

WDVA MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS (MFHP) FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

The Military Funeral Honors Program (MFHP) receives questions on numerous topics relating to Military Honors and veterans benefits. Listed below for Veterans Service Organizations (VSOs) and funeral directors are some of the more common questions fielded. If you have additional questions or would like further clarification, please contact the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs Military Funeral Honors Program toll-free at 1-877-944-6667 or email honors@dva.wisconsin.gov.

WHAT ARE MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS?

All eligible veterans are entitled to a folding and presentation of the flag and the sounding of taps. Rendering military funeral honors reflects the highest regard and respect accorded to military service and demonstrates military professionalism to the nation and the world. Veterans have earned this ceremony and the Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs, in partnership with VSOs, the service-specific Casualty Assistance Centers, the Wisconsin National Guard and our teams, will do our utmost to provide this tribute to our fallen comrades.

HOW DOES THE MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS PROGRAM ESTABLISH VETERAN ELIGIBILITY?

The preferred method is a certificate of release or discharge from active duty, most commonly referred to as a DD-214. Any type of discharge document other than a DD-214 will be evaluated on a case by case basis to determine eligibility. Length of service, type and time period of service can also affect an eligibility determination. A veteran's service, as characterized on the military discharge certificate (i.e., DD-214) must have been honorable, under honorable conditions, or general under honorable conditions. Veterans with characterizations of uncharacterized, bad conduct, other than honorable or dishonorable are not eligible for honors.

More detailed guidance can be found here: <https://www.dmdc.osd.mil/mfh/getLinks.do?tab=Eligible>.

IS IT REALLY NECESSARY TO PROVIDE A COPY OF THE DD-214 OR OTHER ELIGIBILITY DOCUMENT?

Yes, the federal government requires eligibility to be established before the military can participate in honors and so we require the same. If a document is not available, or provided upon request for honors, the MFHP normally is able to obtain or establish eligibility through other means.

Veterans and their families can request copies of the discharge documents for the purpose of determining eligibility for funeral honors directly from the National Archives. Go to the [National Archive website](#) where making an emergency request is explained. The family must submit a form SF-180 which can be printed from that page.

WHERE CAN I OBTAIN ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND THE FORMS USED BY THE MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS PROGRAM?

The Military Funeral Honors Request, WDVA 2800 form and additional forms for Funeral Directors or VSO's are available online in the WDVA Funeral Directors Forms section.

Contact the MFHP toll-free at 1-877-944-6667 or email honors@dva.wisconsin.gov for additional information.

HOW DO I ARRANGE FOR MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS AND CEREMONIAL SUPPORT IN WISCONSIN?

You can call MFHP toll-free 1-877-944-6667 to arrange military honors. The Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs will work with local, state and federal sources to arrange the service to the level you desire. The service detail that performs the honors may be a full-time state team, a full federal service team, a full complement from your local veteran's organization or a combination of federal, state and local personnel.

HOW DOES A VSO RECEIVE NOTIFICATION OR A REQUEST TO PERFORM MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS?

Notification for the VSO can occur two ways. The first is directly via the funeral director. The funeral director can contact a local VSO and see if they wish to participate in the service. If they do, the funeral director then notes this on the form WDVA 2800, Military Funeral Honors Request, when the request is submitted. The second way a VSO can be notified is if there is no VSO preference indicated on the request. In this case, the MFHP Coordinators will begin calling VSOs in the local area of the service to locate a VSO willing to participate in providing honors for the veteran.

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE A BURIAL FLAG AND IS THERE A COST?

The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs provides one flag per veteran at no cost. This flag is normally obtained by a funeral director or CVSO completing paperwork and providing to the Post Office. The flag is presented to the family or next of kin when honors are provided. For those national and state cemeteries with an Avenue of Flags, families of veterans buried in these national and state cemeteries may donate the burial flags of their loved ones to be flown on patriotic holidays. For further information and assistance, contact your County Veterans Service Office or the Federal VA Burial Benefits/Burial Flags website.

ARE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR FUNERAL HONORS AND BURIAL IN A STATE VETERAN'S CEMETERY THE SAME?

No. Eligibility rules for military honors are determined by the Department of Defense. Eligibility rules for our state veterans cemeteries are in accordance with the National Cemetery Administration and our department rules.

