

# BURIAL BENEFITS

# BURIAL BENEFITS & CEMETERIES

- ▶ Local
  - ▶ Veterans Section of Beech Grove Cemetery, Westport
- ▶ State
  - ▶ Massachusetts Veterans Cemeteries Eligibility
  - ▶ Chapter 115 burial assistance
- ▶ Federal
  - ▶ Massachusetts National Cemetery, Bourne
  - ▶ VA Burial & Plot Allowances
  - ▶ Memorial Items
- ▶ Military Honors

# WESTPORT BURIAL BENEFITS

Veterans section in Beech Grove Cemetery

- ▶ Who can be buried in Veterans section?

- 1) Veteran whose discharge from the military was either Honorable or Under Honorable Conditions and who meets either of the criteria listed below
- 2) Legal spouse of veteran listed above

- ▶ Eligibility criteria:

- 1) Westport is listed as Home of Record on DD214 upon entry into the military, OR
- 2) Lived in Westport at time of death

# WESTPORT BURIAL BENEFITS

## Plots:

- ▶ Plots cannot be reserved in advance of need
- ▶ One casket and one cremation, OR two cremations in a single plot
- ▶ Veteran and spouse entitled to their own plot
  - ▶ No cost for plot(s), but other fees must be paid (opening, greens, foot marker foundation)
- ▶ If separate plots:
  - ▶ Must notify funeral home so they can arrange with cemetery department to select two unused plots that are side-by-side.

# WESTPORT BURIAL BENEFITS

Grave Markers (headstones not allowed in Veterans section)

- ▶ Only one grave marker allowed per plot
- ▶ Veteran may be eligible for VA-provided grave marker
- ▶ Spouse is not entitled unless he/she is also a veteran
- ▶ VA will NOT modify veteran's grave marker to add spouse or issue a new grave marker upon death of spouse
- ▶ Veteran's grave marker does include option to add spouse's name and dates of birth and death, but application for marker cannot be made until after veteran's death

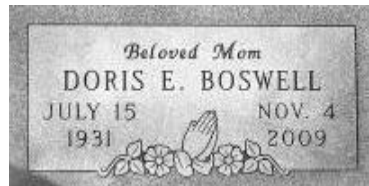
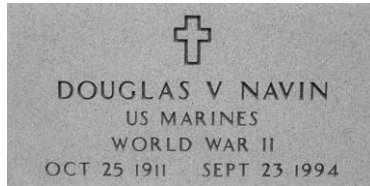
# WESTPORT BURIAL BENEFITS

## Side-by-side plots

V  
E  
T  
E  
R  
A  
N

S  
P  
O  
U  
S  
E

VA-provided  
Grave Marker  
(Veteran)



Family-provided  
Grave Marker  
(Spouse)

## Single plot

V  
E  
T  
E  
R  
A  
N  
&  
S  
P  
O  
U  
S  
E

Family-provided  
Grave Marker  
(Veteran & Spouse)

