



DoD INSTRUCTION 1300.15

MILITARY FUNERAL SUPPORT

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Purpose: This issuance establishes policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides direction for military funeral support in accordance with the authority in DoD Directive 5124.02.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY. This issuance 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.

1.2. POLICY.

a. A military funeral honors ceremony will be provided to eligible beneficiaries, upon request pursuant to Section 1491 of Title 10, United States Code (U.S.C.). Funeral honors will only be rendered one time for each eligible beneficiary. Military funeral honors rendered at a memorial service for those Service members declared deceased and remains not recovered may be re-rendered at the funeral when the deceased Service member's remains are recovered and identified. Commanders at all levels must support paying a final tribute on behalf of a grateful nation to comrades in arms, and must respond expeditiously and sensitively to requests for military funeral support. Rendering military honors reflects the high regard and respect accorded to military service and demonstrates military professionalism to the United States and the world.

b. A veteran, as defined in Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C., or who has been granted veteran status pursuant to DoD Directive 1000.20 in accordance with Section 401 of Public Law 95-202 and Section 106 of Title 38, U.S.C., is eligible to receive military funeral honors if he or she:

(1) Served in the active military, naval, or air service, as defined in Section 101(24) of Title 38, and was discharged or released from that service by means of an honorable or under honorable conditions (general) discharge;

(2) Died while on active duty; or

(3) Was a member or former member of the Selected Reserve described in Section 2301(f)(1) of Title 38, U.S.C.

c. For the purposes of determining eligibility for military funeral honors in accordance with Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C., and this issuance, individuals who have at any time been discharged or released from military service with any of the following characterizations of service or under any of the following circumstances, will be considered to have been discharged or released under dishonorable conditions, and military funeral honors will **not** be provided:

(1) A dishonorable discharge;

(2) A bad conduct discharge;

(3) A dismissal from the Service adjudged by court-martial;

- (4) An under other-than-honorable conditions discharge or separation;
 - (5) An officer resignation or retirement for the good of the Service in lieu of court-martial, which results in a discharge characterization of under other than honorable conditions; or
 - (6) A clemency discharge.
- d. The provision of military funeral honors is designated a total force mission. Service members and members of the Commissioned Officer Corps of the Public Health Service and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration may perform this mission.
- e. Members of the Army National Guard and the Air National Guard may not be ordered to perform funeral honors in any duty status without the consent of the Governor of the State or territory concerned or the Commanding General of the National Guard of the District of Columbia or other appropriate authority of the State, territory, or District of Columbia in accordance with Section 115 of Title 32, U.S.C.
- f. The performance of funeral honors functions by members of the National Guard at funerals for veterans may be treated by the Secretary concerned as a Federal function for which appropriated funds may be used in accordance with Section 114 of Title 32, U.S.C. Any such performance of funeral honors functions at such a funeral may not be considered to be a period of drill or training, but may be performed as funeral honors duty pursuant to Section 115 of Title 32, U.S.C.
- g. Military funeral honors may not be provided at the funeral or burial for any of the following persons, in accordance with Section 985 of Title 10, U.S.C., and Section 2411 of Title 38, U.S.C.:
- (1) A person who has been convicted of a Federal capital crime and whose conviction is final (other than a person who was pardoned or whose sentence was commuted by the President of the United States).
 - (2) A person who has been convicted of a State capital crime and whose conviction is final (other than a person whose sentence was commuted by the Governor of a State).
 - (3) A person who is found to have committed a Federal capital crime or a State capital crime, but has not been convicted of such crime by reason of such person not being available for trial due to death or flight to avoid prosecution by an appropriate Federal official based on clear and convincing evidence in accordance with Section 2411(c) of Title 38.
 - (4) A person who has been convicted of a Federal or state crime causing the person to be a tier III sex offender for purposes of the Sex Offender Registration and Notification Act Section 20911 of Title 34, U.S.C.; and who, for such crime, is sentenced to a minimum of life imprisonment; and whose conviction is final (other than a person who was pardoned or whose sentence was commuted by the President or Governor of a State, as the case may be).
 - (5) A person who is a veteran, as defined in Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C., or who died while on active duty or as a member of a Reserve Component, when the circumstances

surrounding the person's death or other circumstances as specified by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned are such that to provide honors at the funeral or burial of the person would bring discredit upon the person's Military Service (or former Military Service).

