

VA Burial Benefits

Service-connected Death

- VA will pay up to \$2,000 toward burial expenses for deaths on or after September 11, 2001, or up to \$1,500 for deaths prior to September 11, 2001. If the Veteran is buried in a VA national cemetery, some or all of the cost of transporting the deceased may be reimbursed.

Non-service-connected Death

- VA will pay up to \$978 toward burial and funeral expenses for deaths on or after October 1, 2024 and a \$978 plot-interment allowance (if not buried in a national cemetery).

Eligibility Requirements

- You paid for a Veteran's burial or funeral, **AND**
- You have not been reimbursed by another government agency or some other source for an amount that is equal to or exceeds VA's burial allowance, such as the deceased Veteran's employer, **AND**
- The Veteran was discharged under conditions other than dishonorable, **AND**
- 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 while hospitalized by VA, or while receiving care under VA contract at a non-VA facility, **OR**

Eligibility Requirements Continued

- The Veteran died while traveling under proper authorization and at VA expense to or from a specified place for the purpose of examination, treatment, or care, **OR**
- The Veteran had an original or reopened claim pending at the time of death and has been found entitled to compensation or pension from a date prior to the date of death, **OR**
- The Veteran died while a patient at a [VA-approved State Veterans nursing home](#).

VA does not pay burial benefits if the deceased died:

- On active duty, **OR**
- While serving as a member of Congress, **OR**
- While serving a Federal prison sentence.

Evidence Requirements

- Receipted bills that show that you made payment in whole or part, **OR**
- Acceptable proof of death as specified in [38 CFR 3.211](#) (such as a death certificate), **AND**
- A statement of account, preferably on the printed bill or letterhead of the funeral director or cemetery owner. The statement of account must show:
 - The name of the deceased Veteran for whom the services and merchandise were furnished, **AND**
 - The nature and cost of the services and merchandise, **AND**
 - All credits, **AND**
 - The amount of the unpaid balance, if any.

[21p-530EZ form](#)

Burial Allowance for Veterans, Wives or Widows SDCL 33A-5-2 & 33A-5-3

A payment of up to \$100 may be paid by the state to help defray the burial and funeral expenses of any honorably discharged veteran or the wife, widow or widower of a veteran when the estate, or immediate family, of the deceased is lacking in funds to pay the expenses. The veteran must have been a citizen of the United States and a resident of South Dakota for one year preceding entrance into military service or one year preceding the death. This payment CANNOT be made to another unit of government. The surviving spouse, or relatives, must furnish an affidavit to the C/TVSO that sufficient funds are not available for payment of the expenses. Application for the Burial Allowance must be submitted by the county or tribal veterans service officer to the Pierre office within one year from the date of the burial.

[SDDVA Burial Allowance Form](#)

Headstone Setting Reimbursement SDCL 33A-5-4

The state will pay \$200 towards the cost of setting a government headstone or marker at the grave of a veteran who was a resident of this state for one year preceding entrance into the military service or one year preceding death.

The state will pay \$100 for the professional etching of the veterans military information on the back of a privately purchased headstone. The etching on the private stone must include the name, rank, branch of service, and dates of birth and death of the veteran.

Application for the Headstone Setting Reimbursement must be submitted by a county or tribal veterans service officer to the Pierre Office within one year from the date of setting of the headstone or marker.

[SDDVA Headstone Setting Reimbursement Form](#)

Month of Death Benefit
38 CFR § 3.20
M21-1, Part XI, Subpart ii, Chapter 2

(c)

(1) Where a veteran receiving compensation or pension dies after December 31, 1996, the surviving spouse, if not entitled to death compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation, or death pension for the month of death, shall be entitled to a benefit for that month in an amount equal to the amount of compensation or pension the veteran would have received for that month but for his or her death.

(2) A payment issued to a deceased veteran as compensation or pension for the month in which death occurred shall be treated as payable to that veteran's surviving spouse, if the surviving spouse is not entitled to death compensation, dependency and indemnity compensation or death pension for that month and, if negotiated or deposited, shall be considered to be the benefit to which the surviving spouse is entitled under [paragraph \(c\)\(1\)](#) of this section. However, if such payment is in an amount less than the amount of the benefit under [paragraph \(c\)\(1\)](#) of this section, the unpaid difference shall be treated in the same manner as an accrued benefit under [§ 3.1000 of this part](#).

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation (DIC) for Surviving Spouse or Dependent

Dependency and Indemnity Compensation(DIC)is a monthly benefit. Itis paid to eligible survivors of:

- Service members who died while on active duty, active duty for training or inactive duty training, OR
- Veterans who died as a result of a service-connected injury or disease, OR
- Veterans who did not die as a result of a service-connected injury or disease, but were totally disabled by a service-connected disability:
 - For at least 10 years before their death, **or**
 - Since their release from active duty and for at least 5 years immediately before their death, **or**
 - For at least 1 year before their death if they were a former prisoner of war who died after September 30, 1999

Eligibility for Surviving Spouse

One of these must be true:

- You lived with the Veteran or service member without a break until their death, **or**
- If you're separated, you weren't at fault for the separation

And one of these must be true:

- You married the Veteran or service member within 15 years of their discharge from the period of military service during which the qualifying illness or injury started or got worse, **or**
- You were married to the Veteran or service member for at least 1 year, **or**
- You had a child with the Veteran or service member

Eligibility for Surviving Spouse

Note: If you remarried, you can receive or continue to receive compensation if one of these describes you:

- You remarried on or after December 16, 2003, and you were 57 years of age or older at the time you remarried, **or**
- You remarried on or after January 5, 2021, and you were 55 years of age or older at the time you remarried

Additional benefits paid for:

- Aid and Attendance/Housebound
- Dependents under age 18
- 8/8 Rule

Eligibility for Surviving Child

All of these must be true:

- You aren't married, **and**
 - You aren't included on the surviving spouse's compensation, **and**
 - You're under the age of 18 (or under the age of 23 if attending school)
- Note:** If you were adopted out of the Veteran's or service member's family, but meet all other eligibility criteria, you still qualify for compensation.

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