

FARM AND HOME, CEMETERIES, EMPLOYMENT

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FARM and HOME

The purpose of this committee is to make veterans aware of the various ways to obtain the AMERICAN DREAM of home ownership. A "home of your own" may be financed through several means, many of which have special terms for qualified veterans.

In addition to the rose-colored cottage with the white picket fence, veterans may qualify for special terms on Mobile Home Loans and Farm Loans as well. Two major sources of these loans are the Department of Veterans Affairs (federally Guaranteed VA or "GI" loans) and the California Department of Veterans Affairs (CalVet).

It is important to know that some loans are intended for purchases only, while others may be used to refinance or de-finance existing properties. A well-informed veteran will be able to make the right decision for his or her family's situation.

The VFW Farm and Home Committee will attempt to keep the CALIFORNIA VETERAN informed on programs that are available to qualified veterans. Each District should appoint a key person to the position of Farm and Home Chairman. When questions arise, try to contact the committee member nearest you for details on programs of interest. All contacts should be reported to the committee for review, so that we may be of more assistance to our VFW Comrades.

For updates and other information on CAL-VET loans, call 1-800-952-5626.
Internet address:

<https://calvethomeloans.cdva.ca.gov/welcome.html>

VETERANS CEMETERIES

The National Cemetery Administration is responsible for maintaining more than 2.2 million gravesites at 115 national cemeteries in 39 states (and Puerto Rico), as well as 33 soldiers' lots and monument sites. All honorably discharged veterans are eligible for burial in a national cemetery.

National Cemeteries (Note: Casketed remains may be buried in existing spouse's grave):

Arvin:	Bakersfield National Cemetery (Burials begin summer 2009)
Dixon:	Sacramento Valley National Cemetery (Accepting all burials)
Los Angeles:	Los Angeles National Cemetery (Closed to new burials)
Riverside:	Riverside National Cemetery (Accepting all burials)
San Bruno:	Golden Gate National Cemetery (Closed to new burials)
San Diego:	Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery (Cremated remains only)
San Francisco:	San Francisco National Cemetery (Closed to new burials)
Santa Nella:	San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery (Accepting all burials)

Burial benefits in a VA National Cemetery include the gravesite, opening and closing of the grave and perpetual care. Many national cemeteries have columbaria or special gravesites for cremated remains. Headstones, markers and their placement are provided at government expense. In addition, a memorial flag is provided to the next of kin.

Veterans, service members and dependents are eligible for burial in a national cemetery. Spouses and minor children of eligible veterans may also be buried in a national cemetery. Gravesites in national cemeteries cannot be reserved. However, spouses may be buried in the same grave. Funeral directors or others making arrangements must apply at the time of death.

The National Cemetery System normally does not conduct burials on weekends. However, a weekend caller will be directed to one of three (3) regional cemetery offices that remain open during weekends, in order to schedule burials at the cemetery of the caller's choice, the following week.

VA also provides headstones and markers for the unmarked graves of veterans anywhere in the world and for eligible dependents buried in National, State Veteran or Military Post Cemeteries. Headstones and markers are inscribed with the name of the deceased, the years of birth and death, and service branch. VA will accommodate many types of personal headstone inscriptions.

VA will pay a burial allowance up to \$2,000 if the veteran's death is service connected. The VA will pay up to \$300 for a burial in a non-government cemetery, under various special circumstances. See your VFW Service Officer's Guide for specifics

Many National Cemeteries are becoming full and only cremation burial sites remain. We need to work on our Legislators to ensure that all honorably discharged Veterans will have a place of Honor for eternal rest, when their time comes.

State of California Veterans Cemeteries:

Igo (Southwest of Redding)	The Northern California Veterans Cemetery (New/Open)
Yountville	The California Veterans Home (Open for residents only)

Eligibility requirements for burial at The Northern California Veterans Cemetery:
<http://www.cdva.ca.gov/Cemetery/eligibility.aspx>

It is always best to consider a veteran's final wishes, ahead of time, and have copies of his/her discharge or separation (DD Form 214) papers available prior to the need.

VETERANS EMPLOYMENT

Since the consolidation of The California Employment Development Department (EDD) into "One-Stops", add the Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) and Disabled Veteran Outreach Personnel Specialist (DVOPS), plus the extended use of computer technologies, many advances have taken place in veterans' employment. One-Stops are now in place throughout the state and offer a variety of services to veterans, including job placement and training.

CALJOBS, the Internet-based system, can be accessed from any computer on the Internet. This is a statewide system, with job opportunities from every level up to the executive level. All job orders entered into CALJOBS have a 24-hour veteran hold, where veterans are the only ones able to apply for those jobs while during the 24-hour hold. One-on-one case management services have been offered to Veterans with employment barriers. Employed veterans can seek higher paying jobs through this system, through extensive interdepartmental communications, as well as intra-agency cooperation.

See: http://www.edd.ca.gov/Jobs_and_Training/Find_a_Job.htm

Post commanders and their post veteran's employment representatives should attend Veterans Employment Council meetings with their counterparts from the other veterans' organizations, EDD, etc. If your district or county does not have a Veterans Employment Committee, you should take the initiative and organize one for your community. Visit your local EDD Office or One-Stop. Connect with the Veterans Representative and get information on how to get started.

Correspondence received pertaining to Veterans Employment matters, will be mailed to the District Commanders. These should be copied and sent to the District Veterans Employment Chairman and to each Post Commander for their use.

RECOGNITION AND OTHER VFW AWARDS

HONORING EDD, DVOP, and LVER, OR MANAGER OF THE YEAR

This is a separate honor. To honor one of the above, please make a report, in your own words, including how, what, and where the individual was of special help to the VFW. Send the Department Chairman a report for special consideration. The recipient of this award will be presented with a certificate from the Department Commander.

SUBMITTING EMPLOYER OF THE YEAR NOMINATION

The California Employer Advisory Council (CEAC) Veterans Committee, together with the EDD, will recognize employers who advocate the hiring of Veterans. An evaluation team of the Veterans Committee will judge the employer nominated in each of the following three categories:

- Government/Community Based Organizations (CBO)
- Private - Fewer than 100 employees
- Private - 100 or more employees

To assist field office managers and Veterans' staff in nominating the most deserving employer in their locale, the CEAC Veterans Committee has provided a list of 20 Evaluation Categories, which they use to select the State Employer of the Year. You may wish to use these criteria as a guide in preparing your nomination. Details and deadlines for the CEAC Awards will be forthcoming around mid-December.

Please ensure that all nominations are written in a clear, narrative text. Detailed information relating to as many of the Evaluation Categories as possible is important for consideration as a State Winner. Supporting documents, to supplement and enhance nominations, are encouraged; however, please do not include original documents, as they will not be returned.

Please complete the Employer of the Year Nomination Form (Form-14) and attach it to your nomination. Send your nomination to Department Chairman to arrive not later than March 31, 2010. Late submissions will not be considered for the Department's selection as "Employer of the Year Award".

HOW TO REPORT

All activities should be reported on-line via the Department website under **Veteran Service** at <http://www.vfwca.org/membertools/programform12rpt.html> or by submitting a report (Form-12) to the Department Chairman.

Important! – To qualify for awards a Post must send a copy of the Program Reporting (Form 12) to the Department Chairman with all applicable attachments.

AWARDS

Awards will be presented at the State Convention as follows:

- 1st, 2nd and 3rd overall (Post & District) will be awarded a plaque, based on Chairman Recommendation.