

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION FIRST NOTICE OF EVENT (FNOE)

1. REASON FOR ISSUE: To establish policy, procedures, and associated responsibilities related to the reporting of events, conditions, and incidents that may affect operations or the delivery of benefits to eligible Veterans or family members.

2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS: This directive establishes overarching policies, procedures, and associated responsibilities for reporting events and incidents throughout NCA. This directive details when FNOEs are provided, including reporting responsibilities, reporting response time, and reporting types.

3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE: NCA, Cemetery Operations (41A), 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, is responsible for the material contained in this Directive. Questions may be referred to Deputy Director of Cemetery Operations.

4. RELATED PUBLICATIONS:

- a. VA Handbook 0321 - Serious Incident Reports (November 5, 2010).
- b. VA Handbook 0322.1 - VA Integrated Operations Center (VAOIC) (November 10, 2011).
- c. NCA Directive 0320/3 - Emergency Preparedness Planning (May 30, 2008).

5. RESCISSIONS:

- a. NCA Handbook 0322 National Cemetery Administration Integrated Operations Center Support Procedures (June 19, 2013);
- b. 401 Policy Letter Storm Damage Guidance (February 08, 1995);
- c. 41 Policy Memorandum FNOE for Senior Leadership and other Distinguished Visitors (April 13, 2018).

6. RECERTIFICATION: This publication is scheduled for recertification in October 29, 2024.

/s/ Ronald E. Walters
Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs

Distribution: Electronic

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION FIRST NOTICE OF EVENT (FNOE)

1. PURPOSE: This directive establishes policy, procedures, and associated responsibilities related to the reporting of events, conditions, and incidents that have or may affect operations and the delivery of benefits to eligible Veterans or family members.

2. BACKGROUND: The Veterans Affairs Integrated Operations Center (VAIOC) is the Department's primary office for data integration and analysis of events and incidents that have the potential to impact VA. NCA supports the VAIOC with dedicated Emergency Management Specialists (referred to as NCA Watch Officers). NCA Watch Officers serve as NCA's primary point of contact for reporting and analysis related to events or incidents that have the potential to impact NCA. In accordance with VA regulation, information about actual or possible violations related to VA will be reported by VA management officials. All initial First Notice of Event Reports are sent to VA NCA FIRST NOTICE OF EVENT via the Global Address List. This address distribution list contains the individual email addresses of the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, all NCA Central Office Senior Executives, their Deputies and Executive Assistants, the Special Assistants to the USMA, and the NCA Watch Team.

3. POLICY: It is NCA policy that NCA leaders must be notified of events or incidents that have actual or potential to impact operations or disrupt the delivery of benefits to eligible Veterans and family members. These events may affect customer service and results in media attention.

4. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. **NCA Supervisors**, at every level are responsible for:

(1) Ensuring that their employees comply with the reporting procedures described in this directive;

(2) Consulting with the supervising office on corrective and follow on actions;

(3) Conducting all necessary actions required in response to the incident, to include actions such as fact findings, accident investigations, refresher training, and administrative actions.

b. **District Executive Directors**, in addition to the above, are also responsible for:

(1) Communicating the FNOE policy to all cemeteries within the District;

(2) Providing leadership to the cemeteries to ensure FNOEs are complete, accurate, timely and contain a sufficient resolution plan that minimizes a need for follow up coordination with VACO;

(3) Engaging with cemeteries on corrective actions required to address and resolve the situation, to include fact findings and administrative actions as warranted.

c. **NCA Watch Supervisor** is responsible for:

(1) Providing leadership to NCA Watch Officers to ensure FNOEs disseminated to VA/NCA senior leadership are complete, accurate and timely;

(2) Providing feedback to Districts, program, and staff offices to improve compliance and reporting;

(3) Monitoring to identify serious incidences and directing the NCA Watch Officers to escalate the reporting of those reports to the VAOIC;

(4) Directing the collection of additional information as requested by senior leadership.

(5) Monitoring and maintaining a searchable database that accurately records all incidents and events reported in NCA through the FNOE process.

