**(See *Appendix* for explanation of all veteran services provided)**

**Military Funeral Honors Eligibility:**

* Military members on active duty or in the Selected (drilling) Reserve.
* Former military members who served on active duty and discharged under conditions other than dishonorable.
* Former military members who completed at least one term of enlistment or period of initial obligated service in the Selected Reserve and departed under conditions other than dishonorable.
* Former military members discharged from the Selected Reserve due to a disability incurred or aggravated in the line of duty.
* Current or former members of the State Army or Air National Guard with other than dishonorable service. (note: some Guardsmen will qualify as above if they were ordered to federal active duty). If a Guard veteran or member does not have a DD-214 for federal military service, a NYS Form NGB-22 Discharge is needed.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 1. Is the deceased eligible for military honors?**

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Did the family request military honors?** If Yes, please proceed with checklist.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Is the Veteran’s DD-214 form available**? If not, see *Appendix* for information.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Determine who will perform honor ceremony (either Local Veteran Post or uniformed service branch)** See *Appendix* for contact information.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 5. Are Patriot Guard Rider services requested?** If Yes, see *Appendix* for contact information.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Are the American Legion Riders requested?** If Yes, see *Appendix* for contact information.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Is a Casket/Urn Watch (at funeral home) requested?** (Availability varies by local American Legion Post)

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 8. Will the deceased veteran be buried in a veteran cemetery ? (local or National)**  See *Appendix* for information regarding this free service.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ 9. Do you have a Casket/Burial Flag?** (See *Appendix* for more burial flag information)

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** **10. VA Grave Marker**. Is a veteran grave marker needed? See *Appendix* for information regarding this free service.

**\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** **11. Presidential Memorial Certificate**. See *Appendix* for information regarding this free service.

**Appendix : Explanation of Veteran Services**

**1/2. Military Honors**- Upon the family's request, Public Law 106-65 requires that every eligible Veteran receive a funeral honors ceremony. Depending on who performs the ceremony, honors include folding and presenting the United States burial flag, the playing of Taps and a rifle salute squad. The composition of the Funeral Honors Detail will vary depending on the wishes of the family, the organization providing the detail and the availability of the Funeral Detail. Typical graveside funeral honor details consist of flag folders and a bugler. Rifle squads are provided only by certain organizations as explained in #4 below. Funeral home directors are to request funeral honors on behalf of the Veterans' family and must help the family choose the provider of the funeral detail.

**3. DD-214**- The DD Form 214, Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty, generally referred to as a "DD-214", is a document of the [United States](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States) [Department of Defense](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Department_of_Defense), issued upon a military service member's retirement, separation, or [discharge](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military_discharge) from active duty in the Armed Forces of the United States. In some cases of veterans of WW-II and earlier, there may be only a certificate of discharge and no DD-214. State National Guard veterans may not have a DD-214, in which case a Form NGB-22 or equivalent is needed.

While verification of service is always required, it is not always readily available. As such, please obtain any service paperwork (DD-214, discharge papers, retirement, etc.) that the family makes available.  If the family does not have a discharge document and you only need to verify the discharge status of the veteran, call UCVSA for assistance. If the discharge status is not readily available, UCVSA will order discharge documents from the Records Center in St. Louis, which takes at least two business days.

Next of kin may request a veteran's DD-214 online at the below site, but will need a fax machine, death certificate, and basic information about the veteran. A National Guardsman’s NGB-22 may be obtained from NYS Div. of Military and Naval Affairs by calling (518) 272-6438.

 [http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html](http://www.archives.gov/veterans/evetrecs/index.html.)

You may contact Ulster County Veteran Services Agency (UCVSA) at 845-340-3190 for assistance with document requests. UCVSA provides support to County veterans and their families in obtaining medical, disability, burial and other benefits from the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the NYS Department of Veteran Affairs.

**4. Determining the Honor Detail -** Funeral home directors are to request funeral honors on behalf of the Veterans' family and must help the family choose the provider of the funeral detail. The following provider choices are available:

A. **Local Veteran Organization Honor Detail** – The vast majority of local veteran burial honors are provided by local American Legion or VFW Posts. These Posts are also the only organizations that will provide a rifle salute squad (death on active duty excepted). Funeral directors request of and coordinate with a local Veteran Post to conduct the honors. Selection of Post is generally based on geographic proximity to the cemetery or preference of the family. See below list of Posts.

B**. National Cemetery** – Families may choose to bury the veteran in a National Cemetery. Funeral directors request of and coordinate with the National Cemetery for the burial, and the cemetery arranges the honor detail for the designated date. Transportation to the National Cemetery is the responsibility of the family/funeral director. National Cemetery locations are available at: <http://www.cem.va.gov/cems/listcem.asp>. The closest National Cemetery for Ulster County is in Saratoga, NY.

