d. Other Family Members

Family members of an eligible person except those defined as eligible in Section III.

e. Disqualifying Characters of Discharge

A person whose only separation from the Armed Forces was under dishonorable conditions or whose character of service results in a bar to veterans benefits.

f. Discharge from Draft

A person who was ordered to report to an induction station, but was not actually inducted into military service.

g. Persons Found Guilty of a Capital Crime

Under 38 U.S.C. § 2411, interment of memorialization in a VA cemetery or in Arlington National Cemetery is prohibited if a person is convicted of a Federal capital crime and sentenced to death or life imprisonment, or is convicted of a State capital crime, and sentenced to death or life imprisonment without parole. Federal officials are authorized to deny interment in veterans cemeteries to persons who are shown by clear and convincing evidence to have committed a Federal or State capital crime but were not

convicted of such crime because of flight to avoid prosecution or by death prior to trial. The Secretary is authorized to provide aid to States for the establishment, expansion and/or improvement of veterans cemeteries on the condition that the State is willing to prohibit interment or memorialization in such cemeteries of persons convicted of Federal or State capital crimes, or found by clear and convincing evidence to have committed such crimes, without having been convicted of the crimes due to flight to avoid prosecution or death prior to trial. (38 U.S.C. § 2408(d)(2)).

h. Subversive Activities

Any person convicted of subversive activities after September 1, 1959, shall have no right to interment in a national cemetery or the VMC from and after the date of commission of such offense, based on periods of active military service commencing before the date of the commission of such offense, nor shall another person be entitled to interment on account of such an individual. Eligibility will be reinstated if the President of the United States grants a pardon.

i. Active or Inactive Duty for Training

A person whose only service is active duty for training or inactive duty training in the National Guard or Reserve Component, unless the person meets the eligibility criteria listed in this brochure.

j. Other Groups

Members of groups whose service has been determined by the Secretary of the Air Force under the provisions of Public Law 95-202 as not warranting entitlement to benefits administered by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

**Chapter 4
Arranging for Interment**

4-1. General

Services provided by funeral directors and other, related costs, usually including transportation of remains, must be paid for by the veteran's family. There is, however, no cost for opening and closing a gravesite, a grave liner for casketed remains, use of the Committal Shelter or Visitors Center, headstone or marker, and perpetual care at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado.

4-2. At the Time of Need

A funeral director or next-of-kin should contact the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado so that eligibility can be established or confirmed and interment scheduled. Early registration is available and encouraged (see the handout, *Early Registration*, available at the Cemetery and/or contact the Cemetery Administrator). The same procedure is followed if the veteran's eligible spouse or dependent predeceases the veteran.

a. In most cases, one gravesite or niche is provided for the interment of all eligible family members and a single headstone or marker is provided.

b. When both spouses are veterans, two gravesites or niches and two headstones or markers may be provided, if requested. Upright, granite headstones and granite niche markers are used at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado.

4-3. Funeral Services

Are not held at the Cemetery but a final committal service may be conducted. For safety reasons, committal services are held at the Cemetery's Committal Shelter, away from gravesites. Interment takes place following the committal service.

a. Floral arrangements may accompany the casket or urn and will be placed on or at the gravesite or niche after interment. No glass containers are allowed.

4-4. Weekend/Holiday Funerals

The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado does not conduct interments on weekends or State holidays. A weekend caller will be directed to call again on the next workday.

Chapter 5

Assignment of Space

5-1. General

The Cemetery Administrator is authorized to inter eligible persons in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado provided there is available grave or columbarium space.

a. One gravesite or columbarium niche is authorized for the interment of all eligible members of a family except where soil conditions require more than one grave, or when the number of eligible family decedents requires more than one grave or niche.

b. A gravesite or niche cannot be reserved before it is needed for an interment. When a death occurs and eligibility for interment in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado is determined, interment space is assigned by the Cemetery Administrator in the name of the veteran or eligible person.

