Training Coordinator's Module Guide for
VSR TPSS Original Claim for Burial Benefits Module

June 27, 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section 1 - Introduction

Introduction

Welcome to the VSR Training and Performance Support System. Please read this Module Guide in its entirety. Feel free to highlight portions or write down notes as you read through this document. Within these pages, you will find the information you need to successfully set up and implement this course.

Section 1 of this guide is an introduction designed to present you with a broad overview of the Original Claim for Burial Benefits module.

Section 2 of this guide contains the Module Master Planning Chart which is designed to provide you with the information you need to effectively plan the scheduling for the module. Notes and tips are also provided to let you know key instructional events and activities.

Section 3 of this guide contains summaries for each of the lessons in the Original Claims for Burial Benefits Module. You may use this to familiarize yourself with the module contents and also as a review for your students before they complete the posttests.

Who Will Take The Modules?

Students who this module should have either failed or opted not to take the module pretest.

 Note: The pretests are optional. Students who want to take a module may choose to take the pretest, or may choose to go directly to the module.

All students selected to take these modules should take each lesson and topic in sequence to ensure that he/she has (or gains) a comprehensive understanding of VSR tasks from start to finish.

TPSS Materials

Everything that your students need to complete the Burials Module is available to them within the module online. Once provide the students with a proper briefing, your role, other than monitoring their progress throughout and conducting test briefings, will be to score the test answer sheets that they print from the system and give them feedback.

You can access the test scoring instructions and answer keys from the VBA Learning Catalog, where you found this Module Guide. Search for TMS Item #1379372.

TPSS Equipment

Dual Monitors

The computers for the students should be set up with dual monitors so that they can open the online cases and look at other reference material during the training and testing.

In the Module Introduction, the students are provided with the following information about opening instructional cases with or without dual monitors:

"As you work your way through the lessons, you will use online cases that are based on actual Veterans' cases which have been altered for training purposes and to protect the privacy of the individuals involved with the claim.

You will access these online cases by clicking the Cases button in the upper part of the screen.
- If you have dual monitors, when you select a case using the button, it will open in a new window. You may move it to the other monitor and expand it to fit the entire screen.
- If you do not have dual monitors, when you select a case using the button, it will open in a new window, and you must toggle between the case and the courseware.

Note: The cases have bookmarks for each form, letter, etc., within the case. You may select a bookmark to advance to that document within the case. Or you may scroll up and down throughout the case by using the scrollbar on the right-hand side of the window.

Throughout this module, you will be prompted when to open a given case and when to close it."

You may want to reinforce this information during your briefing and make sure when they come to their first online case, they understand what to do with it.

Module Map
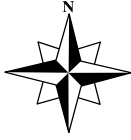
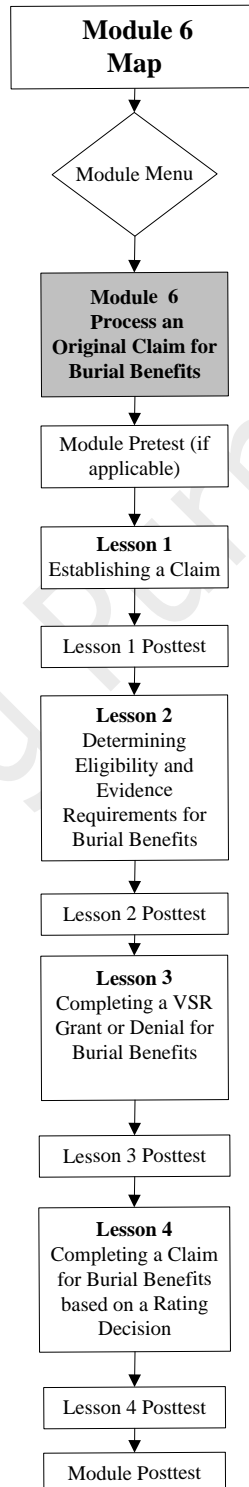To get an overview of how the Original Claim for Burial Benefits Module is laid out, take a look at the Module Map. As you can see, this module is comprised of lessons. The students must take the lessons in the order that they are presented. A student may not proceed to the next lesson until he/she has successfully completed the previous lesson and taken the lesson posttest.

```
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │    Module 6     │
            │      Map        │
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
                 ◇ Module Menu ◇
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │    Module 6     │
            │   Process an    │
            │ Original Claim for│
            │  Burial Benefits │
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │ Module Pretest (if│
            │    applicable)  │
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │    Lesson 1     │
            │ Establishing a Claim│
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │ Lesson 1 Posttest│
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │    Lesson 2     │
            │   Determining   │
            │  Eligibility and │
            │     Evidence    │
            │ Requirements for │
            │  Burial Benefits │
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │ Lesson 2 Posttest│
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │    Lesson 3     │
            │  Completing a VSR │
            │  Grant or Denial for│
            │  Burial Benefits │
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │ Lesson 3 Posttest│
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │    Lesson 4     │
            │ Completing a Claim│
            │ for Burial Benefits│
            │ based on a Rating │
            │    Decision     │
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │ Lesson 4 Posttest│
            └─────────────────┘
                     │
                     ▼
            ┌─────────────────┐
            │ Module Posttest │
            └─────────────────┘
```

