



**MORTUARY SERVICES BENEFITS FOR
RETIRED AIR FORCE MEMBERS**

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(Ms Bonny St. Clair)
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(Mr Arthur J. Myers)
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This pamphlet is provided for you, the retiree, to assist you in explaining to your next of kin the various mortuary benefits you may be eligible for upon death. It also includes a mortuary planning sheet for items to be considered in making funeral arrangements.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

This document is substantially revised and must be completely reviewed.

1. Mortuary Services Benefits. Members who retire from the Air Force retain certain mortuary services benefits. Recognizing your long and faithful military service, the Air Force extends mortuary services benefits to you within the extent possible as permitted by law.

2. Benefits Administered and Extended by the Air Force.

2.1. Remains Transportation.

2.1.1. You are eligible for the transportation entitlement listed in paragraph 2.1.2 if you die while properly admitted to a military medical facility (excludes Veterans Administration hospitals) in the United States, to include Alaska, Hawaii, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and other territories and possessions of the United States.

2.1.1.1. "Properly admitted" means you are placed under treatment or observation and you are provided room, board, and continuous nursing service in the area of the hospital where patients stay at least overnight.

2.1.1.2. If you die in the emergency room without being properly admitted, no eligibility exists.

2.1.2. The Air Force will pay for the transportation of your remains from the place of death to a point no further distant than your last permanent residence (not home of record) within the 50 states, Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, and possessions and territories of the United States.

2.1.2.1. The place of interment selected by your next of kin may not be outside the United States as defined above.

2.1.2.2. If the place of burial is further distant than your last place of permanent residence the Air Force can pay no more than the cost to transport your remains to your last place of permanent residence. For example, you live in Orlando, Florida, and are visiting in Biloxi, Mississippi. You become ill and are properly admitted to the Air Force Hospital, Keesler AFB, Mississippi, and subsequently die. You are entitled to transportation of your remains back to Orlando, Florida. However, if your next of kin wants to bury you in Arlington National Cemetery, Virginia, the Air Force could pay no more than what it would have cost to return your remains to Orlando, Florida (your permanent address).

2.2. Authorized Transportation Expenses.

2.2.1. Removal of remains from place of death or where remains are released by authorities to a funeral home selected by your next of kin for preparation, dressing, and casketing.

2.2.2. An outer shipping container to protect the casket if transportation is by commercial air or rail.

2.2.3. Delivery of remains from the funeral home to a nearby airport or rail station.

2.2.4. Cost of commercial air carrier or train. The movement of your remains by military aircraft in the United States is prohibited by law.

2.2.5. Delivery of remains from the airport or rail station at destination to the funeral home selected by your next of kin.

2.2.6. Delivery of remains from the funeral home at destination to the cemetery.

2.3. Military Funeral Honors.

2.3.1. The Air Force may provide military honors at your place of burial provided:

2.3.1.1. Your next of kin requests such honors by contacting the mortuary officer of the nearest active Air Force base at least 48 hours prior to the scheduled time and date of burial.

2.3.1.2. Subsequent to the request and commitment by the mortuary officer, there is no higher priority request such as the funeral of an active duty member. The mortuary officer has no prior commitments for the same date.

2.3.1.3. Rendering the desired honors will not interfere with the execution of the base's primary mission.

2.3.2. Military honors ceremonial elements that may be requested are part of the standard Air Force funeral and include the following. Any one or all of the elements may be requested: pallbearers, firing party, bugler, color guard, Air Force chaplain, officer or noncommissioned officer in charge.

2.3.2.1. Whether the requested elements are provided depends on the capability of the base on the day requested.

2.3.2.2. Should valid conditions or circumstances preclude the base from providing the requested honors, that base will, as a last resort, provide one military person to represent the Air Force at the place of interment and present the flag to your next of kin, if requested.

2.4. Interment in the USAF Academy Cemetery, Colorado Springs, Colorado. You, your spouse, and dependent unmarried children under 21 years of age may be interred in the USAF Academy Cemetery provided you are a:

2.4.1. Graduate of the USAF Academy.

2.4.2. US Air Force general or lieutenant general.

2.4.3. Former superintendent, commandant, dean of faculty, chief of staff, appointed registrar, director of athletics, permanent professor, or tenure professor.

2.4.4. An Air Force military member assigned to the USAF Academy between 11 July 1955 and 10 September 1957.

3. Veterans Administration (VA) Benefits. You are entitled to certain benefits administered and extended by the VA. Listed below are VA benefits in general. Should you have specific questions or circumstances concerning these benefits, please contact your nearest VA office for assistance. The VA forms and pamphlets discussed in the following paragraphs may be obtained from the nearest VA office.

3.1. National Cemetery. You may be interred in a national cemetery, most of which are operated by the VA, while Arlington National Cemetery is operated by Department of the Army.

3.1.1. All retirees, their spouses, and unmarried children under 21 years of age are eligible for burial in national cemeteries, including Arlington.