5-2. Space is Exhausted

Whenever space for full-casket burials has been exhausted, the Cemetery can still accommodate cremated remains (and vice versa).

Chapter 6

Burial Benefits

6-1. Interment

a. There is *no charge* for interment in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado. A gravesite or niche, opening and closing of the gravesite or niche, an upright granite headstone or granite niche marker with authorized inscription(s), concrete vault (grave liner) for casketed remains, use of Committal Shelter and/or Visitors Center, and perpetual care are provided at no expense to the next-of-kin.

b. A grave liner (vault, crypt) is a concrete container within a gravesite in which the casket is placed. It is provided at no cost and is used to reduce the amount of grave sinkage subsequent to interment. Grave liners are neither sealed nor watertight.

c. Cremated remains are buried or inurned in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado in the same manner and with the same honors as casketed remains.

6-2. Burial Flag



a. A United States flag is provided, at no cost, to drape the casket or accompany the urn of a deceased veteran who served honorably in the United States Armed Forces. It is furnished to honor the memory of a veteran's military service to his or her country.

b. Eligibility for Former Members of Selected Reserve was added by Section 571 of Public Law 105-261.

c. Generally, the flag is given to the next-of-kin, as a keepsake, after its use during the funeral service. When there is no next-of-kin, the flag may be provided to a friend making a request for it. Families may wish to donate the burial flag to the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado to be flown on patriotic holidays.

d. Application for a burial flag may be made by completing VA Form 21-2008 (90-2008), *Application for United States Flag for Burial Purposes*. You may get a flag at any VA regional office or United States Post Office. Generally, the funeral director will help you. Cemetery staff can assist with an application upon request as well.

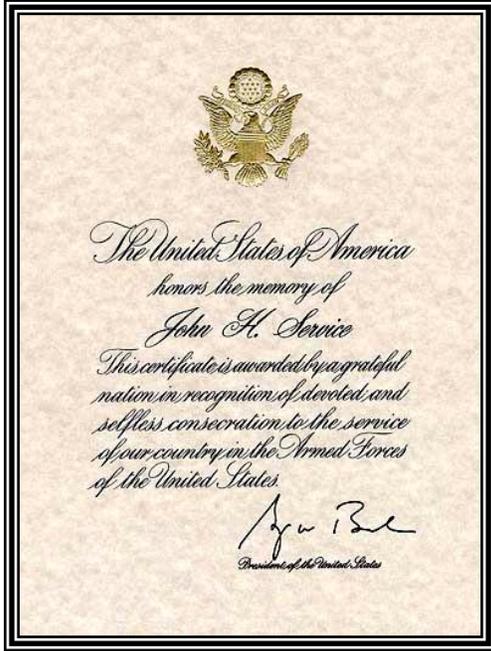
e. The law allows only one flag to be issued for a veteran's funeral. It cannot be replaced if it is lost, destroyed, or stolen. However, some veterans' organizations or other community groups may be able to help get another flag.

f. The proper way to display the flag depends upon whether the casket is open or closed. VA Form 21-2008 (90-2008) provides the correct method for displaying and folding the flag. The burial flag is not suitable for outside display because of its size and fabric. It is made of cotton and can easily be damaged by weather.

6-3. Presidential Memorial Certificate

a. A Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) is a gold embossed paper certificate inscribed with the veteran's name that bears the President's signature. It honors the memory of honorably discharged deceased veterans.

b. This program was initiated in March 1962 by President John F. Kennedy and has been continued by all subsequent Presidents.



c. The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) administers the PMC program through the National Cemetery Administration.

d. Eligible recipients include the deceased veteran's next-of-kin and loved ones. More than one certificate may be provided.

e. A copy of the deceased veteran's military discharge document must be provided when requesting a PMC. Eligible recipients, or someone acting on their behalf, may request a PMC in person at any VA Regional Office or through the United States mail or by fax as follows:

FAX: The request and all supporting documents should be faxed to (202) 565-8054.

