

**STATE OF DELAWARE**  
**COMMISSION OF VETERANS AFFAIRS**  
**DELAWARE VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY**

**GENERAL GUIDELINES,**  
**RULES AND REGULATIONS,**  
**AND**  
**STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES**

**The Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs  
hereby sets forth this manual which governs.**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Administration** ..... Section 1

**General Provisions** ..... Section 2

**Interment Eligibility** ..... Section 3

**Interment Facilities and Services**.....Section 4

**Interment and Related Actions** ..... Section 5

**Cremated Remains and Directed Exhumations** ..... Section 6

**Markers** ..... Section 7

**Ceremonies and Special Events** ..... Section 8

**Emergency Notification Roster**..... Section 9

## **SECTION 1**

### **ADMINISTRATION**

#### **1.01 PURPOSE**

1. This manual sets forth the policies and procedures for the administration, operation and maintenance of the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery (DVMC). The manual is published in loose-leaf format to facilitate the inclusion of changes as published.
2. It should be noted that this manual is both directive and advisory in nature. The matter of content that is directive is usually expressed through the use of such words as “**shall**” or “**will**” or “**must be**” and other words and phrases that are stated in the imperative. Consequently, compliance with the requirements of this manual when they are directive in nature, is mandatory. No deviations will be made without prior written approval of the Executive Director, Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs. In an emergency, deviations may be requested by telephone.

#### **1.02 MODIFICATIONS AND CHANGES**

1. Recommendations for additions, deletions, or refinements to this manual are encouraged and should be submitted through channels to the Executive Director, Commission of Veterans Affairs. The Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs will be informed of proposed changes.
2. Comments should be keyed to the specific page, paragraph, and line of text in which change is recommended. Reasons will be provided for each comment to ensure understanding and complete evaluation.

## **SECTION 2**

### **GENERAL PROVISIONS**

#### **1.01 ESTABLISHMENT**

The Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery (DVMC) was established pursuant to Title 20, Chapter 12 of the Delaware Code. The DVMC is under the direction, control and management of the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs, 802 Silver Lake Blvd, Suite 100, Dover, DE 19904 (Title 29, Chapter 87, Section 8721).

#### **2.02 CEMETERY HOURS**

1. Cemetery administrative offices are open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Closed weekends and holidays.
2. The grounds, rest rooms, and locator kiosks will be open sunrise to sunset.

#### **2.03 VISITORS**

1. Visitors are admitted during the hours that the cemetery is open.
2. Family members and the general public frequently visit the cemetery. Employees should be courteous when responding to those who visit the cemetery.
3. Locator maps are available to assist visitors with locating respective interment sites.

#### **2.04 VISITORS' STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

1. The DVMC is a shrine for deceased veterans who have served in the Armed Forces of the United States.
2. In keeping with the honor bestowed on state veterans cemeteries, it is considered fitting and appropriate that visitors to these hallowed grounds refrain from any conduct or activity that is unbecoming to the final resting place of our nation's heroes. Accordingly, visitors are not authorized to:
  - Litter the grounds.
  - Move, remove or otherwise alter, cut, break or injure trees, shrubs, grass or other plantings, to include markers.
  - Use the cemetery for any form of sports or recreation, to include but not limited to skating, hunting, bicycling, or jogging.
  - Use the cemetery as a picnic ground.
  - Use the cemetery for public gatherings of a partisan nature.
  - Allow pets to run loose.
  - Otherwise engage in any other demeaning activity or boisterous action.
  - Exceed the posted speed limit.
  - Use or transport in alcoholic beverages.

- Bring firearms or explosives of any kind into the cemetery. Authorized military escorts are exempt.
  - Park motor vehicles on lawns, unless so directed.
  - Hold memorial observances or ceremonies on the cemetery grounds other than those approved by the Commission of Veterans Affairs.
  - Solicitation and vending within the DVMC shall not be permitted.
  - Sell or offer for sale items on cemetery grounds. No one may display or advertise for future sale any products while on the grounds of the cemetery.
3. The Cemetery Administrator will, if considered appropriate, post a sign at or near the main entrance to convey to the public the information described above. However, any appropriate variation may be used.
  4. Should efforts to effect voluntary termination of any prohibited practice prove unsuccessful, the Cemetery Administrator or designee may request the offending person(s) to depart the cemetery.
  5. If arrest of an offender is necessary, the Cemetery Administrator will call the nearest local law enforcement authorities. The Cemetery Administrator will report the circumstances to the Executive Director, Commission of Veterans Affairs immediately, or as soon as possible.

