

WHAT TO DO BEFORE DEATH

WHAT TO DO WHEN A VETERAN PASSES AWAY

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) realizes the loss of a loved one is a difficult experience. VA has established a streamlined process for families, executors and legal representatives to follow to notify VA about the death of a veteran enrolled in the VA health care system.

WHY SHOULD I NOTIFY THE VA ABOUT THE DEATH OF AN ENROLLED VETERAN?

- A. *Notifying the VA limits the chance for others to falsely use the Veteran's identity.*
- B. *By updating the Veteran's information, you will reduce the likelihood of VA continuing to send you correspondence about VA benefits, services and bills*
- C. *You will be helping VA to maintain up-to- date records, which will enhance the agency's efforts to better distribute services to the Veteran community.*

THE STEPS FOR NOTIFYING VA ARE SIMPLE AND EASY TO FOLLOW

- A. Step one is for the next-of-kin and/or legally authorized representative under State law to retrieve an official copy of the Veteran's death certificate.
- B. Step two is to submit the death certificate to VA by:
 - 1. Hand delivering or mailing a copy to the death certificate to the Office of Decedent affairs at the VA medical facility where the Veteran was receiving healthcare benefits, or
 - 2. Contacting the VA Health Resource Center at 1-877- 222-VETS (8387) for additional instructions Copied from U.S. Department of Veterans affairs form IB 10-968, Nov. 2016. It would also be helpful if you would contact any Veterans organizations to which the veteran belonged.

The following is a list of items that the veteran should have in a file, easy to access, in case of death:

- A. All Insurances
- B. Copy of DD 214
- C. Any disability ratings with the VA
- D. Retired survivor benefits
- E. All deeds
- F. List of monthly bills and amounts
- G. Social Security Account number
- H. List of benefits from other organizations to which the veteran belonged
- I. Will
- J. Power of Attorney
- K. Deed to burial plots or VA grave approval
- L. Funeral desires
- M. Burial or cremation wish