



DoD INSTRUCTION 1300.31

DoD CEMETERIES

Originating Component: Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

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Purpose: In accordance with the authority in DoD Directive 5124.02, this issuance:

- Establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for DoD cemetery management.
- Establishes the Cemetery Management Board (CMB) for coordinating cemetery management policy and guidance that focuses on industry standards and best practices; administrative and operational procedures; and recommendations on burial and memorialization services.
- Designates the Secretary of the Army as the lead Component head for the establishment of uniform standards, measures, and operating procedures, and for the establishment, operation, and management of the interment and accountability system of record for all DoD cemeteries.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY.

This issuance:

a. Applies to OSD, the Military Departments (including the Coast Guard at all times, including when it is a Service in the Department of Homeland Security by agreement with that Department), the Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff, the Combatant Commands, the Office of Inspector General of the Department of Defense, the Defense Agencies, the DoD Field Activities, and all other organizational entities within the DoD (referred to collectively in this issuance as the “DoD Components”).

b. Applies to all cemeteries for which the Military Departments are responsible, except for Arlington National Cemetery and the United States Soldiers’ and Airmen’s Home National Cemetery (hereby referred to as “Army National Military Cemeteries.”

c. Does not apply to:

(1) Pet cemeteries. Previously established pet cemeteries on land under the administrative control of a Military Department are managed by private organizations or veterinary clinics.

(2) Other U.S. Government organizations located on land under the administrative control of a Military Department.

1.2. POLICY.

It is DoD policy that remains are treated with dignity, honor, and respect in accordance with DoD Directive 1300.22.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS (USD(P&R)).

The USD(P&R) establishes DoD cemetery management policy, excluding Army National Military Cemeteries pursuant to Section 7721 of Title 10, U.S.C.

2.2. ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR MANPOWER AND RESERVE AFFAIRS (ASD(M&RA)).

Under the authority, direction, and control of the USD(P&R), the ASD(M&RA) oversees and monitors compliance with the DoD Cemetery Management Program.

2.3. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR MILITARY COMMUNITY AND FAMILY POLICY.

Under the authority, direction, and control of the ASD(M&RA), the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy:

- a. Appoints the Principal Director, Military Community and Family Policy, to serve as the CMB chair.
- b. Provides a General Schedule (GS)-15 or O-6 level representative to serve on the CMB.
- c. In coordination with the Executive Director, Office of Army Cemeteries, defines the minimum information elements that constitute a record of interment or inurnment, mirroring the Army's policy for Army National Cemeteries.
- d. Maintains the official charter and records for the CMB.

2.4. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR ACQUISITION AND SUSTAINMENT.

The Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment serves as the DoD cemetery affairs point of contact for:

- a. Real property policy and records.
- b. Divestiture, realignment, or closure of cemeteries on installations.
- c. Facilities investment and facility related service requirements.
- d. Cultural resources management policy.

e. Other environmental, water management, energy, and sustainability programs associated with all cemeteries and plots on lands under the administrative jurisdiction of a Military Department.

2.5. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (COMPTROLLER)/CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE.

Pursuant to DoD Directive 5118.03, the Under Secretary of Defense (Comptroller)/Chief Financial Officer of the Department of Defense, provides oversight and guidance for budgetary and fiscal matters for DoD cemetery management, including:

- a. Financial management, budget formulation, and execution.
- b. Guidance and assistance for contract administration.
- c. Policies governing accounting financial systems and audit.
- d. Oversight and guidance for management control and general management improvement programs.