## **2.05 ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICES**

1. Visitors, as well as those wishing to arrange a funeral, should be directed to the administrative facility set aside specifically for the transaction of business with the public. A receptionist's desk/counter is positioned in the main business office for this purpose.
2. Carpeting, office furnishings and wall hangings will be in keeping with the purpose of the office and will not give an appearance or impression of gaudiness, nor will a somber funeral atmosphere prevail.

## **2.06 U.S. FLAG AND CEMETERY FLAGPOLES**

1. The flag of the United States, Delaware and POW/MIA will be displayed at the cemetery 24 hours a day.
2. The flag of the United States will be lowered to half mast when directed by Executive Order of the President. The State flag will be lowered to half mast, when directed by the Governor.
3. General information regarding the rules and customs pertaining to the display, care and disposition of the flag are contained in the Flag Code, Title 36, U.S. Chapter 10, as amended by P.L. 344, 94th Congress.
4. The P.O.W. – M.I.A flag is authorized to display along with the flag of the United States. However, State funds can not be used to procure P.O.W.-M.I.A flags. Service organizations or citizens may donate flags or funds for this purpose (Senate Bill No. 87 April 16, 1991).

## **2.07 TRAFFIC CONTROL**

1. The speed limit at the DVMC is 10 MPH unless otherwise posted.

2. Traffic in the DVMC will flow to the right at all times, or as directed by signage. All vehicles will be restricted to cemetery roads and shall be driven and parked on the right side of the road.
3. When large crowds are anticipated, special accommodation will be developed and implemented by the Cemetery Administrator.

## **2.08 FLORAL STANDARDS**

1. Funeral flowers, holders, containers, baskets and easels will be removed and disposed of when they become unsightly.
2. Natural cut flowers or artificial flowers may be placed in a permanent vase or cone shaped metal container. These flowers will be removed when they become unsightly.
3. Artificial flowers, potted plants, baskets, wreaths and other decorations whose overall dimensions do not exceed 18 inches in length or diameter, may be placed three days prior to Nationally recognized holidays. If the family decides to retain any decoration, they should be removed within the seven-day period after the holiday. After seven days, the decoration will be removed. The only exception is when the holiday falls within the mowing season (April 15th through Sept 15th). During this time, all items will be removed unless they are properly contained in one of the above mentioned vases.
4. Winter decorations: Blankets, mounds, wreaths, artificial flowers and other winter decorations are permitted beginning on December 1st. All such items will be removed after the 15th of January or as the ground foreman dictates.
5. Balloons, streamers, hanging ornaments, statues, vigil lights, glass objects, commemorative items or plantings of any kind are strictly prohibited on graves, surrounding trees, shrubbery, or benches.
6. The DVMC assumes no responsibility for any floral arrangement and reserves the right to remove any floral arrangement or decoration that does not conform to the standards.
7. The DVMC authorizes a permanent vase that has a removable liner and mounts flush with the ground.
8. Flags may be placed on graves as long as they do not touch the ground. The DVMC will provide flags for Memorial Day and Veterans Day which will be removed after the holiday. Families may display flags for their loved ones at their own expense. The DVMC assumes no responsibility for the wear and tear of flags.
9. The DVMC provides grounds maintenance to each cemetery section on a weekly basis. This includes the removal and disposal of unauthorized grave decorations and faded and unsightly floral items. Cemetery personnel will dispose of any decorations or floral items that have been displaced from the gravesites, due to wind or other factors out of our control.

## **2.09 PHOTOGRAPHS**

1. The taking of photographs in the DVMC for private or commercial purposes may be permitted. The Cemetery Administrator will advise photographers that authorization is granted on the condition that the

use of such photographs must not detract from the dignity and reverential atmosphere associated with the DVMC, and will not invade the privacy of next of kin through publication of any photographs showing names or identifying details on individual grave markers.

2. No part of any interment service at the DVMC will be photographed by any cemetery employee. Even if the next of kin (NOK) or a family member requests that photographs be taken. A family member or other photographer may take photographs of an interment when the next of kin requests it or otherwise indicates no objection.