h. Family members of a deceased active duty member or of a deceased veteran who is ineligible to receive military funeral honors or a U.S. flag from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) are ineligible for a DoD-furnished U.S. flag.

i. The Secretary of Defense may waive all or part of the obligation to render military funeral honors when he or she considers it necessary in order to meet the requirements of war, national emergency, contingency operation, or other military requirements as authorized in Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C.

(1) The authority to make such a waiver may not be delegated to an official of a Military Department other than the Secretary of the Military Department and may not be delegated within the OSD to an official at a level below Under Secretary of Defense, in accordance with Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C.

(2) Before or promptly after granting a waiver pursuant to this paragraph, the Secretary of Defense will provide notice of this waiver to the Committees on Armed Services of the Congress.

1.3. INFORMATION COLLECTIONS. The reporting of military funeral honors data, referred to in Paragraphs 2.4.j. and 3.7, has been assigned Report Control Symbol DD-P&R(AR)2089, in accordance with the procedures in Volume 1 of DoD Manual 8910.01.

1.4. SUMMARY OF CHANGE 1. The changes to this issuance:

a. Implement Section 574 of Public Law 116-92, also known as the "National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020". Amend responsibilities of the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard to include defining full military honors in accordance with Service customs and traditions.

b. Authorize military funeral honors to be re-rendered for those Service members declared deceased and remains not recovered when the deceased Service member's remains are recovered and identified.

c. Updates references for accuracy.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR PERSONNEL AND READINESS (USD(P&R)). The USD(P&R) establishes policy on the provision of military funeral honors, and directs the Military Departments to develop policies and procedures for performing military funeral honors in accordance with this issuance.

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):

a. Monitors implementation and compliance of all entities (to include non-governmental) with this issuance.

b. Prescribes annually a daily stipend authorized by Section 1491(d)(2) of Title 10, U.S.C., for volunteer participation in a funeral honors detail.

2.3. DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE FOR MILITARY COMMUNITY AND FAMILY POLICY (DASD(MC&FP)). Under the authority, direction, and control of the ASD(M&RA), the DASD(MC&FP):

a. Ensures a military funeral honors website and a toll-free telephone number are maintained and operated. There will be a national and local liaison established with appropriate groups and organizations to inform and update them on funeral honor policies and procedures. This website will also be the authoritative source for military funeral honors contacts. The DASD(MC&FP) will disseminate contact information for the website and toll-free telephone number as appropriate.

b. Notifies the VA of current Military Department contacts for arranging military funeral honors in order to assist the VA with their requirement, pursuant to Section 2404 of Title 38, U.S.C., to provide the next of kin or other agent of the deceased veteran of funeral honors available to the deceased veteran by DoD.

2.4. SECRETARIES OF THE MILITARY DEPARTMENTS AND THE COMMANDANT OF THE U.S. COAST GUARD: The Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard:

a. Monitor implementation and Military Department policy and guidance for consistency with policy established by this issuance.

b. Define in policy the eligibility criteria for military funeral honors and full military funeral honors and the required elements pursuant to Section 1491 of Title 10 U.S.C., this issuance, and Service customs and traditions.

(1) The eligibility criteria will include full military funeral honors (as determined by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned or the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard, as appropriate) for the funeral of a veteran who:

- (a) Was awarded the Medal of Honor or the Prisoner of War Medal.
- (b) Is not entitled to full military honors by the grade of that veteran.

(2) Full military funeral honors will consist of, at a minimum, a detail of two uniformed members of the Military Services, with at least one of the detail's members being from the parent Service of the eligible beneficiary, pursuant to Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C.; a gun salute; the playing of the National Song of Military Remembrance as identified in Section 596 of Public Law 112-239 (also known and referred to in this issuance as "Taps"), and the folding and presentation of the United States flag, subject to what is permitted where honors are presented.

c. Require the commander of each military installation at or through which a military funeral honors detail is provided, to maintain a plan containing certain elements and requirements for conducting military funeral honors, including:

(1) Mechanisms to ensure compliance with the requirements applicable to the composition of military funeral honors details.