2.6. DOD COMPONENT HEADS.

The DoD Component heads:

- a. Are prohibited from establishing new cemeteries and from expanding the boundaries of existing cemeteries, except as otherwise exempted by the DoD regulations or Federal law.
- b. Are entrusted with the perpetual care of gravesites in the cemeteries under their administrative jurisdiction.
- c. Schedule funerals for eligible Service members, veterans, and eligible family members in a dignified and compassionate manner, as soon as possible after being contacted by the decedent's person authorized to direct disposition of remains (PADD), or if the PADD is unable to direct disposition, the next person with right of disposition.
- d. Maintain all interment and inurnment data and media, using the Enterprise Interment Services System, the designated system of record, and complying with Army's standard operating procedures.
- e. Consult with federally recognized tribes, Alaska Native entities, or Native Hawaiian Organizations, as appropriate, regarding burials and reburials on U.S. Government-owned lands under the administrative control of a Military Department pursuant to:
 - (1) Executive Orders (E.Os.) 13007 and 13175.
 - (2) Subtitle III of Title 54, U.S.C., also known and referred to in this issuance as the "National Historic Preservation Act of 1966."

(3) Chapter 32 of Title 25, U.S.C., also known and referred to in this issuance as the “Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990” (NAGPRA).

(4) Part 10 of Title 43, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), also known as the “Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Regulations.”

(5) DoD Instructions (DoDIs) 4710.02, 4710.03, and 4715.16.

2.7. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS AND THE COMMANDANT OF THE COAST GUARD.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.6., the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the Coast Guard:

a. Maintain an organizational capability to provide for cemetery management to support specific Service needs.

b. Maintain a staff responsible for cemetery affairs matters.

c. Pursuant to Section 553 of Title 5, U.S.C., and subject to Section 985 of Title 10, U.S.C. and Section 2411 of Title 38, U.S.C.:

(1) Establish eligibility criteria for burial in Military Service and Military Service Academy cemeteries under their respective jurisdiction.

(2) Prescribe proceedings when there is reason to believe that a deceased individual who is otherwise eligible for interment or memorialization may have committed a Federal or State capital crime, but avoided conviction of such crime by reason of unavailability for trial due to death or flight to avoid prosecution.

d. Pursuant to Section 553 of Title 5, U.S.C., prescribe the process and criteria for requesting and considering an exception to the burial eligibility policy.

e. Exercise due diligence in confirming who the PADD or, if the PADD is unable to direct disposition, the next person with right of disposition is, and validating the decedent’s eligibility for interment or inurnment.

f. Compile the records and information required by this issuance.

g. Implement policies that ensure the spatial data standard for facilities, infrastructure, and environment accurately capture cemetery operations.

h. Ensure 100 percent accountability of gravesites and niches by conducting initial and periodic record-to-grave verification and correcting any discrepancies as they are identified. This will be documented in accordance with the procedures and processes established by the lead component.

i. Ensure real property records associated with all cemeteries, as defined in Section 3, for which their Department is responsible, are maintained within the Military Department's real property database of record.

j. Provide funding and resources to obtain standardized training to sustain and enhance cemetery operations in order to achieve DoD cemetery management program goals and objectives.

k. Ensure staff responsible for cemetery management participates in the standardized training provided by the Army.

l. Evaluate DoD cemeteries for National Register of Historic Places eligibility and listing in accordance with E.Os. 13007 and 13175.

m. Manage DoD historic cemeteries appropriately in accordance with DoDI 4715.16; E.O. 13287; the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966; Part 800 of Title 36, CFR; National Register Bulletins 15 and 41; and related Service-specific policies.

n. Consult with federally recognized tribal governments, Alaska Native entities, and Native Hawaiian Organizations on the place and manner for the repatriation of remains and objects pursuant to NAGPRA and applicable regulations.

(1) To sustain the DoD mission and meet legal requirements, the prohibition on establishing new cemeteries set forth in Paragraph 2.6.a. of this issuance may be waived on a case by case basis to create reburial areas for American Indian, Alaskan Native and Native Hawaiian remains discovered on the property where the reburial will occur.

(2) This waiver authority is delegable by Secretaries of the Military Departments and Commandant of the Coast Guard, to no lower than a general officer or flag officer or Senior Executive Service equivalent. Such delegations must be in writing.

(3) The Secretary of the Army will ensure the Army Civil Works program will comply with Section 2338, Title 33, U.S.C., and applicable implementing guidance.

o. Biennially inspect all cemeteries for which they are responsible in accordance with Paragraph 3.3.

p. Provide a GS-15 or O-6 level representative (unless otherwise delegated) to serve as a voting member on the CMB.

