

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Allowance for Private Purchase of an Outer Burial Receptacle in Lieu of a Government-Furnished Graveliner for a Grave in a VA National Cemetery

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.
ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: Public Law 104–275 was enacted on October 9, 1996. It allowed the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to provide a monetary allowance towards the private purchase of an outer burial receptacle for use in a VA national cemetery. Under VA regulation (38 CFR 1.629), the allowance is equal to the average cost of government-furnished graveliners minus any administrative costs to VA. The law continues to provide a veteran's survivors with the option of selecting a government-furnished graveliner for use in a VA national cemetery where such use is authorized.

The purpose of this notice is to notify interested parties of the average cost of government-furnished graveliners, administrative costs that relate to processing a claim, and the amount of the allowance payable for qualifying interments that occur during calendar year 2004.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Lisa Ciolek, Capital and Performance Budgeting (402A12), National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420. Telephone: 202–273–5161 (this is not a toll-free number).

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under 38 U.S.C. 501(a) and Pub. L. 104–275, section 213, VA may provide a monetary allowance for the private purchase of an outer burial receptacle for use in a VA national cemetery where its use is authorized. The allowance for qualified interments that occur during calendar year 2004 is the average cost of government-furnished graveliners in fiscal year 2003, less the administrative costs incurred by VA in processing and paying the allowance in lieu of the government-furnished graveliner.

The average cost of government-furnished graveliners is determined by taking VA's total cost during a fiscal year for single-depth graveliners that were procured for placement at the time of interment and dividing it by the total number of such graveliners procured by VA during that fiscal year. The calculation excludes both graveliners procured and pre-placed in gravesites as part of cemetery gravesite development projects and all double-depth

graveliners. Using this method of computation, the average cost was determined to be \$164.66 for fiscal year 2003.

The administrative costs incurred by VA consist of those costs that relate to processing and paying an allowance in lieu of the government-furnished graveliner. These costs have been determined to be \$9.75 for calendar year 2004.

The net allowance payable for qualifying interments occurring during calendar year 2004, therefore, is \$154.91.

Approved: December 12, 2003.

Anthony J. Principi,
Secretary of Veterans Affairs.
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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Privacy Act of 1974; Report of Matching Program

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.
ACTION: Notice.

Notice is hereby given that the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) intends to continue a recurring computer matching program matching Office of Personnel Management (OPM) records with VA pension and parents' dependency and indemnity compensation (DIC) records.

The goal of this match is to compare income status as reported to VA with records maintained by OPM.

VA plans to match records of veterans and surviving spouses and children who receive pension, and parents who receive DIC from VA with OPM benefit records maintained by OPM. The match with OPM will provide VA with data from OPM civil service benefit records.

VA will use this information to update the master records of VA beneficiaries receiving income dependent benefits and to adjust VA benefit payments as prescribed by law. Otherwise, information about a VA beneficiary's receipt of OPM benefits is obtained from reporting by the beneficiary. The proposed matching program will enable VA to ensure accurate reporting of income.

Records to be Matched: The VA records involved in the match are the VA system of records, VA Compensation, Pension and Education and Rehabilitation Records—VA (58 VA 21/22) first published at 41 FR 924 (March 3, 1976), and last amended at 66 FR 47727 (September 13, 2001), with other amendments as cited therein. The

OPM records involved in the match are from the OPM Civil Service Retirement Pay File identified as OPM Central-1, Civil Service Retirement and Insurance Records, published as 64 FR 54930, October 8, 1999, as amended May 3, 2000 (65 FR 25775). In accordance with title 5 U.S.C. 552a(o)(2) and (r), copies of the agreement are being sent to both Houses of Congress and to the Office of Management and Budget.

This notice is provided in accordance with the provisions of the Privacy Act of 1974 as amended by Public Law 100–503.

The match will start no sooner than 30 days after publication of this Notice in the **Federal Register**, or 40 days after copies of this Notice and the agreement of the parties are submitted to Congress and the Office of Management and Budget, whichever is later, and end not more than 18 months after the agreement is properly implemented by the parties. The involved agencies' Data Integrity Boards (DIBs) may extend this match for 12 months provided the agencies certify to their DIBs, within three months of the ending date of the original match, that the matching program will be conducted without change and that the matching program has been conducted in compliance with the original matching program.

ADDRESSES: Interested persons are invited to submit written comments, suggestions, or objections regarding the proposal to conduct the matching program to the Director, Regulations Management (00REG1), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Room 1068, Washington, DC 20420. All written comments received will be available for public inspection in the Office of Regulations Management, Room 1063B, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW., Washington, DC 20420, between 8 a.m. and 4:30 p.m., Monday through Fridays except holidays. Please call (202) 273–9515 for an appointment.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Paul Trowbridge (212B), (202) 273–7218.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: This information is required by title 5 U.S.C. 552a(e)(12), the Privacy Act of 1974. A copy of this notice has been provided to both Houses of Congress and the Office of Management and Budget.

Approved: December 15, 2003.

Anthony J. Principi,
Secretary of Veterans Affairs.
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