Learning Objectives

Each module is divided into lessons which have objectives. A lesson objective builds upon the previous lesson's objective. Collectively, the lesson objectives represent the requirements of the module objective.

The module objective details the **action** to be taken (the task), the **conditions** under which the task is to be performed, the **standards** to be met in order to successfully perform the task, and the **time** it should take to complete the task on the job.

Whereas the lesson objectives detail the **action** of the task the students will learn, the **conditions** under which they will learn this task, the **standards** to be met in order to successfully perform the task, and the **time** it should take to complete the task addressed in the lesson.

Students' performance will be assessed based on their ability to meet these standards. It is critical that students understand what is expected of them throughout training. For this reason, they will be asked to read the module objective at the beginning of the module. At the beginning of all lessons, students will also be asked to read the corresponding lesson objectives.

Students will be directed to contact you if they have any questions about what they will be learning and doing in the lesson. Therefore, you should be thoroughly familiar with the objectives, including each of their components and what they mean for the students. Or, identify the person to whom you may refer any specific technical or task-related questions. Ensure this person is available to provide any one-on-one training and/or feedback that may be necessary.

As Students Take the Course

Make sure to carefully observe students as they go through the course to identify any participants who are struggling in a particular area. Early intervention is the key to student success in the course and in the posttests.

Also encourage students to read and follow the directions for the cooperative exercise very carefully.

Test Design

Tests are designed to evaluate the students in an authentic or "real life" setting using cases or scenarios. The module pretests and posttests consist of various cases or NOD folders that the student must review in order to decide the next appropriate action.

The scenarios and evidence used in the tests are derived from actual claims submitted to the VBA. For testing purposes, the cases have been sanitized and modified. These modifications include replacing actual names and other identifying information with fictitious names and information to protect privacy, and adding or removing elements and issues of the case to ensure appropriate criteria are tested. The cases and answer keys have been reviewed and adjusted by subject matter experts (SMEs) in the VBA and approved by C&P in an effort to remove unintentional errors or issues not relevant to the criteria being tested.

Module Pretest

Taking the module pretest is optional. A student may choose to take the test to determine if he or she can opt out of taking the module, or they may choose to go directly to the lessons.

The passing criteria for the module pretest are provided in the test directions/answer keys. You can access the test scoring instructions and answer keys from the VBA Learning Catalog. Search for TMS Item #1379372.

While you do need to administer the module pretest, you do not need to enter the test score. After you score the module pretest answer sheets and provide feedback to the students, you will email the module pretest scores to the TPSS Help Desk (**CDSHelpDesk@vba.va.gov**). You can email the module pretest scores for multiple students at the same time. The email must include the following information for each student: student's TMS student identifier/TMS user name, module name, test score and P or F, date, amount of time.