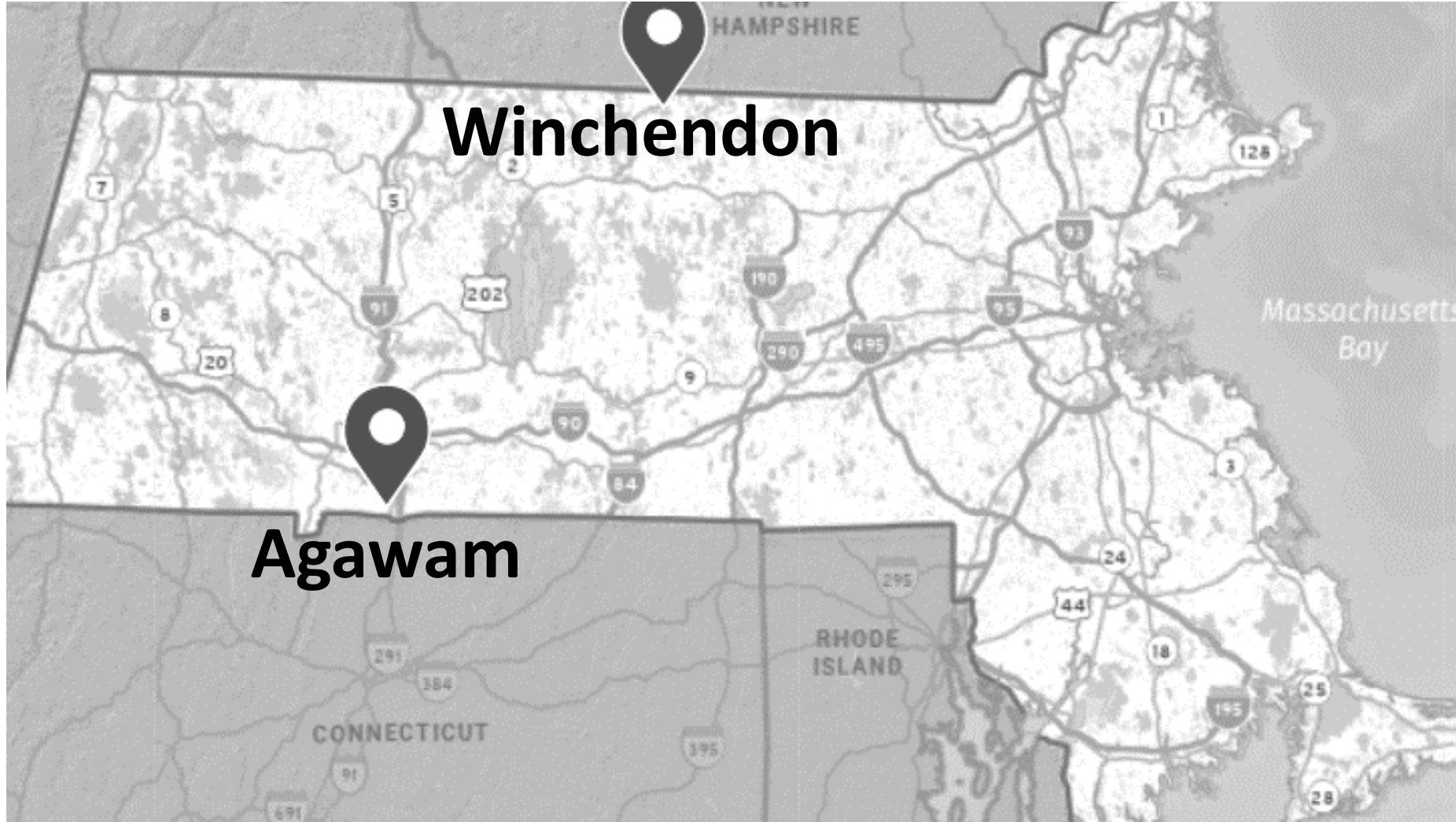


VA-provided  
Grave Marker  
(Veteran & Spouse)



# STATE BURIAL BENEFITS

- ▶ Two cemeteries in Mass. – Winchendon & Agawam



# STATE BURIAL BENEFITS

## Military Service Eligibility

- ▶ The veteran was discharged or released from active duty service under honorable conditions
  - ▶ Active duty must be for 24 months for the following:
    - ▶ Service beginning after September 7, 1980, as an enlisted person
    - ▶ Service after October 16, 1981, as an officer – OR
    - ▶ The full period for which the person was called to active duty from Reserves or Guard
- ▶ The veteran served at least 20 years in the National Guard or United States Reserve and is in receipt of a military pension or has documentation verifying s/he will receive retirement pay at age 60, in accordance with Title 10, Chapter 1223, of the United States Code or;
- ▶ Any member of the armed forces of the United States who dies on active duty and whose home of record is Massachusetts.



# STATE BURIAL BENEFITS

## Residency Requirements:

- ▶ The veteran's home of record on their DD Form 214 or other discharge form indicates that they were a resident of Massachusetts at the time he/she entered into active military service, or
- ▶ The veteran resided in a state other than Massachusetts when they entered military service and resided in Massachusetts at least one day after discharge from active duty, or
- ▶ The veteran was a resident of Massachusetts at the time of their death

# STATE BURIAL BENEFITS

Eligible family members (nominal fee applies):

- ▶ Spouses, widows, and widowers of veterans are eligible for burial in the state veteran's cemeteries if they were legally married at the time of death.
- ▶ The minor child\* of an eligible veteran must be unmarried and:
  - (a) under 21 years of age; or,
  - (b) under 24 years of age and pursuing a full-time course of instruction at an approved educational institution.

