

Veterans Corner

Military funeral honors

The Department of Defense (DOD) provides military funeral honors at the burials of veterans on request from family members. Funeral honors can be given at private or government-operated cemeteries. As provided by law, an honor guard detail for the burial of an eligible veteran shall consist of not less than two members of the Armed Forces. One member of the detail shall be a representative of the parent Service of the deceased veteran. The honor detail will, at a minimum, perform a ceremony that includes the folding and presenting of the American flag to the next of kin and the playing of Taps.

Families of eligible military veterans request funeral honors through their funeral home director. Funeral home directors can request funeral honors from DOD, whether burial is in a national cemetery or another cemetery. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) staff at national cemeteries also can assist to arrange funeral honors at VA national cemeteries. Your funeral home director will assist you in obtaining a flag. More information on burial flags is available at <https://www.va.gov/burials-memorials/memorial-items/burial-flags/>

A Presidential Memorial Certificate will be provided upon request. This is a parchment certificate with an inscription expressing the nation's grateful recognition of an honorably discharged, deceased veteran's service in the Armed Forces. The veteran's name is inscribed and the certificate bears the signature of the President. For information about requesting a Presidential Memorial Certificate and additional information refer to <http://www.cem.va.gov/pmc.asp>. More information is also available at https://www.cem.va.gov/military_funeral_honors.asp. Our office can also assist with making these arrangements along with ordering flags, headstones and grave markers.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office can complete the DMV Veteran Status Verification Form for the California Veteran Designation on your driver's license and also issues Veteran I.D. cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Scott Holwell at the email address provided below, if you would like to receive periodic veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To determine if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information on the Web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office webpage at www.countyofkings.com/vets

Scott Holwell, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230; call (559)852-2669; or e-mail scott.holwell@co.kings.ca.us.