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New Regulations Automate Burial Payments for Veterans' Survivors *Estimated 62,000 Surviving Spouses Benefit from Regulation Changes*

WASHINGTON – New burial regulations effective today will now allow the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) to automatically pay the maximum amount allowable under law to most eligible surviving spouses more quickly and efficiently, without the need for a written application.

Under former regulations, VA paid burial benefits on a reimbursement basis, which required survivors to submit receipts for relatively small one-time payments that VA generally paid at the maximum amount permitted by law.

“VA is committed to improving the speed and ease of delivery of monetary burial benefits to Veterans’ survivors during their time of need,” said Acting VA Secretary Sloan Gibson. “The recent changes allow VA to help these survivors bear the cost of funerals by changing regulations to get them the benefits more quickly.”

This automation enables VA to pay a non-service-connected or service-connected burial allowance to an estimated 62,000 eligible surviving spouses out of a projected 140,000 claimants for burial benefits in 2014. Surviving spouses will be paid upon notice of the Veteran’s death using information already in VA systems. The burial allowance for a non-service-connected death is \$300, and \$2,000 for a death connected to military service.

This revised regulation will further expedite the delivery of these benefits to surviving spouses, reduce the volume of claims requiring manual processing, and potentially make available resources for other activities that benefit Veterans and their survivors.

For more information on monetary burial benefits, visit
<http://www.benefits.va.gov/compensation/claims-special-burial.asp>.

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