

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION
NATIONAL LEADERSHIP BOARD

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** This directive updates and revises National Cemetery Administration (NCA) policy and responsibilities of the National Leadership Board (NLB).
- 2. SUMMARY OF CHANGES:** NLB procedures and membership have been revised to provide improvements to the Board's operations. NCA's NLB policy has also been changed by removing the list of Senior Executive NLB members due to changing membership. In addition, NLB policy has been changed to define the purpose and functions of the Board.
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** NCA Office of the Chief of Staff, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, is responsible for the contents of this directive. For all inquiries contact, the NCA Chief of Staff.
- 4. RELATED NCA PUBLICATIONS:** None.
- 5. RESCISSION:** None.
- 6. RECERTIFICATION:** This directive is scheduled for recertification in December 2024.

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

Distribution: Electronic

NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION NATIONAL LEADERSHIP BOARD

1. PURPOSE/AUTHORITY: This National Cemetery Administration (NCA) Directive defines NCA policy for the NCA National Leadership Board (NLB).

2. POLICY: It is NCA policy that the NLB serves as a forum for NCA senior executives to discuss and provide diverse views and opinions with the intention of making a recommendation to the Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs on major issues affecting NCA as a whole or that would have an impact on more than one NCA program/office. Procedures followed by the NLB are contained in Appendix A.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES

a. **Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs (USMA)** is responsible for:

- (1) Establishing the National Leadership Board;
- (2) Making a final decision to approve or disapprove an NLB recommendation.

b. **Principal Deputy Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs** is responsible for:

- (1) Serving as Chair of the National Leadership Board, and performing functions of the Chair as defined in Appendix A;
- (2) Leading NLB discussions;
- (3) Presenting NLB recommendations to the USMA in the form of an Executive Action Memorandum (EAM), as defined in Appendix A.

c. **NCA Chief of Staff** is responsible for Serving as the NLB Executive Secretary, and performing the functions of the NLB Executive Secretary as defined in Appendix A.

d. **All NCA Senior Executives** are responsible for serving as NLB voting members, and performing the functions of NLB members, as defined in Appendix A.

APPENDIX A – NLB MEMBERSHIP, FUNCTIONS AND PROCEDURES

a. NLB Chair:

(1) Works with the NLB Executive Secretary to determine meeting agenda items, and may task NLB members to develop a new or revised EAM (using the format provided in Appendix C) or do further research on policies/procedures related to particular program areas or issues in EAMs under consideration;

(2) Determines whether a quorum consisting of a majority of the voting members is present in order to convene an NLB meeting; and

(3) Communicates the Under Secretary's decisions to the senior executives.

b. NLB Executive Secretary:

(1) Manages NLB operations and related functions;

(2) Calls for agenda items at least ONE MONTH before the next NLB and publishes the agenda and supporting documents three business days before the next NLB.

(3) Schedules NLB meetings, requests agenda items, and develops meeting agendas (i.e. reviews EAMs submitted by members to ensure issues are ready for discussion/action, determines appropriate number of EAMs and/or other topics to consider, etc.);

(4) Provides NLB members with copies of the agenda, final minutes of the previous meeting, and copies of all EAMs to be discussed including any supporting documentation;

(5) Drafts meeting minutes and presents the Board's final recommendations for action and for the USMA following the NLB for approval/disapproval;

(6) Tracks action items resulting from meetings and reports on progress to the NLB;

(7) Ensures that all NLB members are kept apprised of significant decisions affecting NCA policies and programs that are made by the USMA between NLB meetings;

(8) Annually evaluates NLB processes and recommends changes or improvements as necessary; and

(9) Prepares an Annual Report highlighting the actions and decisions of the NLB.

c. NLB members:

(1) Review meeting minutes, agenda, and EAMs provided by the NLB Executive Secretary in advance of the scheduled meeting and prepare for discussion on new and outstanding issues;

(2) Attend meetings prepared to discuss agenda items, and/or emerging issues, and recommend courses of action to the Chair;

(3) Coordinate discussion of issues and proposed/final actions with program staff within NCA and VA (as appropriate); and

(4) Ensure that USMA decisions on NLB actions, and actions of the NLB related to matters that affect NCA staff and activities (e.g., new programs, changes in policy or procedures that affect more than one program) are effectively communicated within NCA and VA, and to external entities as appropriate.