Lesson Posttests

There are two available variants of each lesson posttest. You must tell the students which variant you want them to take. If a student does not pass a lesson posttest, then the student must take that lesson posttest's variant.

The lesson posttests are designed to test the material specifically covered in each lesson. For the most part, instructions for the lesson posttests contain an Assumptions and Conditions section which informs the student of characteristics inherent to the cases used in the testing environment.

The passing criteria vary for each lesson posttest. Refer to the test directions and answer keys for more information.

Module Posttests

Once students complete all lessons, review key points in the module with the students to ensure they are ready to take the module posttest. There are three available variants of the module posttest. You must tell the students which variant you want them to take. If a student does not pass a modules posttest, then you will provide remediation and administer a variant of the test.

The module posttest is designed to test the task of processing an original claim for burial benefits from start to finish. The instructions for the module posttests contain an Assumptions and Conditions section which informs the student of characteristics inherent to the cases used in the testing environment.

The passing criteria are provided in the test directions and answer keys. You can access the test scoring instructions and answer keys from the VBA Learning Catalog. Search for TMS Item #1379372.

While you do need to administer the module test, you do not need to enter the test score. After you score the module test answer sheets and provide feedback to the students, you will email the module test scores to the TPSS Help Desk (**CDSHelpDesk@vba.va.gov**). You can email the module test scores for multiple students at the same time. The email must include the following information for each student: student's TMS student identifier/TMS user name, module name, test score and P or F, date, amount of time.
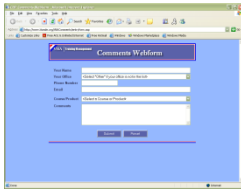
Publications
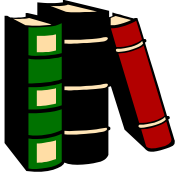
Ensure that students have access to VSR reference materials, such as:

⇨ M21-1, Parts I and V
⇨ M21-1MR
⇨ 38 Code of Federal Regulations (38 CFR)
⇨ VBA Circulars
⇨ Regional Office Procedures

Reporting Feedback

Send in any feedback, reactions, comments (recommendations, additions, deletions) and any pertinent data which may be of use in improving this courseware by accessing the comments web form at:

http://cptraining.vba.va.gov

Select the **Comments Web Form** link located at the bottom of the page.

Section 2 - Module Master Planning Chart

Process an Original Claim for Burial Benefits

The Module Master Planning Chart is designed to provide you with the information you need to effectively plan the scheduling for the module. Notes and tips are also provided to let you know key instructional events and activities.

Note: The estimated range of time required to complete the online content, including cooperative exercises and a single version of the Lesson Posttests, is 13 hours to 22 hours. The Module Posttest times ranged from 2 hours to 3 hours. The estimated total student course time ranges from 11 hours to 25 hours.

This Module Master Planning Chart is based on the average time that students required during the validation of this module. Be aware that the actual times for students may be more or less than the time listed here.

- Estimated total Student time for online course and a single version of the Module Posttest: 20 hours, 30 minutes

- Estimated total Student time for Module (aka, total "seat" time): **23 hours**
  (**Note:** All estimated total "seat" times for modules include module orientation, the online courseware and cooperative exercises, if applicable, along with, when given, a single variant of the Lesson Posttest(s), feedback, and a single version of the Module Posttest and feedback.)

- Estimated total Training Coordinator Time for administrative duties: **6 hours**
  (**Note:** This total includes the additional time required by the TC to perform briefings, feedback, and any administrative duties such as grading tests and emailing the TPSS Help Desk, i.e., those shaded line items that are specifically TC times only. Total time accounts for administration of a single variant of the Lesson Posttest(s), when given, and a single version of the Module Posttest. Module Pretest preparation and grading is not included in the total. Although the TC is listed as personnel for all of the online lessons and all tests, the TC does not have to be present for the entire time the students are working in a lesson or taking a test. The TC may be working with other students or even performing other duties while students are working in TPSS. The TC needs to be available to answer questions as needed. That time will vary depending on how familiar with TPSS the students are.)

Duration		Activity	Notes / Tips
hrs	**min**		
	10	**Module Pretest Preparation**	Includes giving student access to the Burial Benefits Module in TMS.
2	**00**	**Module Pretest (optional)**	Administered sometime prior to Day 1 of the training.
2	**00**	**Module Pretest Grading**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.
	30	**Administrative Functions**	Includes emailing the TPSS Help Desk with Module Pretest results, if applicable, assigning student privileges, notifying students of course schedule, and preparing a briefing.
	30	**Orientation/Briefing**	Includes setting up students' workstation and required materials. Ensure students can log into the courseware, navigate through the course using the buttons and prompts, and understand what on-line "Tools" are available to help.
	5	**Module Introduction**	Students read the module objective. Students are introduced to lessons contained in the module.
1	**00**	**Lesson 1**	• **Introduction** - Students will read lesson objective(s). • **Topic 1 -** Initiating a Claim for Burial Benefits
	15	**Lesson 1 Posttest Preparation and Briefing**	Includes answering any questions and ensuring that students are ready to take the test. Includes assigning a test variant to each student.
1	**00**	**Lesson 1 Posttest**	Students access the test online and turn in any printed documents to TC for scoring.
	30	**Lesson 1 Posttest Grading**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.

Duration		Activity	Notes / Tips
hrs	min		
	15	**Lesson 1 Posttest Feedback**	**Note:** Feedback times will vary depending on the number of items a student missed. If a student fails the Lesson Posttest, you must provide remediation to the student until the student feels confident enough to take a variant of the Lesson Posttest. At that time, you will administer the variant to the student in the same way you administered the Lesson Posttest and provide feedback based on the student's results of the variant.
	15	**Lesson 1 Variant Posttest Preparation (if applicable)** (Students will take the variant that they did not originally take)	Includes answering any questions and ensuring that students are ready to take the test. Includes assigning a test variant to each student.
1	00	**Lesson 1 Variant Posttest (if applicable)**	Students access the test online and turn in any printed documents to TC for scoring.
	30	**Lesson 1 Variant Posttest Grading (if applicable)**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.
	15	**Lesson 1 Variant Posttest Feedback**	**Note:** Feedback times will vary depending on the number of items a student missed. If the student, who failed the first version of the Lesson Posttest, also fails the variant, you may allow the student to progress but make arrangements to provide additional assistance to that student before he or she takes the Module Posttest.
7	30	**Lesson 2**	• **Introduction** - Students will read lesson objective(s). • **Topic 1** - Eligibility and Evidence Requirements • **Topic 2** – Developing for Evidence • **Topic 3** – Evaluating the Evidence of Record **Cooperative Exercise** –Students will review the cases for Simon B. O'Flannery, Keith B. Rennex, and Paul B. Godwin to determine how to proceed with a claim

Duration		Activity	Notes / Tips
hrs	min		
			for burial benefits by evaluating the evidence of record. Then, they will determine the amounts payable for SC burial benefits.
	15	**Lesson 2 Posttest Preparation and Briefing**	Includes time for reviewing the results of the cooperative exercises, answering any questions and ensuring that students are ready to take the test. Includes assigning a test variant to each student.
3	00	**Lesson 2 Posttest**	Students access the test online and turn in any printed documents to TC for scoring.
	30	**Lesson 2 Posttest Grading**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.
	15	**Lesson 2 Posttest Feedback**	**Note:** Feedback times will vary depending on the number of items a student missed. If a student fails the Lesson Posttest, you must provide remediation to the student until the student feels confident enough to take a variant of the Lesson Posttest. At that time, you will administer the variant to the student in the same way you administered the Lesson Posttest and provide feedback based on the student's results of the variant.
	15	**Lesson 2 Variant Posttest Preparation (if applicable)** (Students will take the variant that they did not originally take)	Includes answering any questions and ensuring that students are ready to take the test. Includes assigning a test variant to each student.
3	00	**Lesson 2 Variant Posttest (if applicable)**	Students access the test online and turn in any printed documents to TC for scoring.
	30	**Lesson 2 Variant Posttest Grading (if applicable)**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.
	15	**Lesson 2 Variant Posttest**	**Note:** Feedback times will vary depending on the number of items a student missed.

Duration		Activity	Notes / Tips
hrs	min		
		Feedback	If the student, who failed the first version of the Lesson Posttest, also fails the variant, you may allow the student to progress but make arrangements to provide additional assistance to that student before he or she takes the Module Posttest.
1	30	**Lesson 3**	• **Introduction** – Students will read lesson objective(s). • **Topic 1** – VSR Grant or Denial of a Claim **Cooperative Exercise** - Students will determine whether to grant or deny the claims for burial benefits by reviewing the NOD-folders for Bernard B. Terrelle, Maxwell B. Nikia, and John B. Foster. Then, they will determine the appropriate notification letter(s) for each case.
	15	**Lesson 3 Posttest Preparation and Briefing**	Includes time for reviewing the results of the cooperative exercises, answering any questions and ensuring that students are ready to take the test. Includes assigning a test variant to each student.
1	00	**Lesson 3 Posttest**	Students access the test online and turn in any printed documents to TC for scoring.
	30	**Lesson 3 Posttest Grading**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.
	15	**Lesson 3 Posttest Feedback**	**Note:** Feedback times will vary depending on the number of items a student missed. If a student fails the Lesson Posttest, you must provide remediation to the student until the student feels confident enough to take a variant of the Lesson Posttest. At that time, you will administer the variant to the student in the same way you administered the Lesson Posttest and provide feedback based on the student's results of the variant.
	15	**Lesson 3 Variant Posttest Preparation (if applicable)**	Includes answering any questions and ensuring that students are ready to take the test. Includes assigning a test variant to each student.

Duration		Activity	Notes / Tips
hrs	**min**		
		(Students will take the variant that they did not originally take)	
1	**00**	**Lesson 3 Variant Posttest (if applicable)**	Students access the test online and turn in any printed documents to TC for scoring.
	30	**Lesson 3 Variant Posttest Grading (if applicable)**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.
	15	**Lesson 3 Variant Posttest Feedback**	**Note:** Feedback times will vary depending on the number of items a student missed. If the student, who failed the first version of the Lesson Posttest, also fails the variant, you may allow the student to progress but make arrangements to provide additional assistance to that student before he or she takes the Module Posttest.
1	**45**	**Module Lesson 4**	• **Introduction** – Students will read lesson objective(s). • **Topic 1** – Interpreting a Rating Personnel Decision to Grant or Deny a Claim • **Topic 2** - Implementing a Rating Personnel Decision to Grant or Deny a Claim **Cooperative Exercise** - Students will review the cases for Saul B. Kahana and Willie B. Shoppe to determine how to proceed with processing a claim for SC burial benefits based on a Rating Personnel's decision.
	15	**Lesson 4 Posttest Preparation and Briefing**	Includes time for reviewing the results of the cooperative exercises, answering any questions and ensuring that students are ready to take the test. Includes assigning a test variant to each student.
1	**00**	**Lesson 4 Posttest**	Students access the test online and turn in any printed documents to TC for scoring.
	30	**Lesson 4 Posttest Grading**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.

Duration		Activity	Notes / Tips
hrs	min		
	15	**Lesson 4 Posttest Feedback**	**Note:** Feedback times will vary depending on the number of items a student missed. If a student fails the Lesson Posttest, you must provide remediation to the student until the student feels confident enough to take a variant of the Lesson Posttest. At that time, you will administer the variant to the student in the same way you administered the Lesson Posttest and provide feedback based on the student's results of the variant.
	15	**Lesson 4 Variant Posttest Preparation (if applicable)**	Includes answering any questions and ensuring that students are ready to take the test. Includes assigning a test variant to each student.
1	00	**Lesson 4 Variant Posttest (if applicable)**	Students access the test online and turn in any printed documents to TC for scoring.
	30	**Lesson 4 Variant Posttest Grading (if applicable)**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.
	15	**Lesson 4 Variant Posttest Feedback**	**Note:** Feedback times will vary depending on the number of items a student missed. If the student, who failed the first version of the Lesson Posttest, also fails the variant, you may allow the student to progress but make arrangements to provide additional assistance to that student before he or she takes the Module Posttest.
	10	**Module Posttest Preparation and Briefing**	Includes time for reviewing the results of the cooperative exercises, reviewing the module by reading the Lesson Summaries, and reviewing the module objective.
2	30	**Module Posttest**	Students access the test online and turn in any printed documents to TC for scoring.
	30	**Module Posttest Grading**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.

Duration			
hrs	min	Activity	Notes / Tips
	45	**Module Posttest Feedback**	**Note:** Feedback times will vary depending on the number of items a student missed. If a student fails the Module Posttest, you must provide remediation until the student feels confident enough to take a variant of the Module Posttest. At that time, you will administer the variant in the same way you administered the Module Posttest and provide feedback based on the student's results of the variant.
	10	**Module Posttest Variant Preparation and Briefing**	Includes time for reviewing the results of the cooperative exercises, reviewing the module by reading the Lesson Summaries, and reviewing the module objective.
2	30	**Module Posttest Variant**	Students access the test online and turn in any printed documents to TC for scoring.
	30	**Module Posttest Variant Grading**	Scoring instructions and answer keys are in the VBA Learning Catalog.
	45	**Module Posttest Variant Feedback**	**Note:** Feedback times will vary depending on the number of items a student missed. If a student fails the Module Posttest, you must provide remediation until the student feels confident enough to take a variant of the Module Posttest. At that time, you will administer the variant in the same way you administered the Module Posttest and provide feedback based on the student's results of the variant.

Section 3 - Lesson Summaries

Training Coordinator's Notes

This section provides a summary of each lesson in the Original Claim for Burial Benefits module. Review the entire module by reading the following summary (or your own personalized version) before distributing the module posttest.

After you have presented the module review, if a student does not feel ready to continue to the module posttest, allow him or her some time to review specific topics or issues within the module before administering the module posttest.

The summaries begin on the next page.

<u>Lesson 1 –Establishing a Claim</u>

Burial benefits provide relief for expenses involved in laying a Veteran's remains to rest.

When a claim for burial benefits is received, assess if the claim is ready to be processed. Review a claim for burial benefits and check the VA Form 21-530, Application for Burial Benefits, for the claimant's signature, Veteran's name, Veteran's Social Security Number (SSN), and Veteran's VA File Number.

Once a signed application is received, continue processing the claim. To do so, check the status of the claim through the appropriate system at the RO. From the system you should be able to determine if a claim for burial benefits was previously submitted, whether or not a C-File or Notice of Death (NOD) folder exists, and the location of the C-File or NOD folder.

A NOD folder may be sufficient to process a claim for burial benefits. However, if a C-File exists, you may need it to complete the claim process.

Review the Veteran's C-File and the electronic database at your RO to determine if a First Notice of Death (FNOD) has been completed, if the Veteran was in receipt of benefits at the time of death, and if the Veteran had a claim pending at the time of death.

Once it has been determined that a claim is ready to be processed, write a letter informing the claimant that his or her claim has been received and processing has begun. When acknowledging receipt of the claim, you will usually combine this information with a development letter.

<u>Lesson 2 –Determining Eligibility and Evidence Requirements for Burial Benefits</u>

VA burial benefits consist of a burial allowance, plot allowance, and transportation allowance. Burial benefits are a partial payment of an eligible Veteran's burial and funeral costs. The VA will pay different amounts for Veterans whose deaths were service-related or nonservice-related.

When the cause of death is not service-connected, the payment is generally described as two separate entitlements: (1) a burial and funeral expense allowance, and (2) a plot interment allowance. In addition, costs for transporting the deceased's remains may be paid.