\* The unmarried child of an eligible veteran is one of any age but permanently physically or mentally disabled and incapable of self-support before reaching 21 years of age, or before reaching 24 years of age if pursuing a full-time course of education at an approved educational institution.

# STATE BURIAL BENEFITS

- ▶ If low income & without means to pay for burial:
  - ▶ Chapter 115 can pay burial expenses up to \$4,000 for a burial that costs no more than \$5,000 for eligible veteran and spouse
  - ▶ Do not have to be receiving Ch. 115 benefits at time of death
  - ▶ Must apply through the community of residence at time of death
  - ▶ Six month deadline to file

# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS – VA NATIONAL CEMETERIES

- ▶ Massachusetts National Cemetery in Bourne is a VA cemetery
- ▶ Eligibility:
  - ▶ Veteran who didn't receive a dishonorable discharge\*, or
  - ▶ Service member who died while on active duty, active duty for training, or inactive duty for training, or
  - ▶ Spouse or minor child of a veteran, even if the veteran died first, or
  - ▶ In some cases, the unmarried adult dependent child of a veteran

\* VA determines eligibility for veterans with an undesirable, bad conduct, or other type of discharge other than honorable or veterans with multiple discharges of varying character

# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS – VA NATIONAL CEMETERIES

- ▶ Reserve or National Guard Eligibility:
- ▶ At least one of these must be true:
  - ▶ Met their legal minimum active-duty service requirements, was called up to active duty and served their full term of service, and didn't receive a dishonorable discharge, or
  - ▶ Entitled to retirement pay at their time of death, or would have been entitled to retirement pay if they weren't under 60 years of age at the time of death, or
  - ▶ Died while hospitalized or getting treatment at the expense of the U.S. for an injury or illness that occurred while they were performing active-duty services for training or inactive-duty training under honorable conditions, or
  - ▶ Became disabled or died from a disease or injury caused - or made worse - by their service during a period of active duty for training, or
  - ▶ Became disabled or died from an injury or certain cardiovascular disorders caused - or made worse - by their service during a period of inactive-duty training

# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS – VA NATIONAL CEMETERIES

- ▶ Can submit a pre-need determination of eligibility to find out in advance if veteran/dependent can be buried in a VA national cemetery.
- ▶ Cannot reserve plots
- ▶ Complete VA Form VA40-10007
- ▶ Does not apply to Arlington National Cemetery or the US Soldier's and Airmen's Home National Cemetery in Washington DC – both of which are US Army cemeteries. Call 1-877-907-8585 for burial eligibility in either of these cemeteries
- ▶ Burial at sea: Contact the US Navy Mortuary Affairs office at 866-787-0081

# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS – VA NATIONAL CEMETERIES

- ▶ What is included with burial in VA national cemetery:
  - ▶ Committal service (about 20 minutes, not at gravesite)
  - ▶ Opening and closing of grave
  - ▶ Burial liner provided by government
  - ▶ Headstone or marker provided by government
  - ▶ Perpetual care
  - ▶ United States Flag (for veteran)
- ▶ What is not included:
  - ▶ Services and materials provided by or through funeral home (wake, transportation, death certificates, obituary, casket/urn, etc.)

# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS – BURIAL/PLOT ALLOWANCES

Eligibility: The veteran must not have received a dishonorable discharge, applicant won't be reimbursed by any other organization, and one of these must be true:

- ▶ Died as a result of a service-connected disability, or
- ▶ Died while receiving a VA pension or compensation, or
- ▶ Died while getting VA care, either at a VA facility or at a VA-contracted facility, or
- ▶ Died while traveling with proper authorization, and at VA's expense, either to or from a facility for an examination, or to receive treatment or care, or
- ▶ Died with an original or reopened claim for VA compensation or pension pending at the time of death, if they would have been entitled to benefits before the time of death, or
- ▶ Died while eligible for a VA pension or compensation at time of death, but instead received full military retirement or disability pay



# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS – BURIAL/PLOT ALLOWANCES

Who can apply for burial and/or plot allowance:

- ▶ Veteran's surviving spouse
  - ▶ If listed in the veteran's VA profile, VA will automatically pay a set amount to help pay for plot, cost of interment, or transportation of remains to cemetery
- ▶ Surviving partner from a legal union (relationship made formal in a document issued by the state recognizing the union)
- ▶ Veteran's surviving child
- ▶ Veteran's parent
- ▶ Executor/administrator of veteran's estate

# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS – BURIAL/PLOT ALLOWANCES

How to apply for burial and/or plot allowance:

- ▶ Complete VA Form 21P-530EZ and submit with the following:
- ▶ Veteran's military discharge papers (DD214 or WD AGO form prior to 1950)
- ▶ Veteran's death certificate
- ▶ Documents or receipts for cost of transporting veterans' remains
- ▶ Statement of account on funeral home letterhead with the following info:
  - ▶ Veteran's name
  - ▶ Type of service or item purchased
  - ▶ Any credits
  - ▶ Unpaid balance

# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS - BURIAL & PLOT ALLOWANCES

	Burial	Plot	Filing Deadline
Service-Connected Death (on or after 9/11/2001)	\$2,000	\$0	None
Non-Service Connected Death (on or after 10/1/2022)	\$300	\$893	2 years
Non-Service Connected Death (between 10/1/2021 and 9/30/2022)	\$300	\$828	2 years
Non-SC / Hospitalized by VA	\$828	\$828	2 years

## ▶ Transportation Allowance

- ❖ Buried in national cemetery
- ❖ Hospitalized or in a VA-contracted nursing home at time of death
- ❖ Died while traveling to VA-authorized care

# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS – MEMORIAL ITEMS

## Veteran Eligibility:

- ▶ Enlisted: must have served 24 months of active duty after 9/7/1980
- ▶ Officer: must have served 24 months of active duty after 10/16/1981
- ▶ Other than dishonorable discharge
- ▶ Grave is unmarked
- ▶ Grave is marked with a privately purchased headstone for veteran who died on/after 11/1/1990

## National Guard Eligibility:

- ▶ Entitled to retirement pay at time of death
- ▶ Served in a federal status for the period of time they were called to serve

## Reservist Eligibility:

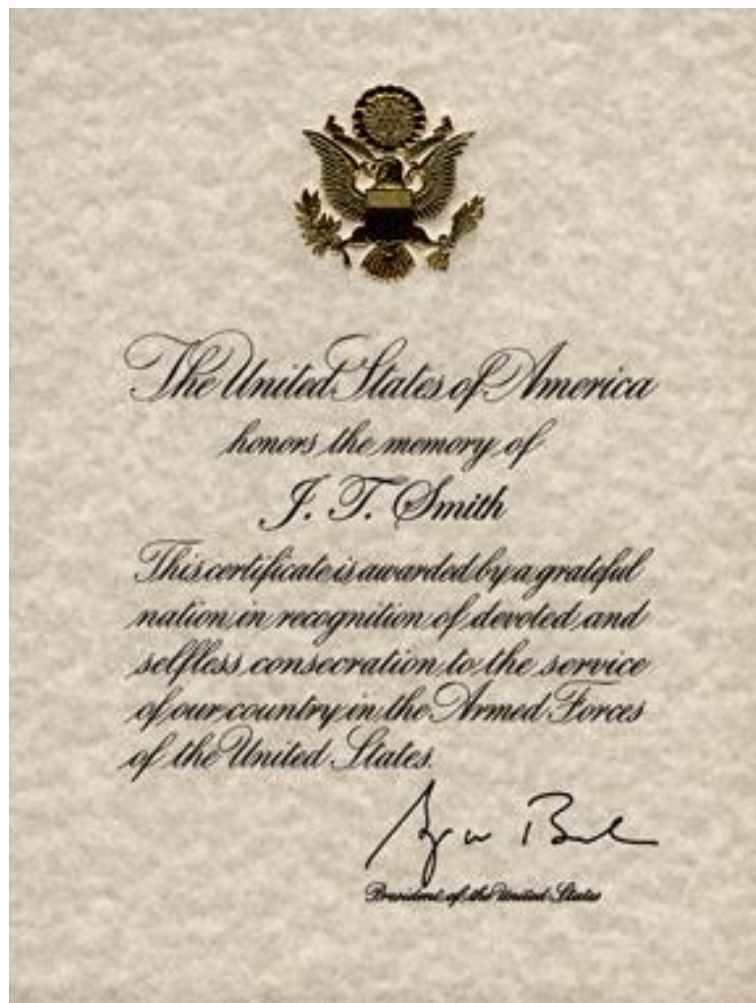
- ▶ Entitled to retirement pay at time of death
- ▶ Called to active duty for other than training purposes

# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS – MEMORIAL ITEMS

- ▶ Request on [VA Form 40-1330](#)
- ▶ Mandatory Items:
  - ▶ Legal name
  - ▶ Branch of service (more than one permitted subject to space availability)
  - ▶ Years of birth and death (can include full dates if preferred)
  - ▶ State and National Cemeteries: Section and grave number
- ▶ Optional Items (subject to space availability):
  - ▶ War service
  - ▶ Highest rank achieved
  - ▶ Awards
  - ▶ Terms of endearment, nicknames, military or civilian credentials
  - ▶ Special unit designations, i.e., 101<sup>st</sup> Airborne, Seabees, WAC, Army Air Corps, Army Nurse Corps
  - ▶ Emblem of belief (from list included with application)

# FEDERAL BURIAL BENEFITS – MEMORIAL ITEMS

## PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL CERTIFICATE

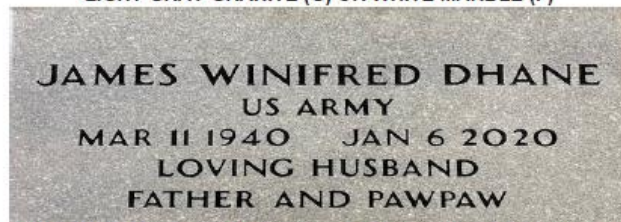


## FLAT MARKERS BRONZE (B)



This grave marker is 24 inches long, 12 inches wide, with 3/4 inch rise. Weight is approximately 18 pounds. Anchor bolts, nuts and washers for fastening to a base are furnished with the marker. The base is not furnished by the Government. Additional inscription is limited to 27 characters (including spaces) up to two lines maximum.

## LIGHT GRAY GRANITE (G) OR WHITE MARBLE (F)



This grave marker is 24 inches long, 12 inches wide, and 4 inches thick. Weight is approximately 130 pounds. Variations may occur in stone color; the marble may contain light to moderate veining. Additional inscription is limited to 27 characters (including spaces) up to two lines maximum.

## SMALL FLAT GRANITE (L)



This grave marker is 18 inches long, 12 inches wide, and 3 inches thick. Weight is approximately 70 pounds. Variations may occur in stone color. Additional inscription is limited to 27 characters (including spaces) up to two lines maximum.

## BRONZE NICHE (Z)



This niche marker is 8-1/2 inches long, 5-1/2 inches wide, with 7/16 inch rise. Weight is approximately 3 pounds; mounting bolts and washers are furnished with the marker. Used for columbarium or mausoleum interment. Also provided to supplement a privately-purchased, permanent and durable headstone or marker for eligible Veterans who died on or after November 1, 1990 and are buried in a private cemetery. Additional inscription is limited to 27 characters (including spaces) up to two lines maximum.

## UPRIGHT HEADSTONE WHITE MARBLE (U) OR LIGHT GRAY GRANITE (V)



This headstone is 42 inches long, 13 inches wide and 4 inches thick. Weight is approximately 230 pounds. Variations may occur in stone color, and the marble may contain light to moderate veining. Additional inscription is limited to 15 characters (including spaces) up to four lines maximum.

# MILITARY HONORS

- ▶ Typically requested through funeral home
- ▶ US Military honor guard – specific branch of service casualty assistance office is contacted (no cost)
- ▶ Veteran Honors consists of two personnel for:
  - ▶ Playing of TAPS
  - ▶ Folding and presentation of flag
- ▶ Local Veterans organizations may also provide military honors depending on their availability and may ask for a small donation

# RESOURCES

- ▶ State Cemeteries:

[www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cisvet/vetburia.htm](http://www.sec.state.ma.us/cis/cisvet/vetburia.htm)

- ▶ Federal Burial Benefits:

[www.va.gov/burials-memorials](http://www.va.gov/burials-memorials)

- ▶ Federal Memorial Items:

[www.va.gov/burials-memorials/memorial-items](http://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/memorial-items)

- ▶ Pre-Need Determination:

[www.va.gov/burials-memorials/pre-need-eligibility](http://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/pre-need-eligibility)

- ▶ Burial Benefits FAQ:

[www.cem.va.gov/cem/faq.asp](http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/faq.asp)