WHAT SERVICES/ITEMS CAN THE MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS PROGRAM PROVIDE?

- Coordination of and conducting Military Funeral Honors.
- Funeral Honors training for veterans organization.
- CD of TAPS.
- Practice Burial Flag for a veterans organization.

- Funeral Honors training video.
- Military Funeral Honors Burial Coins for veterans organizations.
- Information on how to obtain ammunition for M1 and Springfield rifles.
- Information on how to obtain magazine clips for M1 rifles.
- Information on the issue or turn-in of rifles.
- Information on obtaining military display items.
- Refer to the specific areas within this frequently asked questions list to obtain detailed information for each service/item or contact the MFHP for assistance.

WHAT IS THE CEREMONIAL BUGLE AND HOW DO I OBTAIN ONE?

The ceremonial bugle was introduced so that veterans' families have a choice on how Taps will be sounded when a live bugler is not available for a military funeral. The ceremonial bugle has an electronic insert that enables an individual to "symbolically play Taps. The ceremonial bugle comes complete with an authentic bugle music insert, hard case for protection and a manual. Cost of the bugle can be obtained here: [More information and the order form.](#)

WHAT IS THE TAPS TUITION VOUCHER PROGRAM FOR STUDENTS?

A funeral director may issue a tuition voucher in the amount of \$25 to a student when sounding TAPS during a military honors funeral for a deceased veteran. The tuition voucher form and instructions, form WDVA 2802, "Taps" Tuition/Fee Voucher, will provide detailed information and student eligibility.

HOW CAN A VSO TRANSFER, REPLACE, OR OBTAIN CEREMONIAL RIFLES IN ORDER TO PROVIDE OR CONTINUE TO PROVIDE HONORS?

The Army Ceremonial Rifle Donations Program is the responsibility of the U.S. Army TACOM Life Cycle Management Command (TACOM). Read about the Ceremonial Rifle Program at https://www.tacom.army.mil/ceremonial_rifle/index.htm.

U.S. Army TACOM LCMC

6501 E. 11 Mile Rd.

ATTN: AMSTA-LCL-IWD M/S 419D

Warren, MI 48397-5000

Contact: Terry Gavlinski

Phone: (586) 467-6294

Email: terry.w.gavlinski.civ@mail.mil

Alternate Contact: Janice Guarnieri

Phone: (586) 467-6302

Alternate Contact: Audrey Clarke

Phone: (586) 467-6296

Email: audrey.j.clarke.civ@mail.mil

General Information

- Ceremonial rifles issued by TACOM are the M1 Garands. Rifles are conditionally loaned to VSOs. By law, no more than 15 rifles are loaned to one post or department.
- VSOs cannot transfer Springfield weapons to other posts; they must be turned in.
- M1 Garands can be transferred to another post once they are approved by TACOM for transfer. A letter from the post with transfer information and completion of a rifle inventory form must be sent directly to TACOM.
- All paperwork submitted must be 100% complete before any transactions can occur.
- Once you complete an application, ensure you maintain a copy for your records to include any supporting documents, photographs or certifications.
- Original application must be sent through your national headquarters; they will verify it, approve it and mail it to TACOM.
- Forms require a notary public endorsement. It is suggested you mail the packet with a return receipt from your national headquarters.
- Timeline; after TACOM receives the correct paperwork, it takes at least 120 days before an organization will receive the weapons.

HOW DOES MY VSO OBTAIN BLANK .30-CALIBER AMMUNITION OR CLIPS?

- Free ammunition or clips are issued to eligible Veterans Service Organizations (VSO).
- Rock Island Arsenal, IL is the point of contact for all issue of .030 caliber blank ammunition and clips.

Contact:

Dawn Folland

Email: dawn.l.folland.civ@mail.mil

Phone: Toll-free 1-877-233-2515 or Direct (309) 782-4608

Fax: (309) 782-7292 / (309) 782-1776

- Request shipment of ammunition to a residential address of an officer or other individual, not to the post.
- Ammunition is sent 1,240 rounds (2 metal cans in a wooden box). Quantity is limited to 2 boxes (2,480 rounds) of ammunition.
- Allow 6-8 weeks delivery after Rock Island receives and processes your order.
- Rock Island Arsenal Blank Ammunition and Clips Fact Sheet

HOW CAN A VSO OBTAIN A CD RECORDING OF "TAPS" OR A COPY OF THE AUTHORIZED PROVIDER PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (AP3) DVD?