(2) Mechanisms to ensure compliance with Service requirements for ceremonies for funerals.

(3) The provision of a gun salute, for rendering full military funeral honors, by appropriate personnel, including:

(a) Personnel of the installation;

(b) Members of the Reserve Components of the Armed Forces residing in the vicinity of the installation who are ordered to military funeral honors duty;

(c) Members of the Armed Forces in a retired status; or

(d) Members of veterans organizations or other similar nonprofit community service organizations.

(4) Mechanisms for the provision of support authorized.

(5) Such other mechanisms and activities as the Secretary concerned considers appropriate to ensure military funeral honors are appropriately rendered upon request at funerals of eligible veterans.

d. Assign Departmental responsibilities for receiving and coordinating requests for military funeral honors, and establish procedures to ensure responsive and prompt compliance with requests for honors.

e. Upon request of the next of kin or authorized representative, validate eligibility for receipt of military funeral honors or full military funeral honors and provide such funeral honors in accordance with Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C. as amended, and this issuance.

f. Appropriately train Service members to perform military funeral honors duties and ensure a sufficient number of trained Service members are available for this mission.

g. Establish a mechanism for ensuring the quality of military funeral honors ceremonies.

h. Ensure that military funeral honors details are fully supported with the requisite equipment, transportation, uniforms, and other items necessary to perform the mission and that sufficient funds are budgeted for this purpose.

i. Provide a bugler, either military or civilian, for the playing of Taps. Bugler support may be contracted. The Service representative may authorize the playing of Taps on a ceremonial bugle or a high quality recording on a stereo player and must ensure that it is available.

j. Ensure proper decorum for military funeral honors, including trained personnel, implementation of standardized military funeral honors procedures, dignified, respectful honor guard details, professional dress and appearance, synchronization of movement, and regular quality control of funeral details.

k. Maintain a system that collects standardized data on all military funeral honors rendered, including those supported by authorized providers when these honors were coordinated through the Military Service.

l. Determine procedures for augmenting the two-person military funeral honors details in accordance with respective Service traditions. The Military Services are authorized to provide elements of honors such as firing parties and pallbearers in addition to those deemed mandatory as prescribed in Paragraph 3.2.b. Authorized providers, after receiving authorization status, may render these additional elements of honors for the Military Service when requested by the Military Department and used to augment the Service honors detail.

m. Determine the duty category in which the preparation and the conduct of military funeral honors are performed. Performance of funeral honors duty by a Reserve Component member not on active duty must be treated as funeral honors duty in accordance with DoD Instruction 1215.06.

n. Provide updates for the military funeral honors website as required to maintain current Service information. Provide updates to the Office of the DASD(MC&FP), Casualty, Mortuary Affairs and Military Funeral Honors Directorate.

SECTION 3: MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS

3.1. PROVISIONS OF A MILITARY FUNERAL.

a. Upon request of the next of kin, authorized representative, or authorized funeral director, the military funeral honors coordinator arranges the provision of funeral honors for an eligible beneficiary. The next of kin or authorized representative should only need to make a single telephone call to his or her funeral director to request military funeral honors. The parent Service of the eligible beneficiary assumes full responsibility for the entire process from initial contact to final report of completion. The military funeral honors coordinator coordinates the request, as appropriate, with:

- (1) The funeral director.
- (2) Other Military Services.
- (3) The VA when military funeral honors are to be conducted at a VA-administered cemetery.
- (4) Other authorized providers.

b. A funeral honors detail, at a minimum, performs at the funeral a ceremony that includes the folding of a U.S. flag, presentation of the flag to the designated flag recipient, and the playing of Taps.

c. A full military funeral honors detail will include, at a minimum, all the elements in Paragraph 3.1.b. and a gun salute to the extent permitted at the place where the honors are presented.

d. Military flyovers are not part of the funeral honors ceremony as required by Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C. Authorization of flyover support and determination of eligibility criteria based on Service customs and traditions are at the discretion of the Secretary of the Military Department concerned.

