

obtaining written consent of patients to release information pertaining to treatment for drug or alcohol abuse, sickle cell anemia, and infection with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before October 6, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information to Ann Bickoff, Veterans Health Administration (161A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0544" in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Ann Bickoff at (202) 273-8310.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13; 44 U.S.C., 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, VHA invites comments on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of VHA's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of VHA's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) way to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

Title and Form Numbers: Written Consent to Release Medical Records Protected by Section 7332, Title 38, United States Code (Section 1.475(a), Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations).

OMB Control Number: 2900-0544.

Type of Review: Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.

Abstract: Section 7332, Title 38, United States Code requires the VA to obtain prior written consent from a patient before information concerning treatment for alcoholism or alcohol abuse, drug abuse, sickle cell anemia, or infection with the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) can be disclosed from a patient medical record. This special consent must indicate the name of the facility permitted to make the disclosure, the name of the

individual or organization to whom the information is being released, specify the particular records or information to be released, be under the signature of the veteran and dated, it must reflect the purpose for which the information is to be used, and include a statement that the consent is subject to revocation and the date, event or condition upon which the consent will expire if not revoked before. Section 1.475(a), Title 38 Code of Federal Regulations describes the required elements that must be included in a written consent. The Privacy Act of 1974 and VA confidentiality statute, Section 5701, Title 38, United States Code also requires a written patient consent.

The written consent is obtained from the patient. Without the written consent, the VA would not be permitted to disclose this type of patient medical record information to third parties as requested by the patients. The information is used by third parties for such purposes as medical follow-up and treatment and determinations on employment applications and insurance claims. If the information collection were not conducted, the VA would not be able to be responsive to the needs of patients for the disclosure of information pertaining to their medical care.

Affected Public: Individuals or households.

Estimated Annual Burden: 1,720 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 5 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 20,640.

Dated: July 18, 1997.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0222]

Proposed Information Collection Activity: Proposed Collection; Comment Request; Extension

AGENCY: National Cemetery System, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: The National Cemetery System (NCS), Department of Veterans Affairs is announcing an opportunity for public comment on the proposed collection of certain information by the

agency. Under the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995, Federal agencies are required to publish notice in the **Federal Register** concerning each proposed collection of information, including each proposed extension of a currently approved collection, and allow 60 days for public comment in response to the notice. This notice solicits comments on requirements relating to the application for standard Government headstones or markers for unmarked graves of eligible veterans.

DATES: Written comments and recommendations on the proposed collection of information should be received on or before October 6, 1997.

ADDRESSES: Submit written comments on the collection of information to Sonja McCombs, National Cemetery System (402D), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0222" in any correspondence.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Sonja McCombs at (202) 273-5183.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Under the PRA of 1995 (Pub. L. 104-13; 44 U.S.C., 3501-3520), Federal agencies must obtain approval from the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for each collection of information they conduct or sponsor. This request for comment is being made pursuant to Section 3506(c)(2)(A) of the PRA.

With respect to the following collection of information, NCS invites comments on: (1) Whether the proposed collection of information is necessary for the proper performance of NCS's functions, including whether the information will have practical utility; (2) the accuracy of NCS's estimate of the burden of the proposed collection of information; (3) ways to enhance the quality, utility, and clarity of the information to be collected; and (4) ways to minimize the burden of the collection of information on respondents, including through the use of automated collection techniques or the use of other forms of information technology.

Title and Form Number: Application for Standard Government Headstone or Marker for Installation in a Private or State Veterans' Cemetery, VA Form 40-1330.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0222.

Type of Review: Extension of a currently approved collection.

Abstract: The form is used by the public to apply for the benefit of Government-provided headstones or markers for unmarked graves of eligible veterans in accordance with Title 38, U.S.C., Section 906. It is the source of

information used to evaluate the applicant's claim for the benefit.

Affected Public: Individuals or households; State, Local or Tribal Government.

Estimated Annual Burden: 85,000 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 15 minutes.

Frequency of Response: On occasion.

Estimated Number of Respondents: 340,000.

Dated: July 23, 1997.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.
[FR Doc. 97-20745 Filed 8-6-97; 8:45 am]

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DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

[OMB Control No. 2900-0559]

Agency Information Collection Activities Under OMB Review

AGENCY: National Cemetery System, Department of Veterans Affairs.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA) of 1995 (44 U.S.C., 3501 et seq.), this notice announces that the National Cemetery System (NCS), Department of Veterans Affairs, has submitted the collection of information abstracted below to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) for review and comment. The PRA submission describes the nature of the information collection and its expected cost and burden; it includes the actual data collection instrument.

DATES: Comments must be submitted on or before September 8, 1997.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION OR A COPY OF THE SUBMISSION CONTACT: Ron Taylor, Information Management Service (045A4), Department of Veterans Affairs, 810 Vermont Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20420, (202) 273-8015 or FAX (202) 273-5981. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0559."

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Title and Form Number: State Cemetery Data, VA Form 40-0241.

OMB Control Number: 2900-0559.

Type of Review: Reinstatement, without change, of a previously approved collection for which approval has expired.

Abstract: VA Form 40-0241 is used to collect information regarding the number of interments conducted at state veteran's cemeteries each year. This information is necessary for budget and oversight purposes. In addition, NCS's State Cemetery Grants Service uses the information to answer questions which arise during the course of the year to respond to Congressional correspondence and to project and predict the need for burial space and the demand for state grants. Burial information provides the usage rates and helps in the prediction of when a cemetery needs to develop additional acreage (request a grant to expand) or is going to close. The amount of acreage used helps the State Cemetery Grants Service and National Cemetery System anticipate closing and the requirement for additional cemeteries (either state or national). Lower burial rates may indicate problems such as ineffective outreach or poor maintenance that should be investigated. The information is used in conjunction with the information gained from the national cemeteries to consider where to place

national or state cemeteries. Title 38 CFR, Section 39.3, points out that "the Secretary and any authorized representative (in this case the State Cemetery Grants Service) will have access to and the right to examine all records, books, papers or documents related to the grant." Title 38 CFR, Section 39.5, discusses follow-up procedures once a cemetery is established and points out the need for audits.

An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to a collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. The **Federal Register** notice with a 60-day comment period soliciting comments on this collection of information was published on April 8, 1997 at page 16890.

Affected Public: State, Local or Tribal Government.

Estimated Annual Burden: 52 hours.

Estimated Average Burden Per Respondent: 60 minutes.

Frequency of Response: Annually.

Estimated Annual Responses: 52.

Send comments and recommendations concerning any aspect of the information collection to VA's OMB Desk Officer, Allison Eydt, OMB Human Resources and Housing Branch, New Executive Office Building, Room 10235, Washington, DC 20503 (202) 395-4650. Please refer to "OMB Control No. 2900-0559" in any correspondence.

Dated: July 18, 1997.

By direction of the Secretary.

Donald L. Neilson,

Director, Information Management Service.
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