



The Funeral Scheduling Process at Arlington National Cemetery

Caring for the nation's heroes and their families during their time of need is a sacred duty entrusted to the compassionate and dedicated work force at Arlington National Cemetery (ANC).

ANC is one of many beautiful options for families to consider when laying their loved one to rest. The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) National Cemetery Administration maintains 87 national cemeteries in 42 states and Puerto Rico that are open for first interment or inurnments. Visit [here](#) for more information on these cemeteries.

The process of scheduling a veteran or eligible dependent's burial at ANC can be complex, as each request is truly unique. ANC oversees each family's case with the utmost care and professionalism to ensure their loved one is laid to rest with honor and dignity. Additionally, we strive to communicate effectively with families throughout each step of the process to help them understand the complexities of wait times and their options for scheduling a service.

Scheduling military funeral services at ANC is primarily influenced by three factors: the nature of the remains, the availability of military resources, and the preferences of the individual family. The limited availability of military personnel for funeral honors support, coupled with both an ever-increasing demand for interment/inurnment and an operational tempo of up to 30 funeral services per day at ANC, has greatly contributed to an increase in wait times to schedule a service at ANC. This has particularly affected wait times for resource-intensive services, such as military funeral honors with escort.

Services are prioritized for scheduling in the order that they are received. They are then placed into a queue based upon the nature of the remains (casketed or cremated). Currently, active-duty deaths and casketed remains are prioritized in the scheduling process. Burials for active-duty service members killed in action or who died of wounds can be accommodated immediately after receipt and review of all required documents. Additionally, ANC prioritizes casketed remains due to the health and safety factors involved in storing these remains, as well as the cost to families. Services for casketed remains are generally scheduled within two weeks of receipt of documents and eligibility determination. The service takes place when the military funeral honors resources, for which the veteran is eligible, are available.

For cremated remains, the current wait time for scheduling averages approximately 15 months for a service requiring military funeral honors with escort, military funeral honors service without escort or a dependent honors service. These wait times may vary according to service branch, due to the varying numbers of cases in the queue from each service branch.

If an immediate burial is required, families may wish to consider one of the Department of Veterans Affairs' national cemeteries and territorial and tribal veterans' cemeteries across the nation. These are wonderful alternatives, which allow families to be closer for visitation and offer the same iconic look as ANC.

For more information on how to schedule a funeral at Arlington National Cemetery, please see www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/Funerals/Scheduling-a-Funeral.