



POLICY NUMBER

510.400

TITLE

Cemetery Markers, Memorials and Donations

EFFECTIVE
DATE:

April 20, 2011

AUTHORITY:

General authority of the Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs, hereinafter referred to as WDVA, to manage and direct the Agency, RCW 43.60A.040, .050, and .060.

PURPOSE:

To establish policy and procedures placement of grave markers and decorations, and for donation of memorial items at the Washington State Veterans Cemetery – Medical Lake, hereafter referred to as Cemetery.

APPLICABILITY:

All WDVA employees, cemetery staff, visitors or anyone entering the cemetery grounds.

DEFINITIONS:

None

POLICY:

- I. **Grave Markers.** All grave markers shall be issued by the USDVA. Upright granite markers shall be used to mark graves and garden cremains placement. Flush granite markers shall be used to mark interments in an area reserved for the scattering of cremains in the soil. Granite niche markers shall be used to mark the interment of cremains in the columbarium wall. The Cemetery Director or designee may assist the applicant in completing all forms for ordering a grave marker required by the USDVA.
- II. **Flowers and Grave Decorations.** The Cemetery Director shall establish and post the requirements for natural and artificial flowers and other grave decorations in the cemetery. Cemetery staff may remove and discard grave decorations that fail to comply with the posted requirements or that are faded, wilted or tattered. Items, such as coins or stones or other objects, may not be attached to any burial marker. These items will be removed and damaged markers will be replaced at the expense of the individual responsible for the damage.

III. **Plaques, Statues, and Other Memorials.** The Cemetery Director may accept plaques, statues, and other memorials to commemorate events, units, individuals, groups, and organizations. Persons wishing to donate such memorials shall apply using the Cemetery Plaque, Statue or Memorial Application. The cost of all such memorials shall be the responsibility of the applicant. Memorials approved by the Cemetery Director shall be considered donations to the Cemetery and will become the property of the WDVA.

A. **Memorial plaques:** Plaques will be mounted on Organization Benches or Granite Pedestals and are intended to honor groups of veterans by veteran related organizations. Plaques may be accepted from organizations whose purpose, objectives and teachings, as exemplified by their constitution, by-laws, and activities, are primarily patriotic in nature. Plaques are not accepted from individuals.

1. Acceptance of any memorial plaque is discretionary. Organizations officially recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs as chartered or non-chartered Veterans Service Organizations are considered to meet the patriotic character and purpose standard.
2. Organizations not officially recognized by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs may petition WDVA for consideration of their donation of a memorial plaque by submitting a supplemental application and business plan to the Cemetery Advisory Board for review. The documentation must support the patriotic character and purpose of the organization, demonstrating the primarily patriotic nature of the organization or branch of service thereof and service to veterans. Acceptance of memorials from such organizations is discretionary. The Cemetery Advisory Board will recommend approval or denial with documentation supporting any denial recommendation.
3. Memorial plaques shall be artistically designed consistent with the sacred purpose of the cemetery. The purpose of the plaque is to honor military service by groups or

organizations as distinguished from individuals and civilian service.

4. To ensure uniformity, the memorial plaque shall be 12 inches in height and 24 inches wide in landscape or horizontal format. The plaques will be cast in bronze and affixed to a polished granite stone.
5. The inscription must include a clear indication of the commemoration being paid by the military group or organization. The identity of the donor organization will be clearly shown. Official emblems of donor organizations may be included in the inscription.
6. Material and workmanship - To ensure uniform material and workmanship, the donor will be provided examples of approved items. The donor will purchase the complete item from the cemetery with perpetual care included.

B. Memorial Benches with backs are intended to honor groups of veteran related organizations recognized by the Department of Veteran Affairs.

Non-backed benches are intended to honor a single veteran or organization not recognized by the Department of Veterans Affairs. Non-backed benches may be accepted from individuals, or a formally constituted organization.

1. Memorial benches shall be artistically designed, consistent with the sacred purpose of the cemetery.
2. To ensure uniformity and consistency with cemetery design all memorial benches shall be made of granite. The benches shall be six feet long by 2 feet wide with a seat height of 1 foot 10 inches.
3. The top and front shall be polished. Inscriptions are permitted on the front polished surface of memorial benches only.
4. To ensure uniform material and workmanship the donor will purchase the complete item from the cemetery with perpetual care included.
5. Requests for placement of a memorial bench shall be made by contacting the Cemetery Director. The Cemetery Director will ensure all

the following items are produced and reviewed:

- i. A scale drawing showing the exact inscription and details of the proposed memorial bench.
- ii. For individual non-backed benches the donor must submit documentation of proof of veteran's status.
- iii. A completed donation form.

C. Acceptance/Non-Acceptance

1. Donor organizations or individuals will receive acknowledgment of acceptance or non - acceptance from the Cemetery Advisory Board and/or Cemetery Director.
2. The Cemetery Director, upon receipt of payment, will schedule an appointment with donor, monument maker, and Cemetery representative to ensure accuracy. All parties will sign the finalized contract.

D. Placement.

1. The donor will be informed by the Cemetery Director as to actual placement date, allowing them the opportunity to be present.
2. After formal acceptance, the donor may schedule an acceptance ceremony with the Cemetery.

IV. Donations and Gifts. WDVA may accept gifts and donations to the Veterans Cemetery Stewardship Fund established pursuant to [RCW 43.60A.140](#)

REVIEW:

This policy shall be reviewed every five years and updated as necessary.

REFERENCES:

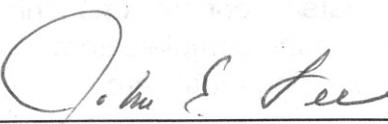
[RCW 72.36.115](#); [RCW 43.60A.140](#)

SUPERSESSON

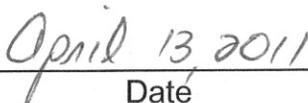
None

ATTACHMENTS:

Plaque, Statue or Memorial Application



John E. Lee, Director



Date