MAIL: The request and all supporting documents should be sent to:

Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration (402E12)
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420-0001

Questions may be directed to (202) 565-4964.

Cemetery staff can assist with this process upon request.

6-4. "HONORING THOSE WHO SERVED" MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS

a. The Department of Defense (DOD) is responsible for providing military funeral honors. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado (VMC) staff will assist, upon request, with military funeral honors at the VMC.

b. On January 1, 2000, the DOD began the implementation plan for Providing military funeral honors for eligible veterans as enacted in Section 578 of Public Law 106-65 of the National Defense Authorization Act of FY 2000.



c. “Honoring Those Who Served” is the title of the DOD program for providing dignified military funeral honors to veterans who have defended our Nation. While military funeral honors are a long-standing tradition within the Armed Forces, this DOD program is in response to the new law governing funeral honors for eligible veterans.

d. Upon the family’s request, the law requires that every eligible veteran receive a military funeral honors ceremony to include folding and presenting the United States burial flag and the playing of Taps. The law defines a military funeral honors detail as consisting of two or more uniformed military persons with at least one a member of the veteran’s parent service of the Armed Forces.

e. The DOD program calls for funeral home directors to request military funeral honors on behalf of the veteran’s family. Veteran’s organizations may assist in the provision of military funeral honors. When military funeral honors at the VMC or a national cemetery are desired, they are arranged prior to the committal service by the funeral home.

f. Questions or comments concerning the DOD military funeral honors program may be sent to:

**Military Funeral Honors
9504 IH-35 North, Suite 320
San Antonio, TX 78233-6635**

A military funeral honors website is located at: www.militaryfuneralhonors.osd.mil.

Chapter 7 Headstones and Markers

7-1. General

a. The [Department of Veterans Affairs](http://www.va.gov) (VA) furnishes upon request, at no charge to the applicant, a Government headstone or marker for the grave of any deceased eligible veteran in any cemetery around the world. For all deaths occurring before December 27, 2001, the VA may provide a headstone or marker only for graves that are not marked with a private headstone.

b. Headstones and markers are provided for eligible spouses and dependents of veterans only in a national, military post/base, or State veterans cemetery. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado is a State veterans cemetery. Spouses and dependents buried in a private cemetery are not eligible for a Government-furnished headstone or marker.

c. While other types may be used at other cemeteries, the upright granite headstone is used exclusively on in-ground gravesites at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado. Granite markers are used to mark columbaria niches for inurnment of cremated remains. The term “marker” hereinafter refers to the niche marker.

7-2. Eligibility

Any deceased Colorado veteran discharged from the U.S. Armed Forces under conditions other than dishonorable is eligible for interment and a headstone or marker in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado.

7-3. Ordering a Government Headstone or Marker

When interment is in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado, cemetery staff will order a headstone or marker based on inscription information provided by the next-of-kin.

7-4. Inscriptions

a. Government-furnished headstones and markers *must* be inscribed with the name of the decedent, branch of service, and the year of birth and death, in this order.

b. Headstones and markers also may be inscribed with other items, including an authorized emblem of belief and, space permitting, additional text including grade, rate or rank, war service, complete dates of birth and death, military awards, military organizations and civilian and veteran affiliations. Additional inscriptions that have been approved *may* also be added (contact a Cemetery staff member for more information). An additional inscription is normally placed on the last line(s) of the inscription on a Government headstone or marker.

c. No graphics (logos, symbols, etc.) are permitted on Government headstones and markers other than the approved emblems of belief, the Civil War Union Shield, the Civil War Confederate Southern Cross of Honor, and the Medal of Honor insignia. Inscriptions will be in English text only.

d. Documentation must be provided when requesting military awards in the inscription. In most cases this information is provided on the veteran's military discharge documents. Civilian titles such as Doctor or Reverend, or any other additions to the name, are not permitted on the name line.

