

State Cemetery Grants Program

- The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) State Cemetery Grants Program was established in 1978 to complement VA's national cemeteries.
- The program assists states in providing gravesites for veterans in those areas where NCA cannot fully satisfy their burial needs.
- Grants may be used only to establish, expand or improve veterans cemeteries that are owned and operated by a state. Aid is granted only to states and federally recognized tribal governments, not to private organizations, counties, cities, or other government agencies.
- VA can provide up to 100 percent of the development cost for an approved project. For establishment of new cemeteries, VA can provide for operating equipment as well. VA cannot pay for acquisition of land.
- Cemeteries established under the grant program must conform to the standards and guidelines pertaining to site selection, planning, and construction prescribed by VA.
- Cemeteries must be operated solely for the interment of service members who die on active duty, veterans (as defined by federal law), and their eligible spouses and dependent children. States may impose residency requirements and other limitations to eligibility in addition to those imposed by federal law. State eligibility requirements, however, may not be less stringent than Federal requirements.
- The administration, operation, and maintenance of a VA-supported state cemetery is solely the responsibility of the state.
- VA is authorized to pay a "plot allowance" of \$300 to a state for expenses incurred in the burial of certain eligible veterans.
- VA has awarded grants totaling more than \$317 million to establish, expand or improve 69 veterans cemeteries in 37 states including Guam and Saipan.
- In fiscal year 2007 NCA-supported state cemeteries provided more than 23,000 interments.