2.8. SECRETARY OF THE ARMY.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraphs 2.6. and 2.7., the Secretary of the Army:

a. In coordination with the CMB, establishes uniform standards and measures for DoD cemeteries (this does not include Army National Military Cemeteries), including standards for temporary grave markers.

b. Serves as the lead Component head for the establishment, operation, and management of the interment and accountability system of record and prescribes standard operating procedures.

c. Manages the configuration control board for the interment and accountability system of record and includes the Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy, Air Force, Navy, and Coast Guard as members of the board.

d. Develops and distributes established standards and measures as well as standard operating procedures.

e. Serves as the primary trainer for cemetery operations and management and the interment and accountability system of record.

f. Serves as the single point of contact for DoD to establish the operational relationships, capabilities, and system integration necessary for effective and efficient operation of the interment and accountability system of record.

g. Exercises jurisdiction and maintains responsibility for the post, private, and other cemeteries on property under the administrative jurisdiction of the Army.

h. Determines eligibility for interment and inurnment in the cemeteries under the administrative jurisdiction of the Army.

2.9. SECRETARY OF THE NAVY.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraphs 2.6. and 2.7., the Secretary of the Navy:

a. Exercises jurisdiction and maintains responsibility for cemeteries on property under the administrative jurisdiction of the Department of the Navy.

b. Determines eligibility for interment or inurnment in the cemeteries under the administrative jurisdiction of the Department of the Navy.

c. Determines eligibility for inurnment in military maritime war graves.

2.10. SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraphs 2.6. and 2.7., the Secretary of the Air Force:

a. Exercises jurisdiction and maintains responsibility for cemeteries on property under the administrative jurisdiction of the Air Force.

b. Determines eligibility for interment or inurnment in the cemeteries under the administrative jurisdiction of the Air Force.

2.11. COMMANDANT OF THE COAST GUARD.

In addition to the responsibilities in Paragraph 2.6. and 2.7., the Commandant of the Coast Guard:

- a. Exercises jurisdiction and maintains responsibility for the United States Coast Guard Academy Columbarium and all other base, private, and other cemeteries on property under the administrative jurisdiction of the Coast Guard.
- b. Determines eligibility for inurnment in the United States Coast Guard Academy Columbarium.

SECTION 3: CEMETERY MANAGEMENT

3.1. MILITARY SERVICE CEMETERIES.

a. Military Service cemeteries are located on property under the jurisdiction of the DoD. These cemeteries fall into the following categories.

- (1) Open and closed cemeteries on military installations.
- (2) Service-contracted plots in private cemeteries used to re-inter persons originally interred in a Service cemetery.
- (3) Cemeteries and burial plots located on land under the administrative control of a Military Department that were originally established to inter enemy prisoners of war.
- (4) Service cemeteries originally established to inter persons who died while criminally incarcerated.
- (5) Private cemeteries or plots on land under the administrative control of a Military Department.
- (6) Private cemeteries or plots on privately owned land within the boundaries of a Service installation.
- (7) Military maritime war graves.
- (8) Plots used for the burials and re-interments of American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians on lands under the administrative control of a Military Department.
- (9) Not otherwise defined cemeteries.

b. Military Service cemeteries are listed in Table 1. Army National Military Cemeteries (Arlington National Cemetery and United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery) are not considered as Military Service cemeteries for the purposes of this issuance.

c. The Military Service Academy cemeteries are Military Service cemeteries, but have separate eligibility standards due to their unique nature. In addition to the Military Service Academy cemeteries, there are four Native American cemeteries on Fort Sill, Oklahoma and four World War II German and Italian Prisoner of War Cemeteries on three Army installations, which are closed for interments, but for which the Army bears responsibility. Finally, there is the U.S. Disciplinary Barracks Cemetery at Fort Leavenworth used for interring the unclaimed remains of those who die while incarcerated by the United States Military. Unlike the other Military Service cemeteries which honor the Nation's Veterans, this cemetery has unique eligibility standards due to the characterization of service of those incarcerated.

