

Working With Funeral Directors

Casualty Assistance Office

Many funeral directors just call the local veteran's post; they are used to working with, and never attempt to contact the military, nor attempt to obtain a member of the Veteran's branch of service. This is a disservice to the family and to the deceased veteran. Any assistance provided by the military does not preclude the local veterans community from assisting, providing additional members as needed, bugler, color guards, pall bearers, honor guards, etc.

Many families are grateful to have at least one member of the detail to be in the Military Uniform of the branch of service the deceased served in. In most cases the State Headquarters of the National Guard or Military Dept is a good point of contact, and will work with DOD as needed to obtain a member from Veteran's military branch of service. Support is also often provided by units from nearby military bases, Armories and Reserve Centers. A google search for nearby military base name, AND Casualty Assistance should provide some contacts.

This will get the area Casualty Assistance Office

Army, 800-350-7746
Navy, 877-478-3988
Air Force, 618-256-4586
Marines, 866-826-3628
Coast Guard, 216-902-6269

Expedited Process to Acquire a DD 214 Military Discharge

To acquire a DD 214 Military Discharge in an expedited manner when the family does not have one, the best method is to call the appropriate service branch **Funeral Honors Coordinator**. This individual will expedite the process through their liaisons at the Records Management Center in St. Louis. Here is a list of Funeral Honors Coordinators:

Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Military Community and Family Policy)

Mr. Mark L. Ward or **Dr. Lynda C. Davis**
703-588-0564
Office of MWR Policy
4000 Defense Pentagon
Room 5A726
Washington, DC 20301-4000

Army

Ms. Pat Staton – 703-325-5305

Marine Corps

SSgt Jeremiah Elwell – 866-826-3628

Navy

LCDR Brian Behlke – 901-874-6672

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Air Force

Mortuary Representative – 800-531-5803

Coast Guard

LT Terry Walsh – 202-475-5391

Verifying the Discharge Status of a Veteran

If a family does not have a DD 214 and you only need to verify the discharge status of the veteran, call the **VA Regional office** in your area. If the deceased veteran does not appear in their system, ask VA to contact the Records Management Center in St. Louis to get the verification (Again, this would just be a verification and would not necessarily involve receiving the actual DD 214 form).