Contact the MFHP toll-free at 1-877-944-6667.

WHAT IS THE AUTHORIZED PROVIDER PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM (AP3) AND HOW CAN MY VSO BECOME RECOGNIZED IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FUTURE FEDERAL REIMBURSEMENT, CERTIFICATES AND LAPEL PINS?

The Wisconsin Military Funeral Honors Program is currently working with the military service organizations and has implemented the recognition training program in Wisconsin for Veterans Service Organizations.

If you would like your VSO to be recognized and receive the following, contact the MFHP toll-free at 1-877-944-6667.

- AP3 Training Information/Criteria.
- Department of Defense Certificate for the post and members.
- Lapel pin for each member who participates in providing honors.
- Consideration for future federal reimbursement (expected in 2004-2005).

Once your organization is recognized, appropriate certificates and lapel pins will be issued to the organization and/or individuals being recognized. The VSO will then have their name entered on a list of recognized VSOs for future consideration of federal funding.

For further information regarding the AP3 Program, please see the U.S. Department of Defense Military Funeral Honors AP3 or the National Military Funeral Honors webpages.

WHERE CAN I FIND INFORMATION REGARDING BURIAL BENEFITS PROVIDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS?

Visit the WDVA Cemeteries page.

Visit the Federal VA website or call 1-800-827-1000 for detailed information on:

- Burial in a National Cemetery: Most veterans and their spouses are eligible.
- Burial Flags: U.S. flag provided at no cost for all types of burials.
- Burial at sea.
- Burial in a private cemetery.
- Presidential Memorial Certificate.
- Military Funeral Honors.
- VA Burial Allowance: \$300, eligibility requirements.
- Headstones and Markers: Provided at no cost, upright or flat depends on cemetery restrictions.

HOW CAN MY VSO OR OTHER GROUPS RECEIVE MILITARY DISPLAY ITEMS?

The U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command in Warren, MI is the executive agent for the Army's Donation Program. The following guidance is provided:

Individuals are not authorized to participate. The eight types of organizations authorized by law to receive items are: military organizations and museums, municipal corporations, Soldier's Monument Association, museums/historical societies/historical institutions of a state or foreign nation, incorporated museums, veterans' associations, foreign veterans' associations and Sons of Veterans Reserve.

The recipient is responsible for the following costs: Construction of a suitable display pad/foundation for the item, the cost of demilitarization and the cost of transportation from its current location to your display site.

To obtain the proper forms and other information you can contact:

Wisconsin's TACOM representative by email: Ms. Judith Milidrag, or

TACOM at:
U.S. Army Tank-automotive and Armaments Command
Attn: AMSTA-LC-LEAD, MIS: 419
6501 E. 11 Mile Rd.
Warren, MI 48397-5000
Phone: 1-800-325-2920, Ext. 46943
Fax: (810) 574-7128
Email: TACOM Donations

WHAT IS THE PRESIDENTIAL MEMORIAL CERTIFICATE? WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RECEIVE THIS CERTIFICATE AND HOW IS ONE OBTAINED?

This is a parchment certificate with an engraved 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 of the United States. Honorably discharged veterans are eligible to receive this certificate.

The family may request up to twenty (20) Presidential Memorial Certificates either in person, at any VA regional office, by toll-free fax or by U.S. mail. One address location is preferred for the PMC's to be mailed back to the requestor. Eligible recipients, or someone acting on their behalf, may apply for a PMC in person at any VA regional office or by U.S. mail or toll-free fax. Requests cannot be sent via email. Please be sure to enclose a copy of the veteran's discharge and death certificate to verify eligibility as they cannot process any request without proof of honorable military service. Please submit copies only, as they will not return original documents. To obtain more information and complete the application form go to www.cem.va.gov/cem/pmc.asp.

AS A FUNERAL DIRECTOR, HOW CAN I OBTAIN A MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS KIT?

Fax a request with your letterhead and funeral home license number asking for the kit to (210) 652-5809; Attn: HQ Air Force Mortuary Affairs, San Antonio, TX.

AS A FUNERAL DIRECTOR, HOW CAN I OBTAIN AN ACCESS CODE ALLOWING ME ACCESS INTO THE FUNERAL DIRECTORS AREA WITHIN THE NATIONAL MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS WEBSITE?

