

Funeral services at a private cemetery:

First and most effective would be delayed interment and committal services.

If delayed interment is not an option: direct interments with no committal services should be considered. Honors at the gravesite can be offered at a later date when everything is determined to be ok

- Family visitations, Funeral services and committal services should be delayed until CDC recommendations allow.
- If this is not an option:
 - Committal services should be kept to a minimum number of attendees (10 or less)
 - ND National Guard and active service- 2 man funeral honor teams can be requested. Local funeral details should refrain from participating.
 - If the funeral honor detail teams insist on participating the members should practice recommended social distancing.
 - The only close contact between funeral details and families should be the presentation of the flag.
 - The detail teams should maintain social distancing amongst themselves.
 - Driving separately
 - Spacing between members of fire team can be 6 feet or better
 - Funeral Honor coins should be presented to the families by the funeral directors
 - Expended shell casings should be presented by the funeral director

Funeral Services at the State Veterans Cemetery:

Services are limited to 10 family members

Family members are allowed to attend committal services in the chapel

- Limit presence to Chapel and outdoor restrooms only
- Please do not have direct contact with State Veterans Cemetery Staff. Headstone orders etc. can be done electronically with the staff.
- Interment/burial- family not to be present at the site. Are asked to return to vehicles-may observe from there.
- Funeral Honor detail (fire team) will perform outside the chapel as usual. 2 person funeral honor detail will perform services inside the chapel
 - Presentation with the flag will be only close interaction with the family.
 - Presentation of coin will be performed by funeral director
 - Presentation of shell casings will be performed by the funeral director (fire team should get the casings to the director)

Some information on National cemetery guidelines:

As of 3/27/2020:

Effective Monday, March 30, 2020, as part of the National Cemetery Administration's on-going effort to minimize the spread of COVID-19 and protect the health and safety of our employees conducting interments, NCA national cemeteries will not accept floral arrangements with direct interments. Families that wish to place a floral arrangement(s) (limit 2) may do so after 4:30 pm on the day of interment or any time thereafter. This change will be in effect until further notice.

As of 3/25/2020: from NCA undersecretary Randy Reeves:

Colleagues:

I sincerely hope you and your families are safe and healthy. We are all facing unprecedented challenges during this COVID-19 crisis. I am reaching out directly to you - our key partners in service to Veterans across the Nation - to express my appreciation for your work and to express our commitment to you.

As you are likely aware, NCA continues providing direct interments with no committal services < Caution-<https://www.cem.va.gov/> > , to protect the health and safety concerns of Veterans, family members and NCA team members, consistent with guidance issued by the Center for Disease Control. We are also paying close attention to state-by-state policies being implemented by governors to ensure our staff are able to stay safe and provide their essential service to inter Veterans and eligible family members.

NCA has no better partnership than it has with states and territories to provide Veterans and their families with the burial and memorial benefits they earned. During these times, our close relationship is even more important and NCA will continue supporting our state partners. The National Cemetery Scheduling Office is open and scheduling interments, and NCA is still processing and delivering headstones, as well as Presidential Memorial Certificates.

Working together, we will overcome today's challenges and emerge as even stronger partners in the noble cause of serving Veterans and their families during their most difficult times.

I will ensure we provide updates to you as they become available. You can also find information on the status of national cemeteries on our social media pages. Caution-<https://www.facebook.com/NationalCemeteries> < Caution-<https://www.facebook.com/NationalCemeteries> > and Caution-<https://twitter.com/VANatCemeteries> < Caution-<https://twitter.com/VANatCemeteries> > . Please don't hesitate to reach out to us with any questions and concerns and we welcome any suggestions you may have as we work through this time together.

As always, thank you so much for your service to our Veterans and their families! Please stay safe and remember to take care of yourselves and your families. I am

Randy Reeves

Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs

As of 3/20/2020:

New Procedures at VA National Cemeteries due to COVID-19

All Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemeteries are open and will continue to provide interments for Veterans and eligible individuals. However, the National Cemetery Administration is continuing to adjust its services in light of the best practices urged by the CDC < Caution-
https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/03.16.20_coronavirus-guidance_8.5x11_315PM.pdf > in response to the COVID-19 epidemic. As a result, on Friday, March 20, NCA will only conduct committal services at our 142 cemeteries nationwide for groups of 10 or fewer people. Larger groups will be asked to reduce their numbers or be refused service. We appreciate your continued support in communicating and reinforcing this direction.

In addition, families should know that volunteer veterans honor guards may no longer be providing services at all cemeteries.

Starting March 23, 2020, as a matter of public health and safety, committal services and the rendering of military funeral honors, whether by military personnel or volunteer organizations, will not be conducted until further notice at VA national cemeteries. Immediate family members (limited to no more than 10 individuals) of the deceased may choose to witness the interment if desired. There is no service involved with witnessing an interment. Families will be able to view the interment of their loved one from a safe distance.

We are asking for your assistance in communicating the changes in operations to families that have interments scheduled and contact honors providers to cancel their services. Please contact the national cemetery where the interment is scheduled as soon as possible if the family wishes to postpone the interment. NCA will work to schedule a committal or memorial services at a later date for those families that choose to continue with the direct interment or postpone the interment.

The National Cemetery Scheduling Office in St. Louis will continue to provide scheduling services for the duration of the current emergency. To schedule a burial, please call 800-535-1117, option 1.

Our cemeteries will remain open to visitors, but we strongly urge all guests to obey local travel restrictions and avoid unnecessary travel. Visitors should expect that certain portions of a cemetery typically open to the public may be closed (for example, public information centers, chapels). Please contact the local cemetery for more information.

As warranted, NCA will provide updates on the operating status of individual national cemeteries on our social media pages: Caution-<https://www.facebook.com/NationalCemeteries> < Caution-
<https://www.facebook.com/NationalCemeteries> > and Caution-<https://twitter.com/VANatCemeteries> < Caution-
<https://twitter.com/VANatCemeteries> >

For more information about the government's response to COVID-19 please visit: Caution-
<https://www.coronavirus.gov> < Caution-<https://www.coronavirus.gov> >

The NCA has command and control of the Fargo National Veterans Cemetery.

The state of ND sets the policies at the State Veterans Cemetery-Mandan

Funeral Directors and Honor details set their own policies