3.2. FUNERAL HONORS CEREMONIES.

a. Funeral honors ceremonies conducted by the DoD use standardized language for the presentation of the flag to the designated flag recipient. The verbiage in Figure 1. will be used when presenting the U.S. flag during the funeral service.

Figure 1. Presentation of the Flag

“On behalf of the President of the United States, (the United States Army; the United States Marine Corps; the United States Navy, the United States Air Force, the United States Space Force, or the United States Coast Guard), and a grateful Nation, please accept this flag as a symbol of our appreciation for your loved one’s honorable and faithful service.”

b. The funeral honors ceremony personnel will consist of a minimum of two Military Service members, and a bugler if one is available. One of the Military Service members will be a representative of the parent Service of the eligible deceased veteran, who will present the U.S. flag to the next of kin or other appropriate individual. The parent Service representative will also be designated the military funeral honors detail lead.

c. In general, when a bugler sounds Taps (including a Service member using the ceremonial bugle), he or she will be placed in a prominent position. Portable stereo players should be used as a last resort and, if used, will be out of sight of the funeral party. The official version of Taps is played by a single bugle, and therefore, Echo Taps are not authorized.

d. The Military Services are encouraged to provide elements of honors in addition to those listed in Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C.; (e.g., a firing party, pall bearer) and use additional members or other authorized providers to augment the funeral honors detail for this purpose.

3.3. SELECTION OF PERSONNEL FOR MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS.

a. Personnel selected for military funeral honors details will be appropriately trained by the parent Service in accordance with their customs and traditions and equipped for this duty. Personnel selected will be within Service professional standards to properly reflect their Military Service.

b. Members of the Ready Reserve may volunteer to participate in military funeral honors details or the preparation of military funeral honors as a Federal function.

(1) Such duty will occur with the consent of the member, who may be in a paid or unpaid status.

(2) Pay, allowances, travel, and transportation allowances, when appropriate, will be paid from funds appropriated to the Secretaries of the Military Departments and will be paid in accordance with the applicable provisions of Chapters 3 and 8 of Title 37, U.S.C.; Section 115 of Title 32, U.S.C.; Section 12503 of Title 10, U.S.C.; and the Joint Travel Regulation.

(3) Pay, allowances, and service credit for Ready Reserve members will be based on the duty category in which the member is performing military funeral honors and the preparation of such honors.

(4) Military funeral honors and the preparation of military funeral honors may be performed by members of the Ready Reserve in one of the following duty categories, as described in DoD Instruction 1215.06:

- (a) Active duty other than for training.
- (b) Full-time National Guard duty other than training duty.
- (c) Funeral honors duty as specified in Section 12503 of Title 10, U.S.C., or in Section 115 of Title 32, U.S.C., in the case of members of the Army National Guard of the United States and the Air National Guard of the United States.
- (d) Members of the Ready Reserve performing military funeral honors in funeral honors duty status may receive service credit in accordance with DoD Instruction 1215.07 and, if authorized by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, compensation as permitted by Section 206 of Title 37, U.S.C.
- (e) Members of the Ready Reserve performing military funeral honors in funeral honors duty status may be reimbursed for travel and transportation expenses incurred in conjunction with such duty, as authorized in Chapter 8 of Title 37, U.S.C., if such duty is performed at a location 50 miles or more from the member's residence.

c. Commanders will issue travel orders, as required, authorizing personnel to perform military funeral honors details. If a Service member is required to perform this duty before issuance of orders, availability of funds must be determined before the performance of duty, and confirmatory orders will be issued.