(6) Maintaining and updating the Microsoft Outlook distribution list VA NCA FIRST NOTICE OF EVENT via the Global Address List as required.

d. Upon receipt of a First Notice of Event (FNOE) report NCA Watch Officers are responsible for:

(1) Reviewing the report to verify that all required information is included;

(2) Validating that the appropriate distribution list is used to disseminate the notification. If not, take corrective action to ensure the report is appropriately disseminated;

(3) Confirming contact with jurisdictional police and the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) when appropriate in accordance with this directive. A contact list for OIG is included as Appendix E of this directive;

(4) Escalating serious incidents to the VAOIC upon receipt and identification;

(5) Providing feedback to individuals submitting reports and their supervising office as needed to achieve reporting compliance;

(6) Referring crime-related incidents and events to the VA OIG, VA Office of Security and Law Enforcement (OSLE), VA Office of General Counsel (OGC), and the VAIOC;

(7) Entering each reported incident into a searchable database of all incidents and events reported in NCA through the FNOE process.

e. **All NCA Employees** are responsible for:

(1) Informing their supervisors of potentially reportable events, conditions, or incidents as described in this directive, whether witnessed directly or reported to them

by other individuals;

(2) Reporting all incidents as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours after becoming aware of the event or incident, using the FNOE notification email template in Appendix A or Appendix B;

(3) Reporting serious incidents (as defined in Appendix D) as soon as possible, but no later than 2 hours after becoming aware of the incident.

5. FIRST NOTICE OF EVENT (FNOE) REPORTING PROCEDURES:

a. FNOE Requirements - FNOEs are required for incidents and events that affect or have the potential to affect normal business operations or interrupt the delivery of VA benefits at any NCA facility. Types of reportable events are included in Appendix C of this directive.

b. Submitting an FNOE Report - NCA employees will send the FNOE reports to the VA NCA FIRST NOTICE OF EVENT via the Global Address List using the email notification format found in Appendix A or Appendix B of this directive.

(1) NCA employees will send the FNOE as soon as possible, but no later than 24 hours after becoming aware of the event or incident, except when the event or incident is determined to be a serious incident report (SIR) (see paragraph 5b (2) below). This maximum 24-hour reporting period provides time for local leadership to gather pertinent information to prepare and submit a complete and accurate report. While the FNOE is being prepared, local leadership will immediately report events or incidents of significant sensitivity to operations and customer service through their chain of command to allow for advanced notice to VACO leadership (e.g., certain media inquiries and unannounced VIP visits).

(2) NCA employees must send an FNOE reporting an event or incident that is defined as an SIR as soon as possible, but no later than 2 hours after becoming aware of the event or incident. SIR situations are defined/described in Appendix D of this directive. NCA Watch Officers are required to forward immediately to VA senior leaders and the VAIOC any FNOE determined to be an SIR.

(3) NCA employees are not routinely required to provide further reporting or close out updates beyond the initial FNOE. Exceptions are noted by type of reportable incident in Appendix C. If senior leadership requires additional information in response to a reported incident the NCA Watch Officers will inform the reporting office as to what information is required and how to provide it.

6. REFERENCES:

a. VA Directive 0321 – Serious Incident Reports (November 5, 2010).

b. VA Handbook 0322.1 – VA Integrated Operations Center (VAOIC) (November 10, 2011).

7. DEFINITIONS:

a. **Emergency Action Plan (EAP)** – Document that facilitates and organizes employer and employee actions during workplace emergencies. This is the emergency planning format used by NCA in accordance with 29 CFR 1910.38 Occupational Safety and Health Standards.

b. **Facility Disaster Plan** - Document that directs the actions of residents or occupants of a government building or facility during and after a disaster. It is generally used by federal buildings that house occupants from multiple agencies.

c. **Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP)** - A United States federal government initiative, required by U.S. Presidential directive, to ensure agencies can continue performance of essential functions under a broad range of circumstances.

