

Army is the largest. Overseas cemeteries are operated by the American Battle Monuments Commission. The Veterans Administration controls a number of cemeteries adjacent to its installations. The Department of Interior manages, as part of the National Park Service, cemeteries transferred from Army jurisdiction in 1933.

Because the national system began as Civil War burial grounds, most of the cemeteries are in the East. Their expansion has been sporadic, and since 1950, no new cemeteries have been added. The 85 cemeteries which constitute the national system occupy more than 3,700 acres of land and have potential for 1,200,000 gravesites, 58 percent of which have already been developed. Eighty percent of the developed gravesites are occupied or reserved, with the remaining 20 per cent available for burials. Approximately one million gravesites can be made available for future use within the current acreage.

The Battle Monuments Commission controls 23 overseas cemeteries, which are closed to burial except for bodies found on battlefields. The Veterans Administration has 24 cemeteries, six of which are closed; 131,000 of the total VA gravesites available are filled and 315,000 are open for future burials. The National Park Service controls, as national monuments, 13 cemeteries, which encompass 175 acres. Six of these cemeteries are still open, but availability for future burials is limited.

Eligibility for burials in Federally-operated cemeteries varies with the operating agencies. Eligibility for burial in the national cemeteries and the Park Service cemeteries embraces active duty personnel, as well as honorably discharged veterans of U.S. service or citizens who served honorably in allied Armed Forces, including their spouses and minor children. Eligibility for burial in the Battle Monuments cemeteries is closed except for cases previously mentioned. The Veterans Administration usually restricts eligibility to veterans who die in VA facilities or in the vicinity thereof and whose bodies are unclaimed. Veterans' widows and children may be included under certain circumstances.

Although eligibility for burial in Federally-operated cemeteries legally extends to approximately 26 million living ex-servicemen, in practice, eligibility is limited by the restricted availability of space and by the geographical distribution of the cemeteries. In fiscal years 1963-65, approximately fifteen percent of all veterans who died were buried in Federal cemeteries. However, of those who died within 100 miles of a national cemetery in 1963, approximately 50 percent were buried in a Federal cemetery. Thus,