

§2900. Cremated remains of a veteran

1. Definitions. As used in this section, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.

A. "National cemetery" means a cemetery under the control of the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, National Cemetery Administration. [PL 2011, c. 318, §1 (NEW).]

B. "Veteran" means a person who served in and was honorably discharged from active duty:

(1) In the Armed Forces of the United States;

(2) In the Army or Air Force National Guard in a full-time status; or

(3) As a reservist in the Armed Forces of the United States. [PL 2011, c. 318, §1 (NEW).]

C. "Veterans' service organization" means an association, corporation or other entity that qualifies under Section 501(c)(3) or Section 501(c)(19) of the United States Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, as a tax-exempt organization that has been organized for the benefit of veterans and recognized or chartered by the United States Congress or a nonprofit corporation, association or entity that specifically assists in facilitating the identification and interment of unclaimed remains of veterans. [PL 2011, c. 318, §1 (NEW).]

D. "Cremate" means subject to the process of cremation or natural organic reduction as defined in section 2841-A, subsection 1. [PL 2023, c. 676, §18 (NEW).]
[PL 2023, c. 676, §18 (AMD).]

2. Cremated remains of veterans. A funeral director or other authorized person who has held in the funeral director's or other authorized person's possession the cremated remains of a veteran for more than one year from the date of cremation may determine pursuant to the provisions of this section if the cremated remains are those of a veteran and, if the funeral director or other authorized person determines that the cremated remains are those of a veteran, the funeral director or other authorized person may dispose of the remains pursuant to this section.
[PL 2011, c. 318, §1 (NEW).]

3. Sharing information. Notwithstanding any other provision of law, a funeral director, the Adjutant General or other authorized person under subsection 2 may share information concerning cremated remains in the funeral director's or other authorized person's possession with the United States Department of Veterans Affairs, the Adjutant General, a veterans' service organization or a national cemetery to determine whether the cremated remains are those of a veteran.
[PL 2015, c. 208, §2 (AMD).]

4. Disposition of veterans' remains. If a funeral director or other authorized person determines that cremated remains in the funeral director's or other authorized person's possession are those of a veteran pursuant to this section and the funeral director or other authorized person has not received instructions as to the final disposition of the cremated remains from the person lawfully in control of the final disposition of the cremated remains, the funeral director or other authorized person may dispose of the cremated remains or relinquish possession of the cremated remains to a veterans' service organization pursuant to section 2843 and this subsection. The cremated remains of a veteran disposed of or relinquished pursuant to this subsection must be finally disposed of in a national cemetery or other government-owned or government-operated veterans' cemetery or in a cemetery or with a cemetery corporation under Title 13, chapter 83 where veterans' graves are memorialized by a veterans' marker or that has a veterans' section.
[PL 2011, c. 318, §1 (NEW).]

5. Release from liability. A funeral director, other authorized person or veterans' service organization is not liable and is released from any legal obligation other than a legal obligation imposed

under this section regarding the release or sharing of information or the disposing of or relinquishing of the remains of a veteran, except in the case of gross negligence or willful misconduct.

[PL 2011, c. 318, §1 (NEW).]

6. Reimbursement. The estate of a veteran whose remains are the subject of disposition under this section is responsible for reimbursing a funeral director, other authorized person or veterans' service organization for all reasonable expenses incurred in activities conducted under this section.

[PL 2011, c. 318, §1 (NEW).]

7. Record. A funeral director or other authorized person shall maintain a record identifying a veterans' service organization that receives a veteran's remains from the funeral director or other authorized person under this section and of the site designated for final disposition of the veteran's remains relinquished or disposed of by the funeral director or other authorized person under this section.

[PL 2011, c. 318, §1 (NEW).]

8. Duty of funeral director or other authorized person. This section does not require a funeral director or other authorized person to determine the veteran status of cremated remains in the funeral director's or other authorized person's possession or to relinquish or dispose of a veteran's remains in the funeral director's or other authorized person's possession pursuant to this section if the funeral director or other authorized person has a reasonable belief or is instructed by the person in lawful control of the disposition of the veteran's remains that the veteran did not desire a funeral, burial-related services or ceremonies recognizing the veteran as a veteran.

[PL 2011, c. 318, §1 (NEW).]

SECTION HISTORY

PL 2011, c. 318, §1 (NEW). PL 2015, c. 208, §2 (AMD). PL 2023, c. 676, §18 (AMD).

The State of Maine claims a copyright in its codified statutes. If you intend to republish this material, we require that you include the following disclaimer in your publication:

All copyrights and other rights to statutory text are reserved by the State of Maine. The text included in this publication reflects changes made through the Second Regular Session of the 131st Legislature and is current through October 15, 2024. The text is subject to change without notice. It is a version that has not been officially certified by the Secretary of State. Refer to the Maine Revised Statutes Annotated and supplements for certified text.

The Office of the Revisor of Statutes also requests that you send us one copy of any statutory publication you may produce. Our goal is not to restrict publishing activity, but to keep track of who is publishing what, to identify any needless duplication and to preserve the State's copyright rights.

PLEASE NOTE: The Revisor's Office cannot perform research for or provide legal advice or interpretation of Maine law to the public. If you need legal assistance, please contact a qualified attorney.