One of the following general eligibility requirements must be met in order to be eligible for the NSC burial and funeral expense allowance:
- In receipt of Compensation or Pension
- In receipt of retired pay in lieu of Compensation or Pension
- Had, at the time of death, an original or reopened claim pending
- Death while Properly Hospitalized by VA
- Resident in a State-Approved Nursing Home
- Death while Traveling

Eligibility to the plot-interment allowance may be established only if burial is not in a national cemetery or other cemetery under the jurisdiction of the United States, and the Veteran's employer has not paid or assumed the plot or interment expenses.
A claimant may be entitled to the plot-interment allowance if the deceased Veteran meets any of the eligibility criteria for the NSC burial and funeral expense allowance.

However, if the deceased Veteran does not meet the eligibility criteria for the burial and funeral expense allowance, he or she can still be eligible for plot interment if he or she was discharged for a Disability in the Line of Duty or was buried in a state cemetery. Once it has been determined that the claimant has met the eligibility requirements for the NSC burial allowance, check the date of burial or cremation to see if the claim has been filed within the two-year time limit. If the claim was filed within the two-year time limit and all other requirements have been met, grant the benefit.

Payment for the SC burial allowance is awarded to a claimant when the Veteran died of a service-connected disability. Whether or not a death was service-connected is determined by Rating Personnel. It is the responsibility of the VSR to determine if a previous service-connected death rating already exists in the C-File or whether the claim should be submitted for a service-connected death determination to the Rating Personnel. You will submit a claim for service-connected burial benefits to the Rating Specialist if the claim meets any of the following criteria:

- The Veteran died within 5 years after discharge.
- There is a reasonable probability the Veteran's death was service connected.
- The claimant has indicated the desire for an SC death evaluation.

Transportation costs are payable when SC death is granted, however, the transportation amount allowable is included in the standard SC allowance.

Entitlement to burial benefits is subject to whether the claim meets the eligibility criteria for a given benefit. To establish entitlement for burial benefits, you may need to gather evidence to determine:

- Qualifying Service
- Proof of Death
- Cost of Burial Expenses and Proper Claimant

<u>Lesson 3 -Completing a VSR Grant or Denial for Burial Benefits</u>

A VSR can grant or deny a claim for NSC burial benefits. A VSR can deny a claim for NSC burial benefits for the following reasons:
- Eligibility Requirements are not met
- Time Limit not met
- Requested Evidence not received
- Improper Claimant

Once it has been decided that a VSR grant or denial is the appropriate course of action, the appropriate system at your RO should be used to enter information for the grant or denial.

The following information may need to be entered into the computer system when denying a claim for NSC burial benefits:
- Name and address of the claimant
- Date of the burial
- Disallowance Reason
- Plot-Interment Disallowance Reason

The following information may need to be entered into the computer system when granting a claim for NSC burial benefits:
- Name and address of the claimant
- Date of the burial
- Death was not service-connected
- Entitlement to the plot-interment allowance
- Total amount of the transportation expenses deemed allowable

The VSR should notify the claimant and the person who authorized services of the decision to grant the award.

Lesson 4 -Completing a Claim for Burial Benefits Based on a Rating Decision

Once the Rating Board has made a final determination as to whether a Veteran's death was related to service, the C-File will be returned to the VSR to complete processing. The VSR will be responsible for reviewing the final determination to ensure it is ready for processing.

To ensure a final rating decision is ready to be processed the VSR should review for the following information:
- The date of claim on the rating should match the date of claim in the C-File and the pending issue file in the electronic database.
- Appropriate signatures should be on the rating decision
- The Veteran's name, SSN, and VA File Number should be on the rating decision

A final rating decision document should contain the following information:
- The issue will reflect the claims requiring consideration by Rating Personnel.
- The evidence will list all the evidence used to make the final determination.
- The decision will state the final determination.
- The rationale will reflect the explanation for the final decision made.

Once the VSR has reviewed the Rating Decision for SC death, he or she will implement the decision. The VSR will use the appropriate system at the RO to process the Rating Decision. Once the final determination regarding the SC burial benefits has been entered, the claimant should be notified of the decision through a notification letter.