NavyFinalExpense

FREE GUIDE

Navy family papers folder guide (PDF)

Gather it now, so your family does not have to search later

A Navy veteran's family needs the same few papers in the same week. This guide shows what to gather, where it tends to hide and how to ask for a copy of anything missing.

The eight papers

Paper	Why the family needs it	Where it often is
DD214 or discharge	National cemetery burial, honors, VA burial allowance, headstone	A desk, a safe, a county recorder's office
Life insurance policy	The claim is paid from it	A fireproof box, the agent's file
Policy claim phone number	Starts the claim	On the policy, on the insurer's site
Marriage certificate	A spouse's eligibility and benefits	With the deeds or the wedding box
VA letters, pre-need	Shows what VA has decided	A folder marked VA, the mail
VGLI or VALife papers	Shows who is named and the amount	Online account, the mail
Retirement orders	Shows entitlement to retired pay	The retirement packet
Written burial wishes	Stops family arguments	The page in this guide

A private policy claim does not depend on the DD214. The funeral plan around it often does, so gather both.

General education, not insurance, legal or tax advice. Figures are examples unless a source is named. Prices and rules vary by state and insurer.

Where to look first

- The veteran's desk, safe or fireproof box, and any folder marked Navy
- The separation or retirement packet from the last command
- The county recorder or clerk's office, where many veterans recorded their DD214
- The state veterans affairs office, if the veteran ever applied for state benefits
- A funeral home that handled an earlier family funeral

> If you plan a national cemetery burial and cannot find the DD214, VA says the National Cemetery Scheduling Office will try to locate the records, although checks can take several days.

How to ask for a missing copy

1. Decide who is asking. VA says next of kin means a surviving spouse who has not remarried, a parent, a child or a sibling.
2. Have a death certificate or other public record of the death, or a letter from a funeral home, if the veteran has died.
3. Apply online through the National Archives' eVetRecs, by mail or fax with Standard Form 180, or in person at the National Personnel Records Center.
4. Write the date you asked on the sheet below and follow up. VA does not give a processing time, so start early.

Wishes sheet

Full name

Branch and years of service

Where I want to rest

Backup choice

Funeral home I prefer

Policy company and number

Who is my beneficiary

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Who knows where the folder is?

Person 1 and phone

Person 2 and phone

Place the folder is kept

> Review the folder every year on the same date, for example your retirement anniversary.

Sources

- VA: Get your military service records
  www.va.gov/records/get-military-service-records/
- VA: Plan a burial
  www.va.gov/burials-memorials/plan-a-burial/
- FTC: The Funeral Rule
  consumer.ftc.gov/articles/ftc-funeral-rule

When the folder is ready, see what a small policy costs at navyfinalexpense.com/quote

navyfinalexpense.com/quote or call (888) 635-3511

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