Fax a request with your letterhead and funeral home license number asking for an access code to (210) 652-5809; Attn: HQ Air Force Mortuary Affairs, San Antonio, TX.

WHERE CAN I OBTAIN MORE INFORMATION ON VETERAN'S BENEFITS THAT I MAY BE ENTITLED TO?

Contact your County Veterans Service Officer. Through your County Veterans Service Officer you will receive the most up-to-date information and assistance regarding benefits to which you may be entitled. See state benefits or federal benefits websites for more information.

WHERE CAN YOU WRITE OR EXPRESS COMMENTS OR CONCERNS ABOUT THE WISCONSIN MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS PROGRAM?

Wisconsin Department of Veterans Affairs
Attn: Military Funeral Honors Program
21731 Spring St.
Union Grove, WI 53182
Phone: (262) 878-5673
Toll Free Phone: (877) 944-6667
Email: honors@dva.wisconsin.gov

WHAT IS THE MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS COIN AND HOW DOES MY VSO OBTAIN IT?

This is a specialized coin that can be presented at the time of honors to the next of kin after the presentation of the U.S. Flag. Veterans groups that have been recognized under the MFH Training Program are also eligible to obtain and present the coins. Purchase and presentation of the coins is completely optional. Contact the MFHP for current pricing and order forms. 1-877-944-6667

WHERE CAN MY VSO OBTAIN WHITE CEREMONIAL GLOVES TO USE WHEN CONDUCTING HONORS?

The MFH Program uses white gloves with small grips which makes it easier to hold on to the flag in difficult weather conditions. The supplier we found can be contacted online at Vanguard Industries or toll-free at 1-800-221-1264. Gloves Honor Guard Gripper is their product name.

WHERE CAN MY VSO OBTAIN M1 RIFLE SLINGS?

When a veterans organization receives M1 rifles from TACOM they will not come with slings. Most gun dealers can obtain slings for your weapons. There are two types of slings, cloth or web.

Possible vendors are:

DPMS – Panther Arms 1-800-578-3767

Amherst Arms (941) 475-2020

Fulton Armory 1-800-878-9475.

Veterans groups should keep the slings for the rifles they turn in.

WHERE CAN MY VSO HAVE RIFLES REPAIRED?

Veterans groups are responsible for the maintenance and accountability of the rifles they are issued from TACOM. For repair a veterans organization may contact any local gun dealer. Veterans groups are

responsible for the cost to repair rifles they have been issued. If a gun dealer determines a rifle to be unsafe or beyond repair the veterans organization should then contact TACOM for further guidance. The Army National Guard's Maintenance Facility at Camp Douglas, Wisconsin is another source that veterans organization can contact for repair of rifles. Rifles must be dropped off and repairs will be conducted on a first come basis and when time permits. All labor to repair weapons is free, but parts must be purchased by the veterans organization. For more information or to coordinate repair of rifles by the Army National Guard contact them at (608) 427-7334.

At the link below, you will find an excellent video on servicing and maintaining the M1 Garand rifle presented by Jim Johannes and brought to you by the UW-Madison ROTC.

<http://media.exed.wisc.edu/m1/m1garand-ceremonial-maintenance/m1garand-ceremonial-maintenance.html>

M1 Garand Operation and Maintenance Guide provided by ARDEC

WHAT ARE THE PROPER STEPS INVOLVED IN FOLDING AND PRESENTING THE U.S. FLAG FOR A MILITARY FUNERAL HONORS CEREMONY?

To obtain a detailed step-by-step procedure for folding and presenting the flag for a casket or cremation honors ceremony contact the MFHP office. 1-877-944-6667

WHERE DO I FIND INFORMATION ABOUT THE U.S. FLAG AND FLAG ETIQUETTE?

Information on when and how to fly the U.S. Flag is located in the U.S. Flag Code. Simply conduct an online search for U.S. Flag Code for multiple pages of information.

WHAT IS THE REIMBURSEMENT STIPEND AND HOW DOES MY VETERANS ORGANIZATION APPLY FOR IT?

Veterans groups that perform honors are eligible under the state program to receive a stipend of up to \$50 for expenses incurred while performing honors. See eligibility requirements to receive the stipend under the MFHP Stipend section of the WDVA webpage for details.