7-5. Shipping Government Headstones and Markers

a. Government-furnished headstones and markers are shipped free of charge, generally between 60 and 120 days after receipt of the order from the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado.

b. The status of a headstone or marker can be checked by contacting a Cemetery staff member.

7-6. Setting Government Headstones and Markers

Cemetery staff will set the headstone or marker at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado at no cost to the family.

7-7. Replacement Headstones and Markers

Previously furnished headstones and markers at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado may be replaced at Government expense when badly deteriorated, illegible, stolen or vandalized. The Government will also replace a headstone or marker if it is different from that specified or permitted by the Cemetery, the inscription is incorrect, or the material or workmanship does not meet specifications.

7-8. Memorial Headstones and Markers

a. Memorial headstones and markers are provided for eligible veterans whose remains are not recovered or identified, are buried at sea, donated to science, or whose cremated remains have been scattered.

b. Memorial headstones and markers may also be provided in the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado to eligible dependents whose remains are unavailable for interment, whether or not they predecease the eligible veteran.

c. These headstones and markers bear an "*In Memory of*" inscription as their first line.

7-9. Inscriptions

a. Headstones or niche covers will be inscribed, at Government expense for eligible veterans (once a niche cover is inscribed, it is referred to as a niche marker). The headstones in use at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado are upright gray granite measuring 13" X 42" X 4". Niche dimensions are 10 1/4" X 14 3/4" X 18 3/8". Niche markers are gray granite and cover the niche.

b. There are maximum allowable lines for inscription on headstones and niche markers. Certain information is *required* on the first four lines of a Government-furnished headstone or niche cover. This information includes: (1) surname; (2) first name and middle initial; (3) branch of service; and, (4) year of birth and year of death.

c. The remaining lines are reserved for a spouse's or dependents' information and/or optional inscriptions.

d. All inscriptions, including additional inscriptions, are subject to VA requirements and regulations.

7-10. Additional Inscriptions

- a. There may be room for an additional inscription on headstones. The inscription must fit on two lines and must not exceed eleven characters per line (including spaces).

- b. There may be room for an additional inscription on a niche marker if it fits on one line and does not exceed thirteen characters (including spaces).

- c. Additional inscriptions must be approved by the Cemetery Administrator and are subject to space limitations. Additional inscriptions will *always* be on the last line(s).

7-11. Authorized Emblems of Belief: Inscription of religious symbols is optional. If the decision is made to include one, the following emblems of belief are authorized for inscribing on headstones and niche markers:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Christian | 18. Hindu |
| 2. Buddhist | 19. Konko-Kyo Faith |
| 3. Judaism | 20. Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints |
| 4. Presbyterian Cross | 21. Sufism Reoriented |
| 5. Russian Orthodox Cross | 22. Tenrikyo Church |
| 6. Lutheran Cross | 23. Seicho-No-Ie |
| 7. Episcopal Cross | 24. The Church of World Messianity (Izunome) |
| 8. Unitarian Church Flaming Chalice | 25. United Church of Religious Science |
| 9. United Methodist Church | 26. Christian Reformed Church |
| 10. Aaronic Order Church | 27. United Moravian Church |
| 11. Mormon-Angel Moroni | 28. Eckankar |
| 12. Native American Church of America | 29. Christian Church |
| 13. Serbian Orthodox | 30. United Church of Christ |
| 14. Greek Cross | 31. Christian Science Cross & Crown |
| 15. Bahai-9 Point Star | 32. Islamic 5 Pointed Star |
| 16. Atheist | |
| 17. Muslim-Crescent & Star | |

Chapter 8 Floral Regulations

8-1. Fresh Cut Flowers

May be placed on graves at any time. Floral items will be removed from graves as soon as they become faded and unsightly. Planting will not be permitted on graves at any time.

8-2. Artificial Flowers

May be placed on graves only during periods when their presence will not interfere with grounds maintenance (normally from November 1st to April 1st). They will, however, be allowed on graves for a period extending 10 days before through 10 days after Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, and Veterans Day.