d. **First Notice of Event (FNOE)** – A templated notification email used by NCA employees to report incidents, events, or situations that have or have the potential to affect cemetery or facility operations or the delivery of benefits to eligible Veterans or family members.

e. **Reportable Event** – Any incident, event or situations that affects or has the potential to affect cemetery or facility operations or the delivery of benefits to eligible Veterans or family members.

f. **Serious Incident Report (SIR)** - Any event or incident that is likely to result in adverse national media or Congressional interest or attention. These reports are referred to the VA Secretary and other VA senior leaders and the VAIOC immediately, but no longer than 2 hours after awareness. See Appendix D for list of SIRs.

g. **Veterans Affairs Integrated Operations Center (VAIOC)** – A division of the Office of Operations Security and Preparedness (OSP), within the VA Office of Human Resources Administration that provides 24 hours, seven days a week coverage of current global weather conditions, global disaster threats and declarations, Department of Defense threat conditions, Department of Homeland Security threat conditions, Federal Emergency Management Administration response efforts, National Security Special Events, and other large-scale events that have the potential of affecting Veterans, the delivery of Veterans' benefits or VA operations.

APPENDIX A - FIRST NOTICE OF EVENT NOTIFICATION FORMAT

1. **GENERAL:** FNOE notifications must follow the formatting instructions below. The NCA Watch Officer will provide the email template upon request. The email templates contain embedded drop-down menus from which to select dates, applicable district or program office, type of incident, media presence, and police or OIG reporting.

a. The FNOE notification email must be sent to: VA NCA FIRST NOTICE OF EVENT, which is located in the Global Address List.

b. The subject line of the notification email must indicate “FNOE”, Initial Report, After-Action Report (AAR), cemetery or facility name, and type of incident or event.

c. The following format must be used for all FNOE notifications.

Subject Line Examples:

FNOE-XXXX National Cemetery-Medical-Visitor
FNOE-Initial-XXXX National Cemetery-VIP-Congressman Joe People
FNOE-AAR-XXXX National Cemetery- VIP-Congressman Joe People

1. **Date OPENED:** [Select date from drop-down calendar]

2. **District / Service Office:** [Select the office or district from drop-down menu]

3. **Cemetery or Facility and State:**

4. **POC for this Incident:**

Name:
Phone Number:
Email:

5. **Date and Time Event Occurred:** [Select date from drop-down calendar] **Time:**

6. **Type of Incident:** [Select the type of incident from drop-down menu]

Is media expected to be present or involved? [Select Yes or No from drop-down menu]

7. **Detailed Summary of the Situation:**

8. **How was or will the situation be resolved?**

9. **After Action Report (As required):** [Summary of event and important facts]

10. **If incident involves an actual or possible violation of criminal law(s) it must be reported to jurisdictional Law Enforcement and if it involves a felony, report to Office of the Inspector General (OIG).**

Was this reported to Police and OIG? [Select Yes, No, or N/A from drop-down menu]

10.a. Police contact information:

Title and Name:

Agency:

Phone Number:

Email:

10.b. OIG POC contact information:

Title and Name:

Office:

Phone Number:

Email:

**APPENDIX B - ACTIVE DUTY OR KILLED IN ACTION
(KIA) NOTIFICATION FORMAT**

1. **GENERAL:** FNOE notifications must follow the formatting instructions below. The NCA Watch Officer will provide the email template upon request. The email templates contain embedded drop-down menus from which to select dates, applicable district or program office, type of incident, media presence, and police or OIG reporting.

a. FNOEs must be sent to: VA NCA FIRST NOTICE OF EVENT, which is located in the Global Address List.

b. The subject line of the initial notification emails must indicate “FNOE-Active Duty Interment” or “FNOE-KIA Interment”, cemetery or facility name. Follow-up FNOEs must be indicated in the subject line as FNOE-AAR”.

c. The following format must be used for all active duty or KIA interment notifications.

Subject Line: Examples:

FNOE-Active Duty Interment-XXXX National Cemetery-Training Accident
FNOE-AAR-Active Duty Interment-XXXX National Cemetery-Training Accident
FNOE-KIA Interment -XXXX National Cemetery-DPAA-USS Oklahoma
FNOE-KIA Interment-XXXX National Cemetery-GWOT-Syria
FNOE-AAR-KIA Interment-XXXX National Cemetery-GWOT-Syria

1. **Date OPENED:** [Select date from drop-down calendar]

2. **District / Service Office:** [Select the office or district from drop-down menu]

3. **Cemetery and State:**

4. **Cemetery POC:**

Name:

Phone Number:

Email:

5. **Date and Time Interment is Scheduled:** [Select date from drop-down calendar]
Time:

Decedent ID:

Decedent (*Last, First MI*):

Date of Death:

Rank:

Branch of Service:

Theater (*Iraq, Afghanistan, Niger, Mali, etc.*):

6. **Does the Corey Shea Act Apply?** [Select Yes or No from drop-down menu]

7. Is the family is requesting a weekend burial? [Select Yes or No from drop-down menu]

8. Is media expected to be present or involved? [Select Yes or No from drop-down menu]

9. After Action Report: Summary of event and important facts:

APPENDIX C - TYPES OF REPORTABLE EVENTS

1. **Active Duty Death or Killed in Action (KIA) Interment** - Interment scheduled for a servicemember that died while on active duty or was killed in action, including remains collected and identified by the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA).

NOTE: Active duty death incidents require an After Action Report following the interment.

2. **Communications** - Disruptions to communication systems or devices, such as internet, phone, gravesite location systems, scheduling and record tracking systems, including loss or damage of issued communication devices.

3. **Complaints** - Customer Service issues that have the potential to escalate and result in negative attention for the cemetery or facility.

4. **Criminal** - Actual or possible violations of criminal laws on NCA property or that affect NCA employees, such as threats against or the arrest of an employee. Criminal matters involving felonies will also be immediately referred to the Office of Inspector General, Office of Investigations.

5. **Emergency Action Plan (EAP)** - Any incident that results in the activation of the EAP.

6. **Interment** - Failure to meet the scheduled interment due to cemetery staff actions. Remains found to be in incorrect interment/inurnment site.

NOTE: Incidents involving interment issues will require a Gravesite Discrepancy Resolution Report (GD RR), which is tracked outside of the FNOE process. Do not delay in sending an FNOE to complete the GD RR.

7. **Marker** - Mismarked gravesites or niches. Markers or niche covers identified as having incorrect data. Markers or niche covers found damaged or reported as being misused or misplaced on or off VA property.

NOTE: Incidents involving mismarked gravesites will require a Gravesite Discrepancy Resolution Report (GD RR), which is tracked outside of the FNOE process. Do not delay in sending an FNOE to complete the GD RR.

8. **Media** - Inquiries, camera crews and interviews, or any event that may draw media attention.

9. **Medical** - Employee, volunteer or visitor is victim to accident, illness, injury and/or death on NCA property, other than suicide.

10. **Motor Vehicle Accident (MVA)** - Vehicular accidents involving employees, contractors, volunteers or visitors on NCA property, or that restricts the flow of traffic to and from the property, or that affect "normal" operations.

11. **Notable Burial** - Notification of a scheduled interment that is likely to draw a large number of attendees to the service. Situations could include, but are not limited to, burial of prominent local community figures, politicians, celebrities, repatriated remains of POW/MIA, and the Missing in America Project (MIAP).

12. **Remains** - Exposure of or damage to remains, caskets, crypts, cremation vessels, gravesites, or columbaria, excluding headstones, markers and niche covers.

13. **Safety, Security and Vulnerability** - Incidents or issues, unrelated to medical, that create a safety hazard, security or vulnerability threat to visitors, guests, employees, facilities or property.

14. **Suicide** - Report or witness of attempted, ideation or death by suicide of anyone on NCA property or by an NCA employee off the property.

15. **Utilities** - Outages, disruptions or breakages of electric, water, gas, sewage, and/or irrigation systems.