C. **Uniformed Service Branch** – The military branches (Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, Coast Guard) provide funeral honor details. Funeral directors request of and coordinate with the service branch to conduct the ceremony. Military funeral details rarely include a rifle squad (death on active duty excepted.) Funeral directors and families must be aware that scheduling and responsiveness policies of the military branches can cause complications in the funeral planning process; it is not unusual for the military to dictate the burial date based on honor detail availability. If a military honor detail is desired, see below contact information for the branches:

**Veteran Posts that may Provide Burial Honor Ceremonies:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Service Org.** | **Post** | **Contact #** | **Rifle Squad? Yes/No** |
| VFW | Post 1386 Ulster | 845-417-1911 | Rifle Squad? Yes |
| American Legion | Post 1026 Woodstock | 845-633-3714 | Rifle Squad? Yes |
| VFW | Post 8645 New Paltz | 845-633-8494 | Rifle Squad? Yes |
| American Legion | Post 72 Saugerties | 845-246-7163 | Rifle Squad? Yes |
| VFW | Post 6534 Highland | 914-204-3928 | Rifle Squad? Yes |
| American Legion | Post 1219 Tilson | 914-388-4218 | Rifle Squad? Yes |
| American Legion | Post 950 Phoenicia | 845-688-5560 | Rifle Squad? Yes |
| American Legion | Post 193 Highland | 845-590-0970 | Rifle Squad? No |

**Uniformed Service Branch Funeral Contacts:**

**AIR FORCE VETERAN MARINE CORPS VETERAN**

(866) 826-3628 (609) 562-6141

**ARMY VETERAN NAVY VETERAN**

(800) 856-7091 (609) 562-4453

**COAST GUARD VETERAN NYS Army National Guard**

(617) 990-6249 518-786-6099

**5/6/7. Additional Honor Services**

**Patriot Guard Riders**- The Patriot Guard Riders is a volunteer, non-profit motorcycle escort which provides dignity and respect at memorial services honoring Fallen Military Heroes, First Responders and honorably discharged Veterans. To request services, visit: <https://www.patriotguard.org/content.php>

**American Legion Riders**- The American Legion Riders are veterans and veteran family members who ride motorcycles to support veterans. American Legion Riders may be able to provide an escort throughout all phases of the burial process. Please contact your local American Legion Post to request this service.

**Casket/Urn Watch-** American Legion Honor Guard members may be available to stand at the casket or urn during the calling hours. Contact your local American Legion Post to request this service (if available).

**8. Veteran Cemetery**-

**Ulster County Veterans Cemetery:**Ulster County, in partnership with the New Paltz Rural Cemetery (NPRC), maintains a Veterans Cemetery at 81 Plains Road in New Paltz. A veteran and Ulster County resident is eligible for burial and a grave marker at no expense, upon request of next of kin. Spouses of eligible veterans may also be buried in the County Veteran Cemetery under this policy. Funeral Directors make the arrangements with NPRC. You may contact the Ulster County Veteran Services Agency at (845) 340-3190 for more information.

VA National Cemetery: Burial in a VA national cemetery is also available for eligible Veterans, spouses and dependents at no cost and includes the gravesite, grave-liner, opening and closing of the grave, a headstone or marker, and perpetual care as part of a national shrine. Benefits also include a burial flag and military funeral honors. Funeral Directors make the arrangements for burial in a National Cemetery.

**9. Casket/Burial Flag-** A United States flag is available at no cost, to drape the casket or accompany the urn of a deceased Veteran of the U. S. Armed Forces. It is furnished to honor the memory of a Veteran’s military service to his or her country.

You may apply for the flag by completing [VA Form 27-2008, Application for United States Flag for Burial Purposes](http://www.vba.va.gov/pubs/forms/VBA-27-2008-ARE.pdf). Forms are available in PDF format on VA’s web site. U.S. Post Offices are the primary issuing point for burial flags. Call and confirm with the post office in advance. Not all local post offices have burial flags on hand but they should be able to direct you to the closest issuing post office.

*On a closed casket, the flag should be placed lengthwise, with the union (stars) at the head and over the left shoulder of deceased.*

*When a full-couch casket is opened, the flag should be folded to the triangular shape and placed in the lid at the head end of the casket and just above the decedent’s left shoulder.*

*When a half-couch casket is opened, the flag should be folded on the lower half of the casket in the same relative position as when displayed full length on a closed casket.*

**10.** **VA Grave Marker**. VA provides a veteran grave marker at no cost for eligible veterans. If burial is in a civilian cemetery, ask the family if a veteran marker is wanted, and verify that the requested marker style is acceptable per the cemetery’s rules. Complete and submit to VA Form 40-1330 (available online as a fillable PDF) to VA Memorial Programs. UCVSA will assist with reviewing and filing the application if you wish. If burial is in the Ulster County Veteran Cemetery, “Flat Bronze” marker is the only acceptable marker. VA grave markers are only delivered to commercial addresses, must be signed for, and bear in mind that most are quite heavy. Delivery to the Funeral Home is recommended, since most cemeteries do not have personnel available to sign for deliveries. Funeral Directors arrange for the marker to be installed at the local cemetery. VA does NOT provide grave markers for spouses; such markers must be purchased by the family/informant.

If burial is in a National cemetery, coordinate the grave marker application with the National cemetery directly.

**11. Presidential Memorial Certificate** - VA provides a presidential certificate to next of kin upon request. If desired by the family, VA Form 40-0247 needs to be completed and submitted with the DD-214. UCVSA can assist with the application if needed.