## **2.10 GIFTS AND DONATIONS**

1. **Members and employees of the Commission are hereby prohibited from soliciting, accepting, receiving, or charging any money, article, or other thing of value in return for performing any service rendered to any veteran or to his or her dependents or survivors, at any time and in any manner. Any person violating the provisions of this subsection shall be guilty of a Class B Misdemeanor (Senate Bill 179, as Amended dated June 4, 1985).**
2. All donations accepted by the DVMC shall become the property of the State. Personal property rights are relinquished by the donor. A receipt will be issued to any donor stating the above.

## **SECTION 3**

### **ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERMENT IN THE DELAWARE VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY SYSTEM**

#### **3.01 PURPOSE**

1. This Section identifies the policies and procedures to establish eligibility for interment in the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery, and specifies which persons are eligible. Veterans are encouraged to register in advance. Applications can be made through the Commission of Veterans Affairs web site obtainable at [www.state.de.us/veteran](http://www.state.de.us/veteran). Paper applications are available at the DVMC or the Commission of Veterans Affairs.
2. The Cemetery Administrator is responsible for implementing interment eligibility requirements in the DVMC in accordance with guidelines furnished in this chapter.

#### **3.02 ELIGIBILITY FOR INTERMENT**

1. Any Delaware resident who was honorably discharged from the armed forces of the United States, other than active duty for training (ADT), or reservists who have served more than 180 days of active federal service. Federal active military service does not have to be consecutive.
2. The veteran's spouse, upon pre-qualification of eligible veteran.
3. The veteran's dependents, when under the age of 21 and not married, or having a verifiable life-long dependency on the eligible veteran.
4. Legal resident of Delaware, means the veteran must have been a:
  - a. Legal resident of Delaware at the time of death; or
  - b. Legal resident for a period of 10 or more years (does not have to be consecutive); any cumulative period of 10 or more years will satisfy the residence requirement, regardless of the residence at time of death; or
  - c. Legal resident of Delaware when he or she entered the Armed Forces of the United States.
5. PRE-APPLICATION PROCEDURES:
  - a. The veteran shall submit to the Cemetery Administrator documentation of honorable military service and proof of residence.
  - b. If desired, inform the Administrator that the applicant also requests interment of spouse and/or dependent children.
  - c. The Administrator shall, upon approval of eligibility, establish a file in the veteran's name indicating pre-approval of eligibility.

- d. The pre-application procedure and approval of eligibility should not be considered as assignment of space, but as a method to expedite the interment arrangement at the time of death to lessen the grief of the survivor.

6. **ARRANGING AN INTERMENT IN THE EVENT THAT PRE-APPLICATION WAS NOT FILED -** The person or persons (the veteran, veteran's survivors or legal representative) making the funeral arrangements should notify the FUNERAL DIRECTOR that the deceased is to be buried in the State Veterans Cemetery. Such person or persons shall furnish the Funeral Director with all information, including documentary evidence of the veteran's Honorable Active Military Service, and evidence to establish that the veteran met the requirements of Legal Residence of Delaware. The Funeral director will then communicate with the Administrator of the Cemetery to arrange for the interment and forward such evidence to establish the veteran's eligibility.
5. **RIGHT TO APPEAL.** A veteran, the next of kin, or legal representative may appeal a decision as to the eligibility of a veteran for burial in the DVMC. The appeal shall be in writing and filed with the Commission of Veterans Affairs, 802 Silver Lake Blvd., Suite 100, Dover, DE 19904. When the matter on appeal concerns the right of immediate burial of a person, the requirement for written appeal is waived, and the Executive Director of the Commission of Veterans Affairs shall respond to the appeal within two working days of its receipt.

### **3.03 ASSIGNMENT OF SPACE**

1. Gravesites are not pre-selected. Assignments are made in sequence, working in one row, one section at a time. Unassigned spaces will be reserved in a single vault section, when husband and wife are both veterans.
2. The applicant should select the DVMC location of their choice, either the New Castle County, or Sussex County location.
3. The person or persons, (veteran, veteran's survivors, or legal representative) making the funeral arrangements should notify the funeral director of their choice for interment in the DVMC. To make an application, such person or persons shall furnish the funeral director with all necessary information and documentation, including the veteran's appropriate discharge form(s), or a Certificate of Eligibility.

