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of not less than 6 months next preceding death. Where no inquiry has been made for or in regard to the decedent for a period of 6 months next preceding his death, he or she shall be deemed to have been abandoned.

(b) If there is no known surviving spouse or known next of kin, or if the decedent shall have been abandoned or if the request is sent and the spouse or, in proper cases, the next of kin fails to reply within the reasonable time stated in such request of the Department of Veterans Affairs for permission to perform the autopsy, the Director is hereby authorized to cause an autopsy to be performed if in the Director's discretion he or she concludes that such autopsy is reasonably required for any necessary purpose of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including the completion of official records and advancement of medical knowledge.

(c) If it is suspected that death resulted from crime and if the United States has jurisdiction over the area where the body is found, the Director of the Department of Veterans Affairs facility will inform the Office of Inspector General of the known facts concerning the death. Thereupon the Office of Inspector General will transmit all such information to the United States Attorney for such action as may be deemed appropriate and will inquire whether the United States Attorney objects to an autopsy if otherwise it be appropriate. If the United States Attorney has no objection, the procedure as to autopsy will be the same as if the death had not been reported to him or her.

(d) If the United States does not have exclusive jurisdiction over the area where the body is found the local medical examiner/coroner will be informed. If the local medical examiner/coroner declines to assume jurisdiction the procedure will be the same as is provided in paragraph (c) of this section. If a Federal crime is indicated by the evidence, the procedure of paragraph (c) of this section will also be followed.

(e) The laws of the decedent's domicile are determinative as to whether the spouse or the next of kin is the proper person to grant permission to perform an autopsy and of the question as to the order of preference among

such persons. Usually the spouse is first entitled, except in some situations of separation; followed by children, parents, brothers and sisters, etc. When the next of kin as defined by the laws of decedent's domicile consists of a number of persons as children, parents, brothers and sisters, etc., permission to perform an autopsy may be accepted when granted by the person in the appropriate class who assumes the right and duty of burial.

(f) The Director of a Department of Veterans Affairs facility is authorized to cause an autopsy to be performed on a veteran who dies outside of a Department of Veterans Affairs facility while undergoing post-hospital care under the provisions of 38 U.S.C. 1712 and 38 CFR 17.93, if the Director determines such autopsy is reasonably required for any necessary purpose of the Department of Veterans Affairs, including the completion of official records and advancement of medical knowledge. Such authority also encompasses the furnishing of transportation of the body at Department of Veterans Affairs expense to the Department of Veterans Affairs facility and return of the body. Consent for the autopsy will be obtained as provided for in paragraph (e) of this section.

[16 FR 5701, June 15, 1951, as amended at 18 FR 2414, Apr. 24, 1953; 24 FR 8330, Oct. 14, 1959; 35 FR 6586, Apr. 24, 1970; 36 FR 23386, Dec. 9, 1971; 45 FR 6939, Jan. 31, 1980. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 21966, 21968, May 13, 1996; 61 FR 29294, June 10, 1996; 68 FR 17551, Apr. 10, 2003]

VETERANS CANTEEN SERVICE

§ 17.180 Delegation of authority.

In connection with the Veterans Canteen Service, the Under Secretary for Health is hereby delegated authority as follows:

(a) To exercise the powers and functions of the Secretary with respect to the maintenance and operation of the Veterans Canteen Service.

(b) To designate the Assistant Chief Medical Director for Administration to administer the overall operation of the Veterans Canteen Service and to designate selected employees of the Veterans Canteen Service to perform the functions described in the enabling

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statute, 38 U.S.C. ch. 75, so as to effectively maintain and operate the Veterans Canteen Service.

[20 FR 337, Jan. 14, 1955, as amended at 36 FR 23386, Dec. 9, 1971; 45 FR 6939, Jan. 31, 1980. Redesignated at 61 FR 21966, May 13, 1996, as amended at 62 FR 17072, Apr. 9, 1997]

AID TO STATES FOR CARE OF VETERANS IN STATE HOMES

NOTE: Sections 17.190 through 17.200 do not apply to nursing home care in State homes. The provisions for nursing home care in State homes are set forth in 38 CFR part 51.

§ 17.190 Recognition of a State home.

A State-operated facility which provides hospital or domiciliary care to veterans must be formally recognized by the Secretary as a State home before Federal aid payments can be made for the care of such veterans. Any agency of a State (exclusive of a territory or possession) responsible for the maintenance or administration of a State home may apply for recognition by the Department of Veterans Affairs for the purpose of receiving aid for the care of veterans in such State home. A State home may be recognized if:

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 501, 1741)

(a) The State home is a facility which exists primarily for the accommodation of veterans incapable of earning a living and who are in need of domiciliary, and

(b) The majority of such veterans who are domiciliary members in the home are veterans who may be included in the computation of the amount of aid payable from the Department of Veterans Affairs, and

(c) The personnel, building and other facilities and improvements at the home are devoted primarily to the care of veterans.

[35 FR 3166, Feb. 19, 1970, as amended at 45 FR 6939, Jan. 31, 1980. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 21966, 21968, May 13, 1996; 65 FR 968, Jan. 6, 2000; 72 FR 18128, Apr. 11, 2007]

§ 17.191 Filing applications.

Applications for Department of Veterans Affairs recognition of a State home may be filed with the Under Secretary for Health, Department of Veterans Affairs. After arranging for an

inspection of the State home's facilities for furnishing domiciliary or hospital care, the Under Secretary for Health will make a recommendation to the Secretary who will notify the State official in writing of a decision.

[35 FR 3166, Feb. 19, 1970, as amended at 45 FR 6939, Jan. 31, 1980. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 21966, 21968, May 13, 1996; 65 FR 968, Jan. 6, 2000]

§ 17.192 Approval of annexes and new facilities.

Separate applications for recognition must be filed for any annex, branch, enlargement, expansion, or relocation of a recognized home which is not on the same or contiguous grounds on which the parent facility is located. When a recognized State home establishes hospital care facilities which have not been inspected and approved by the Department of Veterans Affairs, a request for separate approval of such facilities must be made.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1741, 501)

[35 FR 3166, Feb. 19, 1970, as amended at 45 FR 6939, Jan. 31, 1980. Redesignated and amended at 61 FR 21966, 21968, May 13, 1996; 65 FR 968, Jan. 6, 2000]

§ 17.193 Prerequisites for payments to State homes.

No payment or grant may be made to any State home unless the State home meets the standards prescribed by the Secretary.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1742(a))

[45 FR 6939, Jan. 31, 1980. Redesignated at 61 FR 21966, May 13, 1996; 65 FR 968, Jan. 6, 2000]

§ 17.194 Aid for domiciliary care.

Aid may be paid to the designated State official for domiciliary care furnished in a recognized State home for any veteran if the veteran is eligible for domiciliary care in a Department of Veterans Affairs facility.

(Authority: 38 U.S.C. 1741)

[45 FR 6939, Jan. 31, 1980. Redesignated at 61 FR 21966, May 13, 1996]

§ 17.196 Aid for hospital care.

Aid may be paid to the designated State official for hospital care furnished in a recognized State home for any veteran if: