

## VETERAN FAMILIES

### STEPS TO TAKE WHEN A RETIRED VETERAN DIES

- Contact funeral home and make burial and funeral arrangements
  - Call to start claim process for applicable benefits (e.g., SBP, VA, etc.)
  - Obtain multiple certified death certificates (6-12 copies)
  - Gather important documents for claims processing (e.g., birth certificate, will etc.)
  - Determine immediate and short-term financial needs and income sources
  - Arrange for help with legal affairs of the deceased, contact your attorney if he or she is not a probate lawyer you may contact our firm.
  - Notify joint account agencies (credit cards, banks, auto registration home/auto insurance, brokers, etc.)
  - Review survivor's own legal documents for possible revision or amendment (e.g., will, POA, medical direction, etc.)
- REPORT the death to DFAS at 1-800-321-1080 or (216) 522-5955 (press 3)** to stop retirement pay to avoid indebtedness. If the retired Veteran was receiving pay from another source due to a disability from the Veterans Administration or civil service retirement from the Office of Personnel Management, contact that agency to return the payment. If you fail to do this, you will have to repay it later.

**Note:** When you notify DFAS of the Veteran's death, DFAS will forward the death listing to the Headquarters of his or her branch of service.

- REPORT Survivor Benefit Plan election.** Designated annuitants will receive notification from DFAS if the deceased retired Veteran elected SBP. If you are uncertain whether an election was made, call DFAS at 1-800-321-1080.
- UPDATE your military identification card.** As the survivor of a deceased Veteran, your ID card must be updated to reflect the change in your status due to the Veteran's death. You may access your nearest ID site at [www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl](http://www.dmdc.osd.mil/rsl) to obtain the three sites closest to you.
- NOTIFY the Social Security Administration.** Call 1-800-SSA-1213 to apply for the \$225 death benefit, *if applicable*.
- CONTACT the VA for burial benefits.** The VA does not provide burial benefits for annuitants; however, the annuitant may be eligible for burial in a military cemetery. You will need to provide a copy of the DD 214.

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**RECEIVING CIVIL SERVICE PLAN?** U.S. OFFICE OF PERSONNEL: 1-888-767-6738, (202) 606-0500

**RECEIVING VA PAY?** DEPARTMENT OF VETERAN'S AFFAIRS: 1-800-827-1000

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#### ADDITIONAL AGENCIES PROVIDING AID & ASSISTANCE TO SURVIVING SPOUSES:

- Arlington National Cemetery: (703) 607-800
- Gold Star Wives of America: 1-888-751-6350, [www.goldstarwives.org](http://www.goldstarwives.org)
- Military Funeral Honors: 1-866-826-3628 or (703) 432-9524
- Navy-Marines Corps Relief Society: (703) 694-4904, [www.nmcrs.org](http://www.nmcrs.org)
- National Military Families Association: 1-800-260-0218, [www.nmfa.org](http://www.nmfa.org)
- Society of Military Widows: 1-800-842-3451, [www.militarywidows.org](http://www.militarywidows.org)
- Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors: 1-800-959-8277, [www.taps.org](http://www.taps.org)

