

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA
1987 SESSION

CHAPTER 1051
HOUSE BILL 2650

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH THE REQUIREMENTS OF ELIGIBILITY FOR
INTERMENT IN A STATE VETERANS CEMETERY.

The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

Section 1. Article 8A of Chapter 65 of the General Statutes is amended by adding the following sections:

"§ 65-43. **Definitions.**—For purposes of this Article, the following definitions shall apply, unless the context requires otherwise:

(1) 'Honorable military service' means:

- a. Service on active duty, other than for training, as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States, when the service was terminated under honorable conditions;
- b. Service on active duty as a member of the Armed Forces of the United States at the time of death under honorable conditions;
- c. Service on active duty for training or full-time service as a member of the Reserve component of the Armed Forces, the Army National Guard, the Air National Guard, or the Reserve Officer Training Corps of the Army, Navy, or Air Force, at the time of death under honorable conditions.

(2) A 'legal resident' of a state means a person whose principle residence or abode is in that state, who uses that state to establish his right to vote and other rights in a state, and who intends to live in that state, to the exclusion of maintaining a legal residence in any other state.

(3) A 'qualified veteran' means a veteran:

- a. Who served an honorable military service; and
- b. Who is a legal resident of North Carolina:
 - (1) At the time of death, or
 - (2) For a period of at least 10 years, or
 - (3) At the time he entered the Armed Forces of the United States.

"§ 65-43.1. **Eligibility for interment in a State veterans cemetery.**—(a) The following persons are eligible for interment at a State veterans cemetery:

- (1) A qualified veteran;
- (2) The spouse, widow, or widower of a qualified veteran, or a minor child who is unmarried and dependent on the qualified veteran at the time of his death; and

- (3) An unmarried adult child of a qualified veteran when the child became permanently incapable of self-support because of a physical or mental disability before attaining the age of 18 years.

(b) Only one grave site is authorized for a qualified veteran and his eligible family members. A grave site may not be reserved until the death of a person who is eligible for interment. When a death occurs and the deceased is determined to be eligible for interment in a State veteran cemetery pursuant to subsection (b) of this section, a grave site shall be assigned in the name of the veteran.

(c) When an eligible family member dies before the qualified veteran dies, the veteran shall sign an agreement to be interred in the same plot with the family member before the deceased family member is interred in the veterans cemetery.

"§ 65-43.2. Proof of eligibility.—(a) The veteran, his survivors, or his legal representative shall furnish any evidence necessary to establish the eligibility of the veteran or the family member before the veteran or eligible family member may be interred in a State veterans cemetery.

(b) The survivors or legal representative of the deceased shall notify the funeral director that the deceased is to be interred in a veterans cemetery. The survivor or legal representative shall furnish the funeral director with documentary evidence of the veteran's honorable military service and evidence to establish that the veteran is a legal resident of North Carolina. The funeral director shall notify the superintendent of the nearest State veterans cemetery to arrange for the interment and convey to the superintendent all evidence to establish the veteran's eligibility.

"§ 65-43.3. Bars to eligibility.—(a) A veteran may not be interred in a State veterans cemetery under any of the following circumstances:

- (1) He was discharged or dismissed on the grounds that:
 - a. He was a conscientious objector who refused to perform military duty;
 - b. He was a deserter; or
 - c. He was an officer who accepted his resignation for the good of the service;
- (2) He was convicted of subversive activities against the United States after separation from active military service; or
- (3) He was separated from the Armed Forces of the United States for the good of the service due to a willful and persistent unauthorized absence and issued a Clemency Discharge (DD Form 1953) pursuant to Presidential Proclamation No. 4313.

"§ 65-43.4. Disinterment.—(a) When a veteran fails to abide by his agreement to be interred in the same grave site as his previously interred eligible family member, the veteran, his legal representative, or his heirs shall have the remains of the family member removed from the cemetery at no cost to the State.

(b) A disinterment may be permitted, at no cost to the State, when the following conditions are satisfied:

- (1) The disinterment is requested in writing and filed with the Program Director of the veterans cemeteries, the Assistant Secretary for Veterans Affairs, or the Division of Veterans Affairs;
- (2) The request for disinterment contains the notarized signature of the nearest of kin, such as surviving spouse. If the spouse is deceased, the signatures of a majority of the surviving children of legal age will be required;
- (3) The funeral director has obtained all necessary permits for disinterment.

"§ 65-43.5. Reinterment.—(a) The remains of a qualified veteran or the remains of an eligible family member may be moved to a State veterans cemetery for reinterment, at no cost to the State, when the following conditions are satisfied:

- (1) The superintendent of the State veterans cemetery has been presented with proof of eligibility in accordance with G.S. 65-43.2;
- (2) The reinterment is requested in writing and filed with the Program Manager of veterans cemeteries, the Assistant Secretary for Veterans Affairs, or the Division of Veterans Affairs; and
- (3) The request for reinterment contains the notarized signatures of the veteran or his legal representative, all living immediate family members, and any other interested living family member;
- (4) The request for reinterment contains a statement of the circumstances and reasons for reinterment; and
- (5) The funeral director has obtained all necessary permits for reinterment.

(b) If permission for reinterment is granted, an agreement shall be entered into between the veteran or his living representative, all living immediate family members, and any interested living family members, and the Assistant Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

"§ 65-43.6. State veterans cemeteries cost.—(a) There may be no charge for the grave site or the interment service of a qualified veteran. There may be a minimal charge, to be set by the Division of Veteran Affairs, for only the opening and closing of the grave of an eligible family member.

(b) All other costs, including funeral expenses and costs of the headstone, transportation of the remains, or grave liner or burial vault shall be paid out of allowances by the Veterans Administration or private funds.

(c) All costs resulting from damage to, or destruction or theft of a grave site, headstone, or any other grave monument may not be borne by the State."

Sec. 2. This act shall become effective October 1, 1988.

In the General Assembly read three times and ratified this the 5th day of July, 1988.