3.4. WEAR OF THE UNIFORM WHEN SERVING ON AN HONORS DETAIL. This paragraph outlines DoD's policy for the wear of the military uniform when serving on an honors detail for a deceased Service member or veteran prepared for burial (this includes cremated remains placed in an urn). Honors details include those who travel with the remains to the final destination, meet the remains at an arrival location (including an approved interim stop), participate in the transfers of the remains from an aircraft or other mode of transportation to another mode of transportation or burial location and perform military funeral honors.

a. An honors detail may consist of, but is not limited to, the reception team, casket team (body bearers/pall bearers), escort platoon, firing party, bugler, escort officer, chaplain, casualty assistance officer, and other military officials as appropriate.

b. Rendering honors reflects the highest regard and respect to our Service members who die while serving our Nation. As such, all members of an honor detail will wear the following uniforms prescribed (in all cases, a long-sleeve uniform jacket or jumper will be worn by all Services to honor the decedent). Military Services always prescribe a uniform that meets or exceeds these standards:

- (1) Army – Army Service Uniform (Class A).

- (2) Navy – Service Dress Blue/White.
- (3) Marine Corps – Seasonal Dress Blue or Service “A” Uniform.
- (4) Air Force – Service Dress.
- (5) Coast Guard – Service Dress Blue with combination cover (agreement by the Coast Guard).

c. This uniform policy does not apply to those transporting, transferring, or receiving unprepared and/or unidentified remains at any location between the recovery location and the preparing mortuary facility, to include Dignified and Reverse Dignified Transfers (e.g., collection point, theater mortuary evacuation, preparation point, identification laboratory, hospital, and medical examiner facility).

3.5. DENIAL OF MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS. Military funeral honors will be denied for the reasons listed in Paragraph 1.2.c. Every attempt must be made to provide a decision by the signature authority before the requested time for funeral honors. The decision cannot be held in abeyance until a later date. If a Military Service denies military funeral honors, the following actions are required:

- a. The decision to deny funeral honors rests with the Secretary of the Military Department concerned or a designee responsible for funeral honors within each Military Service at the general or flag officer grade or Senior Executive Service level or higher.
- b. The requesting family member of the deceased veteran or deceased active duty or Reserve Component member will be provided a written explanation detailing the decision to deny honors.
- c. A copy of the funeral honors denial letter issued by the Military Department will be forwarded to the Principal Deputy USD(P&R), Attention: Military Funeral Honors, as directed in Paragraph 3.7.

3.6. MISSED FUNERALS.

- a. The Military Services are required to meet their statutory obligation to provide military funeral honors upon request. The veteran’s parent Service determines eligibility. If a requestor contacts the wrong Service provider, the contacted Military Service has an obligation to provide the correct contact information of the veteran’s parent Service in order to prevent a missed funeral.
- b. A funeral is considered to be a missed funeral by the veteran’s parent Service when:
 - (1) Military funeral honors are scheduled but are not provided for an eligible beneficiary.
 - (2) Honors were provided for an eligible beneficiary but did not include the statutory requirements of the folding and presentation of the U.S. flag and the sounding of Taps by a detail of two uniformed members of the Military Services, with at least one of the detail’s members being from the parent Service of the eligible beneficiary and when eligible and requested, a gun salute, to the extent permitted at the place where the honors are presented.

c. The parent Service will reschedule military funeral honors for a missed funeral upon request.

3.7. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS. The Military Departments will notify the Office of the DASD(MC&FP) of the number of military funeral honors provided, missed funerals, and denied honors. This notification will be provided in a quarterly report sent to the Office of the DASD(MC&FP), Attention: Military Funeral Honors. In addition to the quarterly report, a copy of all funeral honors denial letters will be provided as soon as the letter is complete.

SECTION 4: AUTHORIZED PROVIDER PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (AP³) GUIDANCE

4.1. AUTHORIZED PROVIDERS.

a. Authorized providers, as defined in the Glossary, may complement a military funeral honors detail by rendering additional elements of honors, such as a firing party, pall bearers, or a bugler.

b. Authorized providers are considered government employees for the purposes of liability and workers compensation when augmenting a military funeral honors detail in accordance with Section 1588 of Title 10, U.S.C.