### **3.04 INTERMENT FEES**

2. There is no fee for a gravesite or interment for an eligible veteran who is interred at DVMC within two years from the date of death.
2. Fees are established by the State of Delaware, Commission of Veterans Affairs and may change without notice. These fees may not be prepaid. The current fee schedule:

*DELAWARE VETERANS MEMORIAL CEMETERY  
FEE SCHEDULE*

<b>Spouse / Dependent Fee</b>	\$300.00
<b>Single Disinterment</b>	
<b>Full casket</b>	\$300.00
<b>Cremations (wall)</b>	\$100.00
<b>Cremations (in ground)</b>	\$250.00
<b>Double Disinterment</b>	
<b>Full Casket</b>	\$450.00
<b>Cremations (wall)</b>	\$200.00
<b>Cremations (in ground)</b>	\$450.00
<b>Re-interment from outside system</b>	
<b>Veteran</b>	\$300.00
<b>Spouse / Dependent</b>	\$300.00

3. Any change effecting the initial burial disposition of the eligible veteran, spouse or dependent against the current interment request will be handled as a dis-interment/re-interment and the appropriate fee charged.
4. A bronze marker for the veteran or immediate family member will be furnished upon application to the Department of Veterans Affairs at no cost. All other expenses incurred by the survivors of the deceased, including the funeral expenses must be paid out of private funds.

**3.05 BURDEN OF PROOF**

3. The Commission of Veterans Affairs will assist in every way possible to establish eligibility. However, it shall be the responsibility of the veteran, the veteran's survivors, or legal representative to furnish such documentary evidence before interment.
2. Such evidence must clearly establish that the veteran meets the eligibility requirements prior to interment in the DVMC.

### **3.06 PERSONS NOT ELIGIBLE FOR INTERMENT IN THE DVMC SYSTEM**

The National Cemetery Administration's criteria precludes eligibility under any of the following conditions:

1. **FORMER SPOUSES** - Divorce or annulment from the eligible veteran terminates eligibility for a person not otherwise eligible.
2. **FATHERS, MOTHERS, BROTHERS, SISTERS, GRANDPARENTS OR IN-LAWS** - These persons are not entitled to interment by reason of relationship to an eligible veteran even if they are dependent upon the veteran for support or are members of the veteran's household.
3. **PERSONS SUBJECT TO PUBLIC LAW 105-116** - This law prohibits burial of anyone convicted of a federal or state capital crime and sentenced to death, or life imprisonment.

### **3.07 REINTERMENT IN THE DVMC SYSTEM**

1. Whenever unusual circumstances warrant, the remains of a veteran who met the interment eligibility requirements at the time of death, may be moved to the DVMC for REINTERMENT providing that:
  - a. Detailed documentation and supporting evidence together has been filed with the Cemetery Administrator at the cemetery section chosen for reinterment.
  - b. A copy of the permit issued by the registrar or other city/town official of the department that oversees burials where the grave is presently located must be submitted to show evidence that there has been compliance with all relevant laws. Also, a disposition form, and the appropriate fees if applicable must be provided.
  - c. All permits required for the disinterment, the transportation and the reinterment of the remains in a DVMC must be furnished by the funeral director concerned. No state funds may be expended to assist with the disinterment.

### **3.08 DISINTERMENT FROM THE DVMC**

1. Disinterment from the DVMC will be approved only when all living immediate family members of the decedent, and the person who initiated the interment (whether or not he or she is a member of the immediate family), give their written consent, or when a court order or state instrumentality of competent jurisdiction directs the disinterment. "Immediate Family Members" are defined as surviving spouse, if not married, all adult children of the decedent, appointed guardian(s) of minor children, the appointed guardian of the surviving un-remarried spouse or of the adult children of the decedent. When the person who initiated the interment is the remarried spouse, his/her written consent will not be required. In the absence of a surviving un-remarried spouse and children, the decedent's parents will be considered "family members".
2. All requests for authority to disinter remains must be submitted in writing to the appropriate Cemetery Administrator and will include the following information:
  - a. A full statement of reasons for the proposed disinterment.

- b. A copy of the permit issued by the registrar or other city/town official of the department that oversees burials
3. In lieu of the documents required in paragraph (2.b.) of this section, an order of a court of competent jurisdiction will be considered. The Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs or officials of the cemetery should not be made a party to the court action since this is a matter for the family members to resolve.
4. Any disinterment that may be authorized under this section must be accomplished without expense to the state of Delaware.
5. Any disinterment made will be performed under the jurisdiction of an established and licensed funeral home. Transportation and reinterment is the responsibility of the licensed funeral home in charge.
6. The Cemetery Administrator or designated representative will supervise disinterment at the gravesite. Special care and concern will be shown for adjacent graves and headstones.
7. The grave marker of the decedent being disinterred will not be shipped at the state's expense to the cemetery where the remains are to be reinterred. However, if the decedent being disinterred is to be interred at the DVMC in the state, a new marker will be ordered by the administrator of that cemetery.
8. When a disinterment has been completed, the open grave will not be backfilled. Rather, the Cemetery Administrator will keep the grave open, but will cover it with planking or other rigid materials for purposes of safety. The Cemetery Administrator will then cause the grave to be reused at the earliest possible date. This guidance also applies to crematory niches.