APPENDIX B - NLB GENERAL PROCEDURES

- a. A quorum is necessary in order for an NLB meeting to be held. A quorum consists of the majority of members. The Chair determines the presence of a quorum;
- b. NLB members may not appoint alternates or vote by proxy. All members are expected to be present for meetings, unless excused in writing by the Chair, prior to the meeting;
- c. NLB members vote on recommendations for action to be presented to the USMA for decision (majority of those present);
- d. Meetings of the NLB will be held quarterly, with members physically present or attending via teleconference or videoconference (as directed by the Chair). Additional meetings may be convened at the discretion of the Chair. If necessary, Subcommittees or Working Groups of NLB members and/or their staff may be formed to research complex issues;
- f. The NLB Executive Secretary will call for proposals for possible agenda items at least one month prior to the next meeting;
- g. NLB members will submit EAMs (using the format provided in Appendix C) as discussion topics by the requested due date to the NLB Executive Secretary to determine whether the EAM is ready for discussion/action (see Appendix D for guidance on submissions);
- h. The NLB Executive Secretary will publish the agenda, EAMs and supporting documents three business days before the scheduled NLB meeting;
- i. The NLB Executive Secretary will ensure that minutes are taken at each meeting and attendance is recorded;
- j. NLB voting members vote to recommend USMA approval or disapproval of EAMs. Proxy votes will not be accepted;
- k. After NLB meeting, the NLB Chair will prepare draft meeting minutes and present the Board's final recommendations to the USMA for approval/disapproval;
- l. Approved meeting minutes and EAMs that have received final USMA approval/disapproval will be made available through the NCA SharePoint.

**APPENDIX C - NATIONAL CEMETERY ADMINISTRATION NATIONAL
LEADERSHIP BOARD EXECUTIVE ACTION MEMO TEMPLATE**

DATE: *(Date of EAM is submitted to the NLB Executive Secretary)*

FROM: *(Title of Senior Executive)*

SUBJECT: *(Insert a brief description)*

TO: Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs (40)

THROUGH: National Leadership Board

TYPE OF ITEM: **UPDATE ITEM**
 ACTION ITEM

STATEMENT OF ISSUE: *Provide a concise statement of the issue, circumstance or situation that needs to be addressed or resolved.*

BUDGET/PERFORMANCE IMPACT: *Provide a concise statement of funding requirements (if any) for the request in the current year and outyears. This section should also include a statement of the impact of the request on any performance measures.*

PROPOSED IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (if applicable): *Provide a concise outline of the timing and sequence of recommended actions, including major implementation milestones. Identify the proposed lead office/person and support offices. List any anticipated obstacles.*

RECOMMENDATION FOR NLB CONSIDERATION: *Provide a concise statement of what action is being recommended to address or resolve the issue.*

NLB RECOMMENDATION: Recommend USMA Approval
 Recommend USMA Disapproval

USMA DECISION: Approve NLB recommendation
 Disapprove NLB recommendation

Randy Reeves
Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs

Date

APPENDIX D - NCA'S NATIONAL LEADERSHIP BOARD QUICK TIPS

BEFORE: *Submitting an Information or Action Item*

- Proposals should be “major issues including those that affect NCA as a whole or that would have an impact on more than one NCA program/office.”
- Contact board colleagues if your proposal impacts their functional areas - to build awareness and gain insight.
- Develop the proposal as thoroughly as possible and consider asking supporting staff to present to the board, when appropriate.
- Use the proposal document to clearly and specifically identify the recommendation(s) to the board. Include supporting documentation, when appropriate.
- If the issue is non-decisional in nature, consider simply submitting a non-decisional informational white paper which will be shared with the members as part of their books.

AFTER: *Meeting Notes and Tracking Items*

- Approved meeting minutes and Executive Action Memos that have received final USMA approval/disapproval will be made available through the NCA SharePoint.
- All NLB records are stored on SharePoint at <https://vaww.nca.vaco.portal.va.gov/sites/41B/COP/nlb/default.aspx>.