

Temporary Suspension of Caisson Platoon Funeral Operations at Arlington National Cemetery

The Army has announced that caisson platoon support to funerals at Arlington National Cemetery are scheduled to resume in June 2024. Though some families will be impacted by these changes, Arlington National Cemetery and the Army are working to minimize disruptions and ensure families can appropriately honor loved ones.

What will change without the caisson platoon?

Without the caisson platoon, veterans' remains will be transported to the gravesite by a hearse or cemetery representative vehicle. All other aspects of funeral honors with escort will remain in place, including the service band, escort platoon, firing party, body bearers, and bugler, as pictured on this page.

Will any horses participate in funeral honors between now and June 2024?

Yes. Beginning in late June 2023, a riderless horse will trail the hearse in funerals for Army and Marine officers who retired at O-6 and above. In fall 2023, the Army expects that a horse with a rider will lead the hearse at all ceremonies that would have been eligible for caisson support.

Why is caisson support suspended?

Caisson support is suspended until June 2024 to ensure the herd supporting funerals at ANC can rest, recover, and sustainably support military families. Veterinary and equine experts made this assessment after evaluating horses during an initial 45-day suspension starting in May 2023.

How will the Army improve caisson operations during the suspension?

During the suspension, the Army will continue implementing its long-term plan, informed by veterinary and equine professionals, to sustainably address the health and well-being of the herd. This will include comprehensive efforts to provide horses with physical therapy, order and test new saddles, tack, and caissons, hire qualified equine experts, and expand the herd. Together, these efforts will allow the caisson platoon to safely and sustainably support military families in the years to come.



Who can I call for an update or to find out if I am affected?

Arlington National Cemetery staff will call families whose funeral plans may be altered by the suspension and resume scheduling caisson-supported funerals when the health of the herd allows. Families can call 1-877-907-8585 or visit www.arlingtoncemetery.mil if they have questions.

As ANC has additional information to share on the availability of caisson funeral support, updates will be posted on the ANC website.