



BILLING CODE 8320-01

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

Reimbursement for Caskets and Urns for Burial of Unclaimed Remains in a National Cemetery or a VA-Funded State or Tribal Veterans' Cemetery

AGENCY: Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is updating the monetary reimbursement rates for caskets and urns purchased for interment in a VA national cemetery or a VA-funded state or tribal veterans' cemetery of veterans who die with no known next of kin and where there are insufficient resources for furnishing a burial container. The purpose of this notice is to notify interested parties of the rates that will apply to reimbursement claims that occur during calendar year (CY) 2021.

DATES: The applicable date of this notice is January 1, 2021.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Jerry Sowders, National Cemetery Administration, Department of Veterans Affairs, 4850 Lemay Ferry Road, Saint Louis, MO, 63129. The telephone number is 314-461-6216. This is not a toll-free number.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 2306(f) of title 38, United States Code, authorizes VA's National Cemetery Administration to furnish a casket or urn for interment in a VA national cemetery or a VA-funded state or tribal

veterans' cemetery of the unclaimed remains of veterans for whom VA cannot identify a next of kin, and determines that sufficient financial resources for the furnishing of a casket or urn for burial are not available. VA implemented regulations to administer this authority as a reimbursement benefit in 38 CFR 38.628.

Reimbursement for a claim received in any CY will not exceed the average cost of a 20-gauge metal casket or a durable plastic urn during the fiscal year (FY) preceding the CY of the claim. Average costs are determined by market analysis for 20-gauge metal caskets, designed to contain human remains, with a gasketed seal, and external rails or handles. The same analysis is completed for durable plastic urns, designed to contain human remains, which include a secure closure to contain the cremated remains.

Using this method of computation, in FY 2020, the average costs were determined to be \$1,984.00 for caskets and \$145.00 for urns. Accordingly, the maximum reimbursement rates payable for qualifying interments occurring during CY 2021 are \$1,984.00 for caskets and \$145.00 for urns.

Signing Authority

The Secretary of Veterans Affairs, or designee, approved this document and authorized the undersigned to sign and submit the document to the Office of the Federal Register for publication electronically as an official document of the Department of Veterans Affairs. Brooks D. Tucker, Assistant Secretary for Congressional and Legislative Affairs, Performing the Delegable Duties of the

Chief of Staff, Department of Veterans Affairs, approved this document on December 31, 2020, for publication.

Luvenia Potts,

Regulation Development Coordinator,

Office of Regulation Policy & Management,

Office of the Secretary,

Department of Veterans Affairs.

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