4.2. PROCEDURES. In accordance with Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C., and Paragraph 2.4. of this issuance, the Secretaries of the Military Departments and the Commandant of the U.S. Coast Guard may include authorized providers in the delivery of military funeral honors. If the Secretary of the Military Department concerned determines that authorized providers will augment a funeral detail, the Military Service may assist these individuals by:

a. Providing military funeral honors training as authorized by Section 1491(d) of Title 10, U.S.C. Before recognizing an individual as an authorized provider, under the Military Department's AP³, the Secretary concerned will provide initial training to ensure a professional, dignified, and coordinated delivery of military funeral honors in accordance with the ceremony, standards, and procedures established by the respective Military Service or the U.S. Coast Guard.

b. Providing periodic training for authorized providers, once qualified, to maintain professionalism and proficiency in the rendering of military funeral honors.

c. Helping authorized providers with obtaining the material and equipment required for a professional appearance and delivery of military funeral honors. This may include access to military clothing sales stores or other sources of uniform items in accordance with statutory authorities and Service policies notwithstanding the restrictions in DoD Instruction 1330.21 for not otherwise authorized veterans. For members of a veterans' organization or other organization referred to in Section 1491(b)(2) of Title 10, U.S.C., this includes articles of clothing that, as determined by the Secretary of the Military Department concerned, are appropriate as a civilian uniform for persons participating in a funeral honors detail.

d. Referring authorized providers to the appropriate point of contact within the Army Materiel Command for the express purpose of acquiring ceremonial rifles and blank ammunition to augment a military funeral detail with a firing party. See Table 1 for the Army Materiel Command points of contact.

Table 1. Army Materiel Command Contacts

Blank Ammunition	Military Ceremonial Rifles
U.S. Army Joint Munitions Command AMSJM-CDS 2695 Rodman Avenue Rock Island, IL 61299-6000 Toll Free: (877) 233-2515 Commercial: (309) 782-4608	U.S. Army TACOM Life Cycle Management Command ATTN: AMSTA-LCL-IWD M/S419D 6501 East 11 Mile Road Warren, MI 48397-5000 Commercial: 586-282-1952

e. Identifying an individual as an authorized provider of military funeral honors after providing the training required by Paragraphs 4.2.a. and b.

(1) The Secretary concerned will document the recognition of an individual authorized provider.

(2) Documentation may take the form of a certificate or other appropriate record. An established certificate is available on the DoD Military Funeral Honors Website for recognition of authorized providers under the AP³.

(3) Recognition as an authorized provider is Service-specific. A prospective authorized provider must secure the same status from each Military Service with which he or she desires to participate unless there is an agreement between Military Services to accept the other's recognition.

f. Providing reimbursement or financial support to authorized providers:

(1) The Secretary of the Military Department concerned may only approve reimbursement to authorized providers for expenses incurred while augmenting a military funeral honors detail if such approval precedes the incurring of any expenses, in accordance with Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C.

(2) Covered expenses must be in direct support of the funeral detail.

(3) Reimbursable expenses include travel and transportation allowances as specified in regulations prescribed under Section 464 of Title 37, U.S.C., or the daily stipend authorized by Section 1491(d)(2) of Title 10, U.S.C.

(4) Standard Form 1164, "Claim for Reimbursement for Expenditures on Official Business," will be used by authorized providers to submit expense claims, in accordance with Section 0409 of Chapter 4, Volume 9 of DoD 7000.14-R. The parent Service of the honored veteran or Service member is responsible for the processing and payment of the claims of authorized providers.

(5) In the rare case that a Military Department's approval of a request by an authorized provider to augment a military funeral honors detail requires travel that necessitates overnight accommodations, the Military Department must place the authorized provider on invitational travel authorization before travel.

g. Providing government transportation instead of the use of privately owned vehicles.

SECTION 5: AT SEA DISPOSITION

5.1. ELIGIBILITY FOR BURIAL AT SEA BY THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE. The following are eligible for burial at sea by the DoD:

- a. Members or retired members of the uniformed services.
- b. Former members of the uniformed services honorably discharged.
- c. U.S. civilian Marine personnel of Military Sealift Command.
- d. Merchant marines who served in support of the Navy during World War II.
- e. U.S. citizens who are determined eligible by the Chief of Naval Operations because of notable service and or other contributions to the government.

