

The purpose of this notice today is to share information and make you aware of an important change to the law that now limits how a Presidential Memorial Certificate (PMC) request can be accepted, and what information is required when a request for a PMC is received and processed by our office.

Firstly, I'd like to take a moment of your time and introduce myself. My name is James Flanagan and I have had the honor of supervising the National Cemetery Administration (NCA) PMC program since late 2007. Since that time we have made many internal and process changes designed to provide the PMC more efficiently and timely.

The Dignified Burial and Other Veterans' Benefits Improvement Act of 2012, enacted on January 10, 2013 amends Title 38 U.S.C. § 2411 to prohibit VA from providing burial or memorialization benefits to Tier III sex-offenders who were sentenced to a minimum of life imprisonment and who's conviction is final. It also prohibits VA from providing burial or memorialization benefits to individuals who committed a State or Federal Capital Crime.

This law also impacts how we can process a PMC application. Where we used to accept older versions of our application form, **because of changes in the law we can now only accept the June 2013 and August 2014 versions of our VA Form 40-0247** with each request. I've attached a copy of the 2014 form for your convenience and use.

The newly revised form requires the applicant to certify that **"to the best of your knowledge, that the decedent has never committed a Capital Crime or was never convicted of a sexual offense for which he or she was sentenced to a minimum of life imprisonment."** Using and signing the new application form will ensure that your request is processed in a timely manner and also that we are in compliance with existing law. Submitting your request using an older or outdated form will delay the processing of your request until the new form is submitted.

Last but not least, I'd like to take this brief opportunity to share my thanks with each and every one of you for your continued support and partnership in providing these wonderful certificates to the family's and loved ones of our honorably discharged & deceased veterans. I'd also like to encourage all of you to continue to visit our web page at <http://www.cem.va.gov/pmc.asp> where you will always find the latest copies of our request form. Please always remember to sign the form, provide supporting military documents showing Active Duty service and to use our [800-455-7143](tel:800-455-7143) fax service for the best service.

For information on VA burial benefits, visit www.cem.va.gov or call [\(800\) 827-1000](tel:800-827-1000). Please look for our future e-mails on memorial benefits available for eligible Veterans and spouses. Also, please encourage your friends and colleagues to sign-up for notifications, future e-mail updates and information regarding VA memorial benefits through GovDelivery at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/usvanca/subscriber/new>.

Respectfully,

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