8-3. Maintenance

a. During lawn mowing and grounds maintenance season, all floral items will be removed from graves weekly. The only exception will be during the Easter Sunday, Memorial Day, and Veterans Day periods.

b. Holiday wreaths, blankets, and other seasonal adornments are permitted on graves from December 1st through January 20th. They will be removed after that time.

c. Permanent types of flower containers are not authorized.

d. Statues, vigil lights, glass objects of any kind and any other types of commemorative items are not permitted on graves at any time.

e. Floral items and other types of decorations will not be secured to markers.

8-4. Other Items on Gravesites

a. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado does not permit items on graves, which are: considered offensive; inconsistent with the dignity of the cemetery; and/or, considered hazardous to cemetery personnel (items incorporating beads or wires, for example, may become entangled in mowers or other equipment and cause injury).

b. All items placed on gravesites become the property of the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado and will be disposed of under applicable regulations. The cemetery is not responsible for floral items/decorations after they have been placed on gravesites. Flowers are placed at one's own risk; the cemetery will not replace them if they are damaged, lost, or stolen.

c. For additional information, please contact a cemetery staff member.

Chapter 9

Locating Veterans Gravesites

9-1. Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado

For assistance with finding a veteran's gravesite at the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado, there is a grave locator kiosk, similar to an ATM, under the roof, on the south side of the Administration Building. It can be used to locate a gravesite. Directions for its use are provided at the grave locator. Visitors can also visit the Administration Building for directions and assistance during normal business hours.

9-2. Other Veterans Cemeteries

To find veterans' gravesites at other national cemeteries, the United States Department of Veterans Affairs' (VA) National Cemetery Administration (NCA) can provide limited burial location assistance to family members and close friends of decedents thought to be buried in a VA national cemetery. No form is required to request this information and no fee is charged.

a. The VA does not have burial locations of persons buried in cemeteries other than VA's 119 national cemeteries. The VA's burial records do not contain any personal, military or family information on decedents. The Privacy Act does not allow the VA to provide the address or phone number of the next-of-kin listed on its burial records. It is only able to say if the individual veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery and where.

b. Upon request, NCA personnel will research its records to determine if a decedent is buried in one of the VA's national cemeteries. The NCA cannot search for large groups on the basis of surname, military unit, war period or place of residence. A request can include up to ten specific names. The date of death is required for each decedent.

c. To request a burial location search, please provide the following information on each individual veteran:

- (1) Full name, including any alternate spellings;
- (2) Date and place of death;
- (3) Service number;
- (4) Social Security number; and,
- (5) Military service branch.

d. Most requests take approximately four weeks for a reply. Be sure to include your mailing address and phone number with your request and send it to:

U. S. Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Administration (402B)
810 Vermont Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20420

Chapter 10

Visitors Standards of Conduct



a. The Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado is a shrine for the honored dead who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States. Visitors to these hallowed grounds are asked to preserve the dignity and sanctity of the cemetery.

Accordingly, visitors are not to:

- (1) Litter the grounds;
- (2) Cut, break, or injure trees, shrubs, grass, or other plantings;
- (3) Use the cemetery for any form of sports recreation, including, but not limited to jogging; skating; bicycling; fishing; and, picnicking.

- (4) Use the cemetery for any public gatherings of a partisan nature;
- (5) Engage in demeaning activities and/or boisterous actions;
- (6) Bring pets onto the grounds, with the exception of seeing-eye dogs.
- (7) Enter the cemetery grounds after dark.

Chapter 11

Memorial Monuments - *Design*

11-1. General

Memorial monuments to honor veterans collectively can be donated by a veterans service organization (VSO), civic group, or other organization. Memorial monuments may also be accepted from individual donors whose intent is to commemorate and honor the military service of a group or class of veterans.

