

Refusal to testify, concealment of material facts, or willfully inaccurate testimony in connection with an investigation or hearing may be ground for disciplinary action. An employee, however, will not be required to give testimony against himself or herself in any matter in which there is indication that he or she may be or is involved in a violation of law wherein there is a possibility of self-incrimination.

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### DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS OFFICIAL SEAL AND DISTINGUISHING FLAG

#### § 1.9 Description, use, and display of VA seal and flag.

(a) *General.* This section describes the official seal and distinguishing flag of the Department of Veterans Affairs, and prescribes the rules for their custody and use.

(b) *Definitions.*

(1) *VA* means all organizational units of the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(2) *Embossed seal* means an image of the official seal made on paper or other medium by using an embosser with a negative and positive die to create a raised impression.

(3) *Official seal* means the original(s) of the VA seal showing the exact form, content, and colors thereof.

(4) *Replica* means a copy of the official seal displaying the identical form, content, and colors thereof.

(5) *Reproduction* means a copy of the official seal displaying the identical form and content, reproduced in only one color.

(6) *Secretary* means the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(7) *Deputy Secretary* means the Deputy Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(c) *Custody of official seal and distinguishing flags.* The Secretary or designee shall:

(1) Have custody of:

(i) The official seal and prototypes thereof, and masters, molds, dies, and other means of producing replicas, reproductions, and embossing seals and

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(ii) Production, inventory, and loan records relating to items specified in paragraph (c)(1)(i) of this section, and

(2) Have custody of distinguishing flags, and be responsible for production, inventory, and loan records thereof.

(d) *Official Seal*—(1) *Description of official seal.* The Department of Veterans Affairs prescribes as its official seal, of which judicial notice shall be taken pursuant to 38 U.S.C. 302, the imprint illustrated below:



(i) The official seal includes an American eagle clutching a cord in its talons. The cord binds a 13-star U.S. flag and a 50-star U.S. flag. In the field over the eagle is a pentagon formation of stars, with one point down. The words Department of Veterans Affairs and United States of America surround the eagle, stars, and flags. A rope motif makes up the outermost ring of the seal.

(ii) The eagle represents the eternal vigilance of all our nation's veterans. The stars represent the five branches of military service. The crossed flags represent our nation's history. The gold cord that binds the two flags, which is shown clutched in the eagle's talons is symbolic of those who have fallen in the defense of liberty. Each of the various individual items placed together in the seal is a salute to the past, present, and future.

(iii) The colors used in the configuration are gold, brown, blue, white, silver, yellow, black, and red.

(iv) The colors are derived from the American flag and from nature. By invoking this symbolism, the color scheme represents the Nation's commitment to its veterans.

(2) *Use of the official seal, replicas, reproductions, and embossing seals.* (i) The Secretary or designees are authorized to affix replicas, reproductions, and embossed seals to appropriate documents, certifications, and other material for all purposes as authorized by this section.

(ii) Replicas may be used only for:

(A) Display in or adjacent to VA facilities, in Department auditoriums, presentation rooms, hearing rooms, lobbies, and public document rooms.

(B) Offices of senior officials.

(C) Official VA distinguishing flags, adopted and utilized pursuant to paragraph (e)(2) of this section.

(D) Official awards, certificates, medals, and plaques.

(E) Motion picture film, video tape, and other audiovisual media prepared by or for VA and attributed thereto.

(F) Official prestige publications which represent the achievements or mission of VA.

(G) For other similar official purposes.

(H) For such other purposes as will tend to advance the aims, purposes and mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs as determined by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary.

(iii) Reproductions may be used only on:

(A) VA letterhead stationery.

(B) Official VA identification cards and security credentials.

(C) Business cards for VA employees.

(D) Official VA signs.

(E) Official publications or graphics issued by and attributed to VA, or joint statements of VA with one or more Federal agencies, State or local governments, or foreign governments.

(F) Official awards, certificates, and medals.

(G) Motion picture film, video tape, and other audiovisual media prepared by and for VA and attributed thereto.

(H) For other similar official purposes.

(I) For such other purposes as will tend to advance the aims, purposes and mission of the Department of Veterans

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Affairs as determined by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary.

(iv) Use of the official seal and embossed seals:

(A) Embossed seals may be used only on VA legal documents, including interagency or intergovernmental agreements with States, foreign patent applications, and similar official documents.

(B) The official seal may be used only for those purposes related to the conduct of Departmental affairs in furtherance of the VA mission.

(e) *Distinguishing flag.* (1) Description of distinguishing flag.

(i) The base or field of the flag shall be blue and a replica of the official seal shall appear on both sides thereof.

(ii) A Class 1 flag shall be of nylon banner, measure 4'4" on the hoist by 5'6" on the fly, exclusive of heading and hems, and be fringed on three edges with nylon fringe, 2½" wide.

(iii) A Class 2 flag shall be of nylon banner, measure 3' on the hoist by 5' on the fly, exclusive of heading and hems, and be fringed on three edges with nylon fringe, 2½" wide.

(iv) Each flag shall be manufactured in accordance with Department of Veterans Affairs Specification X-497G. The replica of the official seal shall be screen printed or embroidered on both sides.

(2) Use of distinguishing flag. (i) VA distinguishing flags may be used only:

(A) In the offices of the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, Assistant Secretaries, Deputy Assistant Secretaries and heads of field locations designated below:

(1) Regional Offices.

(2) Medical Centers and Outpatient Clinics.

(3) Domiciliaries.

(4) Marketing Centers and Supply Depots.

(5) Data Processing Centers.

(6) National Cemetery Offices.

(7) Other locations as designated by the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration.

(B) At official VA ceremonies.

(C) In Department auditoriums, official presentation rooms, hearing rooms, lobbies, public document rooms, and in non-VA facilities in connection with events or displays sponsored by

VA, and public appearances of VA officials.

(D) On or in front of VA installation buildings.

(E) Other such official VA purposes or purposes as will tend to advance the aims, purposes and mission of the Department of Veterans Affairs as determined by the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration.

(f) *Unauthorized uses of the seal and flag.* (1) The official seal, replicas, reproductions, embossed seals, and the distinguished flag shall not be used, except as authorized by the Secretary or Deputy Secretary, in connection with:

(i) Contractor-operated facilities.

(ii) Souvenir or novelty items.

(iii) Toys or commercial gifts or premiums.

(iv) Letterhead design, except on official Departmental stationery.

(v) Matchbook covers, calendars and similar items.

(vi) Civilian clothing or equipment.

(vii) Any article which may disparage the seal or flag or reflect unfavorably upon VA.

(viii) Any manner which implies Departmental endorsement of commercial products or services, or of the commercial user's policies or activities.

(2) Penalties for unauthorized use. Any person who uses the distinguishing flag, or the official seal, replicas, reproductions or embossed seals in a manner inconsistent with this section shall be subject to the penalty provisions of 18 U.S.C. 506, 701, or 1017, providing penalties for their wrongful use, as applicable.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 302, 38 U.S.C. 501)

[55 FR 49518, Nov. 29, 1990]

### THE UNITED STATES FLAG FOR BURIAL PURPOSES

#### § 1.10 Eligibility for and disposition of the United States flag for burial purposes.

(a) *Eligibility for burial flags*—(1) *Persons eligible.* (i) A veteran of any war, of Mexican border service, or of service after January 31, 1955, discharged or released from active duty under conditions other than dishonorable. (For the purpose of this section, the term *Mexican border service* means active military, naval, or air service during the