16. **Very Important Person (VIP)** – Notification of a planned visit from a VIP. A VIP is defined as: Federal, state, or local elected representatives; VA senior leaders; equivalent senior leaders of other federal Agencies; state or local government officials; and/or representatives of foreign governments.

NOTE: *VIP visits require an After-Action Report following the event.*

17. **Weather** – Atmospheric conditions or natural disasters causing a disruption to “normal” operations. Including but not limited to: rain, snow, flood, wind, earthquake, tornado, hurricane, or wild fire.

NOTE: *Additional reporting may be required in response weather and natural disasters and will be coordinated through the NCA Watch Desk and the District Offices outside of the FNOE process.*

**APPENDIX D - SERIOUS INCIDENT REPORT (SIR)
SITUATIONS**

1. General: Following is a list of situations that are likely to be designated as SIRs; however, VAIOC determines whether an incident is a “serious incident” and could designate an incident not on this list as an SIR.

The following are examples of situations that MUST be reported within 2 hours of awareness. This reporting requirement balances the need for complete and accurate reporting and timely senior leadership awareness of a serious incident that may have an adverse impact on customers, visitors, and employees.

- a. Public information regarding the arrest of a VA employee (police report, public release of information, etc.).
- b. Major disruption to the normal operations or closure of a VA facility.
- c. Loss or compromise of VA sensitive data, including classified information.
- d. Theft or loss of material over \$1,000 in value, to include VA-controlled firearms or hazardous materials.
- e. Activation of Emergency Action Plan (EAP), Facility Disaster Plan, and/or Continuity of Operations Plan.
- f. Incidents on VA property that result in serious illness or bodily injury, to include attempted suicide, sexual assault, aggravated assault, and child abuse.
- g. Death on VA property, to include suspected homicide, suicide, accidents, and/or suspicious deaths.
- h. Shootings on or near VA property or facilities.
- i. Terrorist event or credible threat that impacts VA facilities or operations.

APPENDIX E -
OFFICE OF THE INSPECTOR GENERAL CONTACTS
<http://www.va.gov/oig/about/investigations-contact-list.asp>

Office	Area of Coverage	Phone
D.C. Headquarters		(202) 461-4702
Newark	(NJ, Eastern PA, DE, CT)	(973) 297-3338
New York	(Southern NY)	(212) 951-6850
Massachusetts	(MA, RI)	(781) 687-3157
New Hampshire	(NH, ME, VT)	(603) 222-5866
Buffalo	(Northern NY, Central NY)	(716) 857-5012
Washington DC	(DC, MD, VA, Southern WV)	(202) 530-9193
Columbia	(SC)	(803) 695-6707
Fayetteville	(NC)	(910) 482-5133
Pittsburgh	(Western PA, Northern WV)	(412) 482-6301
St. Petersburg	(Central FL)	(727) 319-1215
Atlanta	(GA, AL)	(404) 929-5950
Nashville	(TN, KY)	(615) 695-6373
Tallahassee	(Northern FL)	(850) 656-1145
West Palm Beach	(Southern FL, PR)	(561) 422-7720
Chicago	(IN, IL, MI, WI)	(708) 202-2676
Kansas City	(MO, IA, NE, KS)	(816) 997-6976
Denver	(CO, WY, ND, MN, SD)	(303) 331-7674
Cleveland	(OH)	(216) 522-7606
Dallas	(Northern TX, OK)	(214) 253-3360
Houston	(Southern TX)	(713) 383-2793
Little Rock	(AR)	(501) 257-3446
Jackson	(LA, MS)	(601) 364-7041
Los Angeles	(Southern CA)	(310) 268-4269
Phoenix	(AZ, NM)	(602) 627-3257
Las Vegas	(UT, Southern NV)	(702) 791-9108
San Diego	(CA South of LA)	(858) 404-8332
San Francisco	(Northern CA, Eastern CA, Northern NV, HI, Philippines, Guam)	(510) 637-6360
Seattle	(Western WA, OR, AK)	(206) 220-6637
Spokane	(Eastern WA, MT, ID)	(509) 353-0637