Table 1. List of Military Service Cemeteries

Military Service	Cemetery
Army	Aberdeen Proving Ground, Maryland
Army	Fort Benning, Georgia
Army	Fort Bragg, North Carolina
Army	Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania
Army	Edgewood Arsenal, Maryland
Army	Fort Huachuca, Arizona
Army	Fort Knox, Kentucky
Army	Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri
Army	Joint Base Lewis-McChord, Washington
Army	Fort Meade, Maryland
Army	Presidio of Monterey, California
Army	Fort Riley, Kansas
Army	Schofield Barracks, Hawaii
Army	Fort Sill, Oklahoma
Army	Watervliet Arsenal, Watervliet, New York
Army	West Point Post Cemetery, West Point, New York
Coast Guard	United States Coast Guard Academy Columbarium
Navy	Captain Ted Conaway Memorial Navy Cemetery, Portsmouth, Virginia
Navy	Cuzco Beach Naval Cemetery, U.S. Naval Base Guantanamo Bay, Cuba
Navy	U.S. Naval Cemetery, Great Lakes Naval Base, North Chicago, Illinois
Navy	Maine Memorial, Key West, Florida
Navy	U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland
Air Force	U.S. Air Force Academy Cemetery, Colorado Springs, Colorado
Air Force	Fort Crook/Offutt Air Force Base, Offutt Air Force Base, Nebraska
Air Force	Volk Field, Camp Douglas, Wisconsin
Air Force	F.E. Warren Air Force Base, Wyoming
Air Force	Fort George Wright Cemetery, Fairchild Air Force Base, Washington

3.2. GENERAL RULES GOVERNING INTERMENT OR INURNMENT AT MILITARY SERVICE CEMETERIES.

a. The PADD, or if PADD is unavailable, the next person with right of disposition, is responsible for providing the appropriate prescribed documentation to verify the decedent's eligibility for interment or inurnment as prescribed by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned or Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard in accordance with Paragraph 2.7.c.(1).

b. The Executive Director, Office of Army Cemeteries; the Secretary of the Navy; the Secretary of the Air Force; and the Commandant of the Coast Guard have the authority to act on requests for exceptions to the interment or inurnments policy. Exceptions to policy will only be considered after an individual's death.

c. Pursuant to Section 985 of Title 10, U.S.C., and Section 2411 of Title 38, U.S.C., exceptions to policy will not be granted for those persons prohibited from interment, inurnment, or memorialization in any DoD Military Service cemetery.

d. Findings concerning the commission of certain crimes where a person has not been convicted due to death or flight to avoid prosecution will be submitted to the concerned Military Department's General Counsel to initiate preliminary inquiry proceedings prescribed by the Service Secretary of the Military Department concerned or Commandant of the Coast Guard will be followed.

3.3. ASSIGNMENT OF GRAVESITES OR NICHES.

a. All eligible persons will be assigned gravesites or niches without discrimination as to race, color, sex, religion, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, or national origin and without preference to military grade or rank.

b. Gravesites or niches will not be reserved or assigned prior to the time of need.

c. Gravesite reservations properly reserved before May 1, 1975 will be honored at all DoD Military Service cemeteries. Cemetery responsible officials will periodically review and confirm the validity of these reservations. Gravesites that are no longer needed will be made available to eligible persons on a first-come, first-served basis.

3.4. STANDARDS AND MEASURES.

a. Inspections.

The Secretaries of the Military Departments and Commandant of the Coast Guard will ensure that cemeteries under their respective jurisdiction are inspected biennially using the standards and measures established by the Secretary of the Army.

b. Waivers.

A waiver to a standard and measure for a particular cemetery may be considered and granted by the Secretary concerned.

c. Burial Records.

