



Missing In America Project

www.miap.us

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STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

WORKING WITH FUNERAL HOMES

PURPOSE: To instruct State Coordinators and volunteers on approaching and working with funeral homes.

PROCEDURE:

1. Make an appointment with the Funeral Home Director.
2. Sign the release/liability form (provided in funeral home packet) and give to the funeral director. Explain the mission of MIAP i.e., we are insured, all info is kept strictly confidential; funeral home is in charge, etc.
3. Funeral home decides how and when the inventory is to take place.
4. Inventory cremains. NOTE: Any cremain awaiting death of spouse may be inventoried but not included in burial.
5. If the funeral home wishes to do the inventory themselves, just let them know that you need the date of birth, place of

birth, date of death, social security number if available and copy of death certificate. Ask that they put the inventory on a spreadsheet for easier handling.

6. Once the inventory is complete and verification of veteran's status is returned from NCSEO, notify the Funeral Home Director and provide him/her with a copy of the veteran's verification.
7. Work with the Funeral Home Director to decide on a date of the funeral.
8. Once a date is decided upon, request that the funeral home send certified letters to the last known next of kin (NOK) informing them of the planned funeral. If no NOK is listed, notice in the local newspaper is needed. A 30 day waiting period is observed allowing time for NOK to contact the funeral home. If NOK wishes to claim the veteran, they will be removed from the funeral list and the funeral home will assist the NOK. If the NOK agrees to the funeral, they will be invited to attend and presented a flag and Presidential letter will be sent to them.
9. Most funeral homes will wish to participate in the funeral. Clarification of their involvement is essential. Questions to ask are:
 - A. Does the funeral home wish to transport the veterans to their final resting place in the closest State VA or National Cemetery?
 - B. Does the funeral home wish to provide urns for those veterans without urns?
 - C. Does the Funeral Director wish to speak at the funeral?
 - D. Will the funeral home allow the media to cover the funeral?
 - E. If the funeral home transports the veterans to the cemetery, will they be agreeable to an escort by both veterans motorcycle groups and cars?

F. Important Information from the VA National Cemetery Administration:

<http://www.cem.va.gov/cem/funeraldirector.asp>