5.2. INFORMATION FOR THE AT SEA DISPOSITION. Burial at sea is normally performed by the U.S. Navy and the U.S. Coast Guard. Burial at sea meets the intended requirements of military funeral honors. Burial at sea will be conducted in accordance with Section 229.1 of Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, and the applicable Service regulation:

- a. For the Navy, Section 2 of Navy Personnel 15555D and Chapter 8 of Navy Medical Command Instruction 5360.1.
- b. For the Coast Guard, Article 3.H. of Commandant Instruction M1770.9A.

5.3. FUNERAL PLANNING.

- a. Any eligible beneficiary planning for burial at sea should indicate that preference to the person authorized to direct disposition of remains. Burial at sea may be performed at the direction of the person authorized to direct disposition of remains, with or without written direction from the deceased.
- b. The Navy/Marine Corps Mortuary Affairs Office will provide burial at sea information for funeral planning.

Navy/Marine Corps Mortuary Affairs Office
5720 Integrity Drive
Millington, TN 38055
Toll Free: 1-866-787-0081

5.4. RETIREMENT AT SEA (RAS).

- a. The existence of partial remains is almost uniquely a military situation. RAS provides a dignified means of disposition for cremated partial remains to a final resting place.

b. RAS is used only for the disposition of unidentified partial remains where the individuals associated with the incident have been individually identified and where the unidentified partial remains have been cremated. The partial remains may fall into one of three categories:

(1) Subsequently identified partial remains where the family has elected in writing not to be notified or take possession, and directed that the Military Service effect disposition. RAS may be used to effect disposition once the partial remains have been cremated.

(2) Subsequent partial commingled remains that are unidentifiable with existing technology and that have been cremated.

(3) Commingled unidentified cremated partial remains that may contain persons ineligible for burial in a national cemetery.

c. No formal ceremony for RAS is prescribed; however, there are standard elements.

(1) The committal service for RAS is performed aboard either a U.S. Navy or U.S. Coast Guard vessel with the assistance of the parent Service(s), if available.

(2) Partial remains of multiple identified Service members are cremated and placed in a water-soluble urn, such as a sea salt urn. Unidentified, cremated partial remains are placed in a separate water-soluble urn. Individual urns are not identified by name to ensure the same dignity, honor, and respect is afforded to all identified and unidentified remains.

(3) The RAS is conducted with respect to nautical traditions at the discretion of the responsible commander or commanding officer of the ship.

(4) There is no authorization for reimbursable travel of family members to attend RAS.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

AP ³	Authorized Provider Partnership Program
ASD(M&RA)	Assistant Secretary of Defense for Manpower and Reserve Affairs
DASD(MC&FP)	Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Community and Family Policy
RAS	retirement at sea
U.S.C.	United States Code
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
VA	Department of Veterans Affairs

G.2. DEFINITIONS. Unless otherwise noted, these terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

active duty. Full-time duty in the active Military Service of the United States – includes active duty for training.

AP³. DoD program to train individuals not in the Military Services or employees of the United States Government to augment the uniformed members of a military funeral honors detail. This program allows for the training and payment of daily stipend or travel expenses for authorized providers when requested to assist in performing military funeral honors by a Military Service in accordance with Section 3.

authorized providers. Individuals or groups recognized by the Military Services, who are not Service members or employees of the United States Government and who augment the uniformed members of a military funeral honors detail. Authorized providers may include, but are not limited to, veterans' service organizations, members as trained volunteers of the Reserve Officer Training Corps, VA honor guards, and other appropriate individuals and organizations that support the rendering of military funeral honors.

authorized representative. A person chosen by the next of kin to represent him or her in matters dealing with the death of the eligible beneficiary (may include funeral director or cemetery representative).

clemency discharge. A neutral discharge, neither honorable nor less than honorable obtained in accordance with President Gerald R. Ford's "Proclamation 4313 – Announcing a Program for the Return of Vietnam Era Draft Evaders and Military Deserters."

eligible beneficiaries for Military funeral honors. Deceased active duty personnel and veterans, as defined in Section 1491 of Title 10, U.S.C.