Cemetery responsible officials will use the standardized burial record in the Enterprise Interment Services System. The minimum information elements, defined in Army's standard operating procedures, which constitute a record of interment or inurnment are:

- (1) Cemetery unique identifier.
- (2) Installation code, as applicable.
- (3) Site unique identifier, as applicable.

- (4) Cemetery parcel identifier, as applicable.
- (5) Cemetery name.
- (6) Interment type.
- (7) Grave section identifier, as applicable.
- (8) Grave row identifier, as applicable.
- (9) Grave headstone marker identification, as applicable.
- (10) Court identifier, as applicable.
- (11) Columbarium section, as applicable.
- (12) Columbarium row, as applicable.
- (13) Columbarium niche number, as applicable.
- (14) Status update.
- (15) First name.
- (16) Middle name.
- (17) Surname.
- (18) Date of death.
- (19) Date of interment/inurnment.

d. Training Burial Records.

All cemetery responsible officials will attend the Army's cemetery responsible official training within 2 years after the first-time certification and then every 5 years thereafter.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

ACRONYM	MEANING
ASD(M&RA)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CMB	Cemetery Management Board
DoDI	DoD instruction
E.O.	Executive order
GS	general schedule
NAGPRA	Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act
PADD	person authorized to direct disposition of remains
U.S.C.	United States Code
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness

G.2. DEFINITIONS.

Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

TERM	DEFINITION
Army National Military Cemeteries	This includes Arlington National Cemetery and the United States Soldiers' and Airmen's Home National Cemetery.
cemetery responsible official	An official who serves as the primary point of contact and responsible official for all matters relating to the operation, maintenance, and administration of a DoD cemetery. The official must be a U.S. Government employee or Service member.
configuration control board	A group of qualified people with responsibility for the process of controlling and approving changes throughout the development and life-cycle of a system. It involves identifying, defining, and baselining configuration items; controlling modification and releases of configuration items; reporting the recording status of configuration items and any requested modifications; and ensuring completeness, consistency, and correctness of configuration items.

TERM	DEFINITION
interment	The ground burial of casketed or cremated human remains.
inurnment	The placement of cremated human remains in a niche.
land under the administrative control of a Military Department	Property for which a Military Department defines how access is granted and rights to use and control, as well as associated responsibilities and restraints.
niche	An above-ground space constructed specifically for the placement of cremated human remains.
PADD	Defined in DoDI 1300.29.
person with right of disposition	A person who has legal authority to direct disposition of human remains and who elects to exercise that right.
real property	Defined in the DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms.

REFERENCES

- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 36, Part 800
- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 43, Part 10 (also known as the “Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Regulations”)
- DoD Directive 1300.22, “Mortuary Affairs Policy,” October 30, 2015, as amended
- DoD Directive 5124.02, “Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)),” June 23, 2008
- DoD Instruction 1300.29, “Mortuary Affairs Program,” June 28, 2021
- DoD Instruction 4710.02, “DoD Interactions with Federally-Recognized Tribes,” September 24, 2018
- DoD Instruction 4710.03, “Consultation with Native Hawaiian Organizations,” October 25, 2011, as amended
- DoD Instruction 4715.16, “Cultural Resources Management,” September 18, 2008, as amended
- Executive Order 13007, “Indian Sacred Sites,” May 24, 1996
- Executive Order 13175, “Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments,” November 6, 2000
- Executive Order 13287, “Preserve America,” March 3, 2003
- National Register Bulletin 15, “How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation,” 1997¹
- National Register Bulletin 41, “Guidelines for Evaluating and Registering Cemeteries and Burial Places,” 1992²
- Office of the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, “DoD Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms,” current edition
- United States Code, Title 5, Section 553
- United States Code, Title 10
- United States Code, Title 25, Chapter 32 (also known as the “Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act of 1990”)
- United States Code, Title 33, Section 2338
- United States Code, Title 38, Section 2411
- United States Code, Title 54, Subtitle III (also known as the “National Historic Preservation Act of 1966”)

¹ Available at https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB-15_web508.pdf

² Available at <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/upload/NRB41-Complete.pdf>