11-2. Specific Design Criteria: Character

a. A memorial monument shall be artistically designed and consistent with the sacred purpose of the Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado. It is to honor military service by groups or organizations as distinctive from individuals and civilian service, however notable and patriotic.

b. **Dimensions:** To ensure uniformity, the plaque or incised inscription of a memorial monument shall be 12” wide and 24” long. If a plaque is used, it will be mounted on a suitable stone support 18” high at the front with a sloped mounting surface to a maximum height of 24” at the rear. The stone support is to be 20” wide and 33” long. Together, the plaque or incised inscription and stone support comprise a memorial monument. (Fig. 1).

c. **Foundation:** Each memorial monument will have a 4” thick foundation with a memorial monument.

d. **Inscription and Mounting:** The plaque must include in the design a clear indication of the commemoration or homage being paid the military group or organization. The identity of the donor organization and date of presentation may be shown. Official emblems of the donor organization are encouraged to be included on the plaque. In lieu of a plaque and stone support, the inscription and emblem may be incised directly on a stone base, no greater than 24” maximum height above grade. (Fig. 2).

e. **Material and Workmanship:** The material and workmanship of a memorial shall be of the highest quality, free of flaws and imperfections. The plaque on a monument shall be cast bronze. The stone support(s) shall be granite, marble, limestone, or natural boulder. Where incising of inscription is used in lieu of a bronze plaque, granite, limestone, or marble is to be used.

f. **Title:** The title to any donated monument passes to, and is vested in, the State of Colorado and the donor organization relinquishes all control over the future use and disposition of the donated monument.

g. **Additional Terms and Conditions:** There are additional terms and conditions with the donation of a memorial monument. Please contact the Cemetery Administrator for complete details and guidance.