**SECTION 4**  
**INTERMENT FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

**4.01 BASIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

1. At the time burial arrangements are being made, the Cemetery Administrator will explain to the funeral director, the next of kin, or to his or her agent, what services will be provided by the DVMC and what facilities are available for committals.
2. Services and/or facilities furnished normally include the opening and closing of the grave, transportation to and from the committal area, use of the committal area, and good perpetual care.

**4.02 VIEWING OF REMAINS IN STATE CEMETERIES**

1. Facilities for viewing of remains are not provided at the DVMC.
2. Under no circumstances will a casket be opened after the coach bearing a closed casket has entered the cemetery.

**4.03 DESIGNATED SERVICE AREAS**

1. Committal services at the DVMC are **not** conducted at the gravesite. Instead they are held at the designated committal site or other committal areas away from the gravesite. This is done primarily for two reasons:
  - a. Greater safety is provided for those attending the services.
  - b. Disruption of cemetery operations in the area of the gravesite is avoided.
3. Cemetery Administrator and/or designated staff representatives will make sure that the funeral homes making arrangements for the next of kin are made aware of designated committal areas.

**4.04 USE OF CLERGY FOR COMMITTAL SERVICES**

1. Committal services will be held for all interments at the DVMC unless the next of kin specifically requests that a service not be held.
2. The DVMC is not responsible for scheduling clergy for services. The funeral director, veteran agent, or family members are responsible for scheduling clergy.

#### **4.05 MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS**

1. The Department of Defense (DOD) is responsible for providing military funeral honors. "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, the DOD program is in response to the new law governing funeral honors for eligible veterans.
2. 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. The DOD program calls for funeral home directors to request military funeral honors on behalf of the veterans' family, however the Cemetery Administrator can also assist with arranging military funeral honors at the DVMC. Several veterans organizations have honor guards to assist or provide for military funeral honors. When military funeral honors at the DVMC are desired, they are arranged prior to the committal service by the funeral home (Section 578 Public Law 106-65, National Defense Authorization Act, FY 2000, January 1, 2000).
3. If military personnel or members of a local veterans organization are not available to provide the military honors (e.g. bugler) the Cemetery Administrator is authorized to use pre-recorded music and taps only.

#### **4.06 UNITED STATES FLAG**

1. The United States, Department of Veterans Affairs will provide a flag, at no cost, to drape the casket or to accompany the urn of a deceased veteran who served honorably in the U.S. Armed Forces. Generally, the flag is given to the next-of-kin, after use during the funeral service.
2. Application for United States Flag for Burial Purposes is completed on VA Form 21-2008. The Funeral Director should complete the application on behalf of the next-of-kin.

#### **4.07 PALLBEARERS**

1. Funeral Directors should make arrangements for the assignment of pallbearers with the NOK.
2. The DVMC is not appropriately staffed to provide pallbearers, but when the decedent is indigent, or without family or others attending the interment, the Cemetery Administrator may assign staff to assist the funeral director with unloading the casket.

## **SECTION 5**

### **THE INTERMENT AND RELATED ACTIONS**

#### **5.01 GENERAL**

1. The interment is the most important function of the DVMC. That period of time between arrival of the funeral procession at the cemetery entrance until the last member of the funeral party has left the cemetery should be looked upon by the Cemetery Administrator, and all cemetery employees who might be directly involved in any interment as the most important time in their work day. It is the time when the highest degree of compassion and concern on the part of all cemetery personnel must be very much in evidence. This is the time when family of the deceased are under physical and emotional strain and when their grief is so intense that any little mistake made during the course of the funeral and interment is magnified in their minds. The end result of such mistakes could be a criticism of the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery and the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs.
2. The Cemetery Administrator should ensure that each funeral and interment is conducted with the maximum efficiency without sacrificing any of the dignity and reverence that must be accorded to these ceremonies. It must be kept in mind at all times that the sole reason for the existence of the DVMC is the burial of the dead and that any other function is secondary.