3.1.2. A current list of those cemeteries having available grave space is contained in VA Pamphlet #VA-DMA-IS-1, Interments in National Cemeteries.

3.2. Government Headstone. A government furnished headstone may be obtained to mark your grave. There are different styles and types of headstones and certain cemetery requirements that must be met. All details concerning these headstones may be found in VA Form 40-1330, Application for Standard Government Headstone or Marker for Installation in a Private or Local Cemetery.

3.3. Burial Allowance. Your next of kin may receive a small burial allowance from the VA. Details pertaining to this allowance are contained in the VA Fact Sheet IS-1, Federal Benefits for Veterans and Dependents.

3.4. Interment Flag. You are entitled to one interment flag to drape your casket, with ultimate presentation to your next of kin. This flag is furnished by the VA, not the Air Force. The funeral director handling your arrangements and conducting your funeral obtains this flag by completing a prescribed VA form. The funeral director then gives the form to the nearest postmaster who, in turn, gives him or her the flag that will drape your casket.

4. How to Obtain Benefits.

4.1. If your next of kin wants to take advantage of some or all benefits when you die, he or she should do the following:

4.1.1. Call the mortuary officer of the Air Force base nearest you. Inform the mortuary officer of your death, and let his or her tentative thoughts on funeral arrangements and interment be known at that time.

4.1.2. Call a nearby funeral home to care for your remains and conduct desired arrangements and services.

4.2. The mortuary officer will assist your next of kin to the extent possible. If you are eligible for transportation, the mortuary officer will obtain a signed statement from your next of kin listing the funeral home(s) selected and place of burial.

4.3. The mortuary officer will instruct the funeral home(s) on direct billing to the Air Force for transportation. The mortuary officer will also arrange for requested honors within the base's capability. If interment will be in another area, the mortuary officer will request the nearest base to provide requested honors to the extent possible.

4.4. Your next of kin must give the funeral home the official document (DD Form 214 or retirement orders) reflecting pertinent military service data. The document substantiates your status as a retiree for Air Force benefits and enables your next of kin to obtain VA benefits such as interment in a national cemetery, headstone, interment flag, etc.

4.5. Your next of kin will be responsible for paying any funeral home and cemetery expenses they incur.

5. Future Planning. Attached for your consideration and completion is a "Mortuary Planning Sheet for Retired Air Force Military Members." Discussing the items contained on this sheet and completing the appropriate items would be a tremendous help to your next of kin upon your death. Should you have specific questions concerning your benefits or have a unique situation, please contact your local Mortuary Officer at the nearest Air Force installation.

WILLIAM P. HALLIN, Lt General, USAF
DCS/Installations and Logistics

Attachment 1

MORTUARY PLANNING SHEET FOR RETIRED AIR FORCE MILITARY MEMBERS

TO THE NEXT OF KIN OF _____.

This is not intended as a legal or binding document. It is only an expression of my preferences and desires regarding the disposition of my remains upon my death. Please recognize that this was done primarily to make things easier for you and to let you know my thoughts.

A1.1. At the time of my death, I prefer:

- Burial I would like to Yes
- Cremation be in uniform No
- No Preference (Yes is marked for uniform, please give one complete set of 'blues' to funeral director at time of death.)

A1.2. I feel it would be best if preparation, casketing, and transportation were handled by:

- you, working with the local funeral home you choose.
 - you working with the following funeral home _____
-

A1.3. Services I desire: (More than one may be marked.)

- Metal Casket Wood Casket
- Church Services _____
- (Show name and location _____
- of church or chapel.)

Funeral home services

Interment Receptacle: None if not required Vault Concrete Box

Graveside Services

Other _____

No preference

A 1.4. Military honors desired (if available from Air Force resources):

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Air Force Chaplain | <input type="checkbox"/> Firing Party |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pallbearers | <input type="checkbox"/> Color Guard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Bugler | |

NOTE: Aerial flyovers are only authorized for commissioned officers who hold an aeronautical rating and who die while on active duty.

A1.5. Government-furnished headstone or marker:

- Yes No Preferred type _____

A1.6. My preference for burial place (or disposition of cremains) is a:

- Private Cemetery (show name and location of cemetery)

- National or other government cemetery, contingent on the availability of space.
(Show name and location of government cemetery.)

First Choice*: _____

Second Choice: _____

*May write: "Wherever you decide it will be easiest for you."

A1.7. My remains should be removed to the funeral home designated below for services prior to interment in the cemetery named above.

NOTE: Names and addresses of funeral homes are published in a national directory of funeral directors which the base mortuary office should have.

Name and location of funeral home _____

A1.8. Clergy _____

A1.9. Flowers, memorials, agencies contributions should be made to, or other special requests.

A1.10. Friends to notify.

A1.11. The nearest base is _____ AFB.

Mortuary Office phone number is _____. (If this information is not available to you, please call the Air Force Mortuary Services 1-800-531-5803).

SIGNATURE _____

DATE _____