Federal capital crime. An offense under Federal law for which life imprisonment or the death penalty may be imposed.

funeral director. A State-licensed individual responsible for arranging all burial details, to include requesting military funeral honors.

gun salute. A three-volley salute performed by a rifle party at military funerals. This three-volley salute is not to be confused with the 21-gun salute (or 19-gun or 17-gun, etc.) which is fired by a battery of artillery pieces.

honors coordinator. The military office, as directed by each Military Service, responsible for arranging the delivery of military funeral honors within a specified geographic area.

invitational travel authorization. Defined in Volume 9 of DoD 7000.14-R.

memorial service. A religious or secular service held to honor a deceased person without the presence of their remains.

military funeral honors. The ceremonial paying of respect as a final demonstration of the country's gratitude, to those who, in times of war and peace, have faithfully defended the United States. The military funeral honors ceremony consists of, at a minimum, the folding and presentation of the U.S. flag and the sounding of Taps by a detail of two uniformed members of the Military Services. At least one of the detail's members will be from the parent Service of the eligible beneficiary.

missed funeral. When military funeral honors are requested but not provided for eligible beneficiaries or are provided but do not include the statutory minimum military funeral honors as defined in this instruction.

next of kin. Defined in DoD Instruction 1300.18.

parent Service. The Military Service in which a deceased active duty person or veteran last served.

Service representative. Uniformed member of the parent Service of the eligible beneficiary who leads the honors detail and presents the U.S. flag to the next of kin.

State capital crime. Under State law, the willful, deliberate, or premeditated unlawful killing of another human being for which life imprisonment or the death penalty may be imposed.

Taps. The bugle call designated as the National Song of Military Remembrance. The official version of Taps is played by a single bugle.

veteran. A person who:

Served in the active military, naval, or air service, as defined in Section 101 (24) of Title 38, U.S.C., and was discharged or released under conditions other than dishonorable by means of an honorable, or under honorable conditions (general) discharge; or

Was a member or former member of the Selected Reserve, as described in Section 2301(f) of Title 38, U.S.C.

REFERENCES

- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 40, Section 229.1
- Commandant Instruction M1770.9A, “Military Personnel Casualties and Decedent Affairs,” June 2016
- DoD 7000.14-R, Volume 9, “DoD Financial Management Regulation: Travel Policy,” June 2019
- DoD Directive 1000.20, “Active Duty Service Determinations for Civilian of Contractual Groups,” September 11, 1989
- DoD Directive 5124.02, “Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)),” June 23, 2008
- DoD Instruction 1215.06, “Uniform Reserve, Training and Retirement Categories for the Reserve Components,” March 11, 2014, as amended
- DoD Instruction 1215.07, “Service Credit for Non-Regular Retirement,” July 30, 2019
- DoD Instruction 1300.18, “Department of Defense (DoD) Personnel Casualty Matters, Policies, and Procedures” January 8, 2008, as amended
- DoD Instruction 1330.21, “Armed Services Exchange Regulations,” July 14, 2005
- DoD Manual 8910.01, Volume 1, “DoD Information Collections Manual: Procedures for DoD Internal Information Collections,” June 30, 2014, as amended
- DoD Military Funeral Honors Website, <https://www.militaryonesource.mil/leaders-service-providers/casualty-assistance/funeral-directory-and-planner-resources>
- Gerald R. Ford: “Proclamation 4313 - Announcing a Program for the Return of Vietnam Era Draft Evaders and Military Deserters,” September 16, 1974
- Joint Travel Regulations, current edition
- Navy Medical Command Instruction 5360.1 “Decedent Affairs Manual,” September 17, 1987
- Navy Personnel 15555D, “Navy Military Funerals,” 1999
- Public Law 95-202, Section 401, “The G.I. Bill Improvements Act of 1977,” November 23, 1977
- Public Law 112-239, Section 596, “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2013,” January 3, 2013
- Public Law 116-92, “National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2020,” January 3, 2019
- United States Code, Title 10
- United States Code, Title 32
- United States Code, Title 34, Section 20911
- United States Code, Title 37
- United States Code, Title 38