#### **5.02 SCHEDULING OF INTERMENTS**

1. It is the responsibility of the Cemetery Administrator to schedule the date and hour of all interments in the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery.
2. Upon receipt of a request for interment, the requester will be advised that the date and time set is tentative pending official determination of eligibility and/or authorization for interment. When eligibility requirements have been met, a firm date and time may be established.
3. Under normal circumstances, the Cemetery Administrator will tentatively schedule interments so as to allow two full workdays for verification of service data. However, if verification of service is received prior to the expiration of this two-day period and the decedent is eligible, the Cemetery Administrator and his/her staff may advance the scheduling of the burial service providing the next of kin is agreeable and there are no conflicts with other scheduled burial services.
4. All interments should be scheduled sufficiently early in the day to permit time for proper back filling of the grave prior to the close of the workday. No graves will be opened after 2:30 p.m. and the Cemetery will not keep a cadaver overnight.
5. The daily operating schedule currently allows for four interments a day. The times are 10:00 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 1:00 p.m., and 2:00 p.m.

## **FLORAL PIECES DELIVERED PRIOR TO SERVICE**

1. Interment flowers and floral pieces, which normally are delivered to the cemetery immediately prior to the arrival of the funeral party, should be placed in a designated area. Designated staff will transport the flowers to the interment site.
2. If the volume of floral pieces becomes a disposal problem, the Cemetery Administrator may limit the number placed on the grave.

## **5.04 THE FUNERAL PROCESSION, COMMITTAL SERVICE AND INTERMENT**

1. The Cemetery Administrator will attend each funeral to render assistance to the funeral party. He or she will meet the funeral procession at a designated point within the cemetery, which in his or her judgment is most suitable for that purpose. If necessary, any special instructions will be provided to the funeral director at that time. A designated representative will be appointed to attend when the Cemetery Administrator is not available.
2. All cemetery operations within the immediate area of the committal shelter will be suspended prior to the arrival of the funeral party, and until after the committal service has been completed and the funeral party has left the area. No graveside services will be conducted in the DVMC, as noted in Section 5.03, paragraph 1.
3. When the members of the funeral party have left their automobiles, the Cemetery Administrator or designated representative will direct them where to assemble. When this has been done and all is in readiness, the funeral director will open the door of the coach. The Funeral Director will then remove the casket from the coach and will place it on the casket-carrying device. If necessary, the cemetery representative may assist in this procedure. If the family or funeral director has provided pallbearers, they will be instructed and positioned to receive the casket as it is removed from the coach.
4. The committal service by the clergy will begin as soon as the family has been seated, the other mourners have gathered around and all movement has ceased. When the clergy has completed the service, military honors, if being provided, will be accorded. At the conclusion of the service, the flag will be folded.
5. It is the responsibility of the funeral director or the designated representative (i.e. Honor Guard) to see that the flag, when folded, is presented to the NOK or to the person who represents the NOK.

## **5.05 CLOSING THE GRAVE**

Graves will be closed as soon as possible after interment services and before the close of business on the day of the interment.

## **5.06 TEMPORARILY MARKING THE GRAVE**

A temporary marker bearing the name of the deceased and location of the grave will be used until a permanent marker is installed.

## **5.07 ARRANGEMENT AND REMOVAL OF INTERMENT FLOWERS**

1. After the grave has been closed, all floral pieces that were delivered to the cemetery will be transported to the interment site and be neatly arranged on the grave.
2. Quite often, for various reasons, some members of a funeral party do not leave right away or linger in the general area of the gravesite to observe the grave closing operation. If cemetery employees haphazardly or carelessly throw the floral pieces on the grave, such actions do not go unnoticed. As a result, these bystanders may register a complaint to their elected officials. Cemetery employees should be reminded periodically of the need for concern and care in this operation.

## **5.08 RECORDING THE INTERMENT**

When an interment is made at the DVMC, it is essential that it be recorded immediately in the cemetery records. The name of the deceased, location of grave, and the date must be recorded on the interment register, and BOSS (Burial Operational Support System).