h. Drawings and Dimensions

STONE BASE

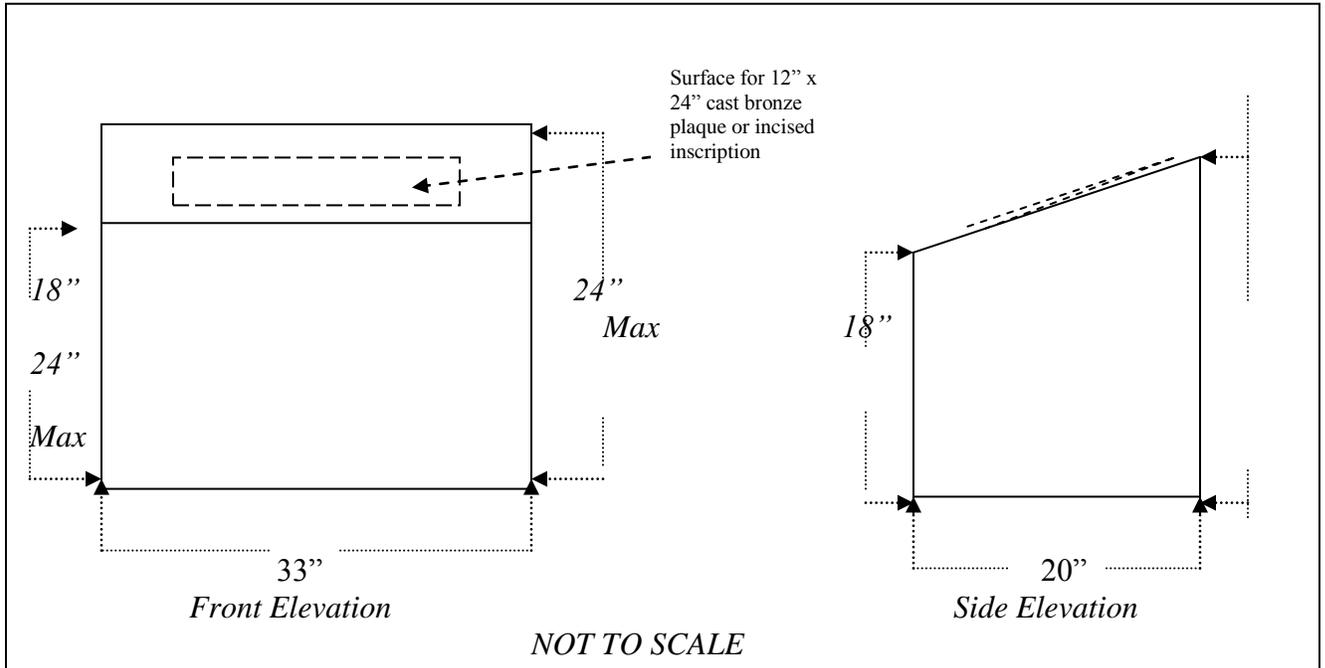


Figure 1

STONE BOULDER

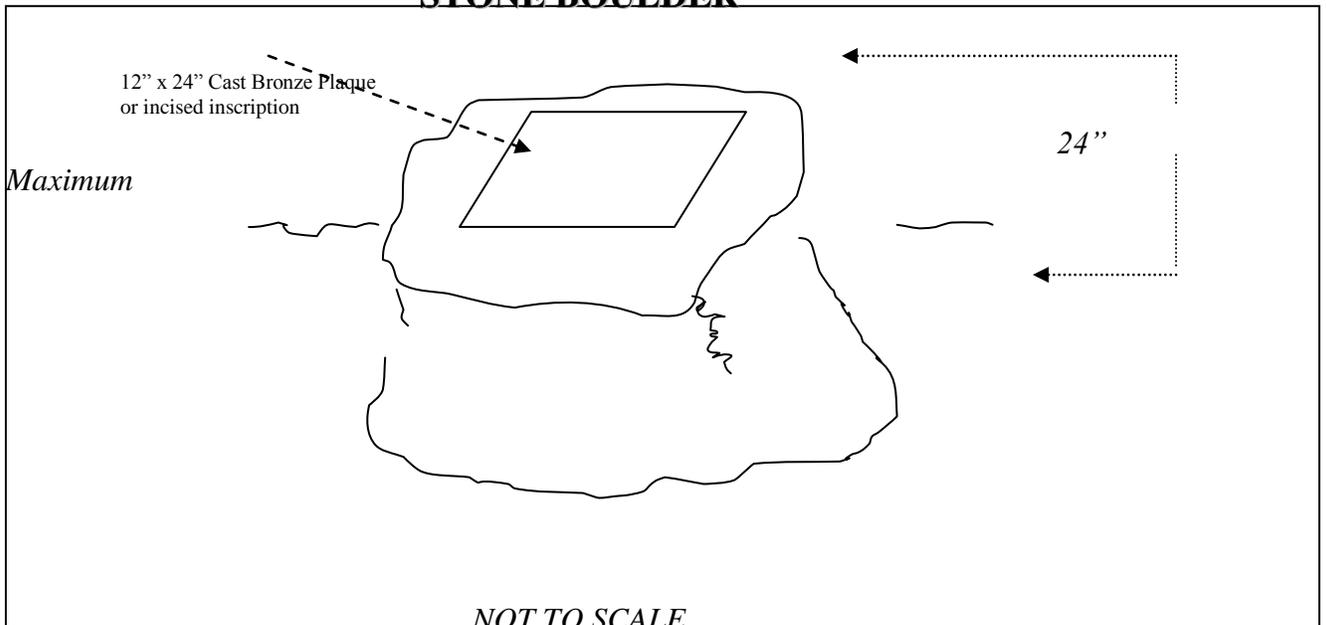


Figure 2

Chapter 12

Contacting Cemetery Staff

Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado staff may be contacted as follows:

Veterans Memorial Cemetery of Western Colorado; 2830 D Road; Grand Junction, CO
81501

Administrator: Richard J. Gigliotti

E-mail: Richard.Gigliotti@state.co.us

Administrative Assistant: Rhy Paris

E-mail: Rhy.Paris@state.co.us

Phone: (970) 263-8986

FAX: (970) 257-7450

