

1 SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 35 of Title 72, unless there is
3 created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4 A. This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Dignity in
5 Burial Act".

6 B. The Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs shall establish
7 a program to ensure a dignified burial for honorably discharged
8 veterans of the United States Armed Forces who, prior to death,
9 lacked the financial capacity to prepare for or to provide for an
10 interment or cremation befitting a veteran of the United States
11 Armed Forces. The program shall aid in obtaining any available
12 burial benefits from the United States Department of Veterans
13 Affairs or through private organizations. The program shall provide
14 a burial grant for any veteran or any person who qualifies for
15 reimbursement as determined by the Oklahoma Department of Veterans
16 Affairs, for unpaid expenses directly resulting from interment or
17 cremation. The maximum amount of reimbursement, not including
18 private funds, shall not exceed One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per
19 application.

20 C. Eligibility requirements for the program shall be as
21 follows:

22 1. The deceased shall be a veteran as defined in Section 2 of
23 Title 72 of the Oklahoma Statutes;

24 2. The veteran shall have died in Oklahoma;

1 3. The veteran shall not have been in the custody of the
2 Department of Corrections at the time of death;

3 4. The applicant shall provide documentation establishing the
4 burial location of the deceased veteran's remains in a cemetery or
5 the location where the deceased veteran's cremains have been
6 permanently placed;

7 5. The applicant shall provide documentation establishing that
8 the deceased veteran was provided an appropriate casket if the
9 deceased veteran was interred; and

10 6. The applicant shall provide documentation establishing that
11 the deceased veteran received a proper memorial headstone or marker
12 at the place of his or her interment as provided in 38 U.S.C.,
13 Section 2306 or that a memorial headstone or marker meeting the same
14 physical standards for size, material, composition, placement, and
15 informational content was provided in the event the deceased veteran
16 did not qualify under the provisions of 38 U.S.C., Section 2306.

17 D. The Executive Director of the Oklahoma Department of
18 Veterans Affairs or his or her designee shall make final approval of
19 the Dignity in Burial Act applications, shall determine whether the
20 deceased meets eligibility criteria, and may approve funds to
21 reimburse the costs of interment or cremation.

22 E. Reimbursement shall be paid from the Indigent Veteran
23 Burial Revolving Fund provided in Section 34 of Title 72 of the
24 Oklahoma Statutes. If there are insufficient resources in the

1 Indigent Veteran Burial Revolving Fund, payment shall be made from
2 the Oklahoma Department of Veterans Affairs Revolving Fund.

3 F. An application process for the implementation of this
4 program shall be developed by the Oklahoma Department of Veterans
5 Affairs.

6 G. Rules for the implementation of this program shall be
7 promulgated by the Oklahoma Veterans Commission.

8 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2022.

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10 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AND MILITARY AFFAIRS,
11 dated 03/02/2022 - DO PASS, As Amended and Coauthored.

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