## **5.09 INTERMENTS POSTPONED BECAUSE OF WEATHER OR WEATHER RELATED CONDITIONS AND OTHER EMERGENCIES**

1. When scheduled committal services and interments are not feasible due to conditions outside the control of the Cemetery Administrator at the scheduled time and/or date of interment, the following courses of action will be followed as appropriate:
  - a. Funeral directors will be notified that the burial and ceremonies cannot be accomplished as scheduled (for reasons to be cited) and, therefore, the burial must be rescheduled for another time and date.
  - b. The interment will be rescheduled at a date and time acceptable to all parties concerned.
2. When a decision has been reached, the Cemetery Administrator will contact the funeral director and/or family to notify them of the decision. The Cemetery Administrator will prioritize a newly scheduled interment time for the funeral director and family. The Cemetery Administrator will ask the funeral director to hold the remains at the funeral home until such a time has been determined.

## **SECTION 6**

### **CREMATED REMAINS AND DIRECTED EXHUMATIONS**

#### **6.01 CREMATED REMAINS**

1. The cremation of remains is becoming an accepted practice in this country. Over the years, the cremated remains of many eligible persons have been interred in cemeteries. In many of the new private cemeteries, columbaria have been built to serve as the repository of urns containing ashes of cremated remains. The DVMC provides for niches in a columbarium or a ground vault.
2. Cremated remains are often received at the cemetery through various modes of transportation including Parcel Post, quite often unattended. They will receive the same attention to detail and dignity as that afforded attended casket remains. Upon receipt of cremated remains other than by parcel post where a signed receipt is required, the Cemetery Administrator will initiate a cremation receipt with proper signatures.
3. Committal services will be held for all interments of cremated remains unless the next of kin requests no service.
4. It is not necessary to formally schedule interment for cremated remains, if it is known that neither the next of kin, any family members, or friends plan to attend the interment. However, the Cemetery Administrator will inter the remains at the earliest possible time. The interment should not be deferred merely for the convenience of the cemetery work force or because of the daily workload.

#### **6.02 DIRECTED EXHUMATIONS**

1. A directed exhumation is the disinterment of the remains from a DVMC gravesite ordered by an authoritative court. Such exhumations are usually ordered for purposes of an autopsy or other forensic reasons. Usually the remains are returned for interment in the DVMC.
2. Federal and appropriate State court orders directing exhumations will be honored. However, the Cemetery Administrator/staff upon receipt of such an order, will notify the Executive Director of the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs, prior to taking any action.
3. The issuing court must indicate the final disposition of the exhumed remains. If the remains are to be permanently removed from the cemetery, arrangements will be made for immediate removal and the gravesite may be reutilized. If the remains are to be interred in the cemetery, the same gravesite will be used. Following the exhumation, the open grave will be covered with planking, pending interment or other final disposition of remains.
4. All exhumation activities will be coordinated with the ordering court; however, disinterment activities will be conducted under the supervision of the Cemetery Administrator. The Cemetery Administrator will ensure that all governing state and local laws are being met with compliance.

## SECTION 7

### MARKERS

#### 7.01 GENERAL

1. Operational policies and procedural guidance governing the marker program are set forth in this section. This section provides a ready reference for those situations arising in the DVMC.
2. Each grave in the DVMC will be marked with a government-furnished marker. **No exception is permitted.**

#### 7.02 MARKERS

1. A flat bronze marker (12 x 24) is used for interment fields using casketed remains. A flat bronze niche (8.5 x 5.5) is used for crematory garden niches and the columbarium at the DVMC, New Castle County. Flush granite niche markers are used on the columbarium at the DVMC, Sussex County.
2. Upon request, a memorial marker will be furnished at government expense to commemorate any veteran dying in service, and whose remains have not been recovered, identified, or buried at sea. Memorial markers may be placed in the DVMC, in areas reserved for such purposes.

#### 7.03 MARKER APPLICATION

1. The Funeral Director, working with the deceased's NOK, will obtain the information required on the Application for Standard Government Headstone or Marker (VA Form 40-1330).
2. The Administration Specialist will utilize the Application for Standard Government Headstone or Marker to submit the request on the Burial Operations Support System (BOSS).

#### 7.04 DELIVERY, RECEIPT AND INSPECTION

1. The Cemetery Administrator and his/her staff are expected to be familiar with receiving and inspection procedures. They should watch for obvious signs of damage to the containers; such as dents, punctures, flattened corners, as well as short counts, etc. These defects should be noted on all copies of the freight bill and the carrier's driver should sign it. It is important to remember that once a consignee accepts a shipment with no notation of discrepancy on the freight bill, and damage is later discovered the burden of proof is on the consignee to show where the damage occurred.
2. The Cemetery Administrator and his/her staff will exercise utmost care to prevent markers from being chipped, marred or damaged through cemetery activities, or otherwise.
3. No marker will be installed until the Cemetery Administrator/staff has assured himself or herself of the following:

- a. That it is the correct type of marker.
  - b. That it has suffered no cracks, chips, or other physical damage in transit or delivery.
  - c. That the quality of the material and workmanship is, in his or her judgment, in conformity with the specifications.
  - d. That the inscription is correct.
4. A previously furnished government marker should be replaced under the following conditions:
- a. Cracked, broken, destroyed or lost during transit from manufacturer's plant to the cemetery.
  - b. Type of marker supplied is different from that specified.
  - c. Inscription information is erroneous through no fault of the applicant.
  - d. Material or workmanship is not in accordance with specifications.
  - e. Stolen or vandalized.
  - f. Damaged by cemetery personnel.
  - g. Broken or damaged, cause unknown.
  - h. Additional inscription must be added to a marker to memorialize second decedent.

## **7.5 MEMORIAL MARKERS**

1. Application for a memorial marker for placement in the DVMC cemetery, to commemorate any veteran whose remains have not been recovered or identified, were buried at sea by one's own choice or otherwise, were donated to science, or were cremated and the remains scattered without interment of any portion of the ashes, must be submitted on VA Form 40-1330. When completing the form, the box pertaining to non-recoverable remains must be checked.
2. The next of kin of the decedent to be memorialized must submit applications for a memorial marker. Applications received from other close family members will be honored if there is evidence the family member is acting in behalf of the next of kin.
3. Whenever an application is submitted by a surviving family member distantly related to the decedent, the application will only be considered if proof of the decedent's service is officially established. Memorial markers requested for veterans who served prior to World War II will be considered on the basis of proof of service, as well as other factors.
4. Memorial markers will be furnished only for decedents identified by name. A decedent who is part of a group burial is authorized a memorial marker provided placement is not made in the same cemetery in which the group burial has been made. Group burials are those in which two or more remains are interred as a group, because they could not be or were not individually identified.

5. The Cemetery Administrator/staff assigns memorial plots in the DVMC when the memorial marker is ordered. The marker is shipped directly to the DVMC, and upon arrival will be installed on the assigned plot.
6. In those cases where a memorial marker for a veteran has been provided for placement in the DVMC, the subsequent death of a surviving spouse whose remains are unrecoverable or unidentified, buried at sea, cremated and the ashes dispersed, or donated to science, may be commemorated by an appropriate inscription on the veterans' memorial marker. A replacement marker (or additional inscription), with appropriate inscription applicable to the veteran and spouse, will be provided in each case at government expense. Appropriate commemorative data may be inscribed, if desired, if space is available.
7. When remains are not buried, the words "In Memory of" are mandatory and precede the authorized inscription data. The words "In Memory of" are not inscribed when remains are buried.

## SECTION 8

### CEREMONIES AND SPECIAL ACTIVITIES

#### 8.01 GENERAL

1. The Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery is a shrine and a tribute to our deceased veterans, it shall provide for the conduct of various patriotic services and ceremonies honoring those veterans interred therein as well as those who lie buried elsewhere.
2. The principal occasions for such observances are Memorial Day and Veterans' Day. There may be other special occasions at the DVMC where special ceremonies or services are conducted.

#### 8.02 REQUESTS TO HOLD PATRIOTIC CEREMONIES/SPECIAL EVENTS

1. Request for permission to hold special services will be submitted in writing to the Executive Director, DCVA or the appropriate Cemetery Administrator at least 30 days in advance of proposed ceremony date.
5. The request will describe the proposed ceremony in sufficient detail to enable the Cemetery Administrator to determine whether the service would in any manner violate the Standards of Conduct at the Delaware Veterans Memorial Cemetery
3. The Executive Director and the Cemetery Administrator will determine whether the service shall be permitted.
4. If permission is granted the Cemetery Administrator will notify the applicant and assign an appropriate time and will render assistance in carrying out the program.
5. No organization will be given exclusive permission to use the DVMC on any occasion.
6. When several requests are received for separate services, the Cemetery Administrator will schedule each so as to avoid overlapping or interference. If this cannot be done, the Cemetery Administrator will make the necessary modifications in scope or timing of the service.

**SECTION 9**

**EMERGENCY NOTIFICATION ROSTER**

(To be inserted by Cemetery Administrator – or designate location)