

# Policy Statement

## RCMP National Memorial Cemetery at Beechwood

Policy Direction: Eligibility Criteria (2019-04-01)

*“The RCMP National Memorial Cemetery at Beechwood is open to current RCMP employees, members of the RCMP Veterans’ Association (RCMPVA) and those who may meet the criteria of the RCMP Veterans’ Association and members of their respective families.”*

Subjects who are not current RCMP employees or RCMPVA members may have their eligibility considered for approval/non approval by the RCMPVA Ottawa Division’s (ODVA) RCMP National Memorial Cemetery at Beechwood Committee.

2019-03-05: New eligibility criterion presented to and supported by the ODVA Division Executive Committee (DEC)

2019-03-12: New eligibility criterion presented to and supported by the ODVA Regional General Meeting (RGM)

### Policy Authority:

The 2006 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) dated September 7, 2006 between the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation, the RCMP veterans’ Association – Ottawa Division and the RCMP concerning the operation of a Royal Canadian Mounted Police National Memorial Cemetery, Ottawa refers.

*Administration of MOU:*

*2) Responsibilities:*

*2.3 a) “The RCMP-VA will establish confirmation of eligibility for burial in the RCMP-NMC”*

**NOTE:** The RCMPVA as defined in the 2006 MOU is the RCMP Veterans’ Association, Ottawa Division.

### Background:

In 2002 the Ottawa Division-RCMPVA entered into an understanding on behalf of its (RCMP-ODVA) members with Beechwood Cemetery to reserve a number of burial lots at the cemetery to be used for the interment of Members and retired Members and their spouses / families.

The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation dedicated a parcel of land in the cemetery (Lot 114) that will accommodate more than 4,000 gravesites. The creation of granite columbaria on the site allows for additional capacity to hold thousands of burial niches. Initially proposed as the *RCMP Veterans' Memorial Cemetery* it went on to be officially opened in 2004 as the *RCMP Memorial Cemetery*. Particular consideration was given at the time to ensure that families of members were included in the design. This focus on family and familial support for Members throughout their careers has set this RCMP-designated cemetery apart from others in Canada. The eligibility criterion was initially established by RCMP-ODVA as:

*Serving members, past serving members those being Regular members, Civilian Members and Special Constables. Immediate family including spouse, children and grandchildren (ODVA motion to adopt criteria carried 2004-11-25).*

In 2006 once the RCMP formally joined with ODVA and the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation in a new tripartite agreement, the cemetery was re-named to the *RCMP National Memorial Cemetery (RNMC) at Beechwood*. At that time, the eligibility criterion was expanded to include Federal Public Service Employees with a demonstrated service of 20 continuous years with the RCMP.

*“Open to current and retired members, civilian members, special constables, civil servants with 20 years or more of uninterrupted service with the RCMP and members of their families” (2006)*

Over the years, there has been discussion and questions about the possibility of expanding the definition to be even more inclusive by possibly reducing the number of years of Federal public service, not making the service continuous, considering municipal employees, Auxiliary Members, RCMP Reservists, Honourary Members or persons with a special positive relationship with the Force and/or the RCMPVA. As a result, a number of business cases have been considered and approved as exceptions to the 2006 criteria by the ODVA committee in consultation with the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation.

At this point in the Cemetery's history, the ODVA committee has now decided to expand the eligibility criteria for the RNMC at Beechwood. This change aligns with our collective focus on the RCMP's families, communities, supporters and contributors in the history and evolution of the Force and Canada. Consultations with the Beechwood Cemetery Foundation support this broadened criterion.

The 3 categories of eligible subjects are defined as 1) current RCMP employees with the RCMP responsible to ensure criterion is met, 2) current RCMPVA active and associate members (defined below), and 3) those who are no longer working for the RCMP nor current members of the RCMPVA. As long as subjects are found by the ODVA committee in consultation with Beechwood, to be deemed of good character and to meet RCMPVA membership requirements, they may be approved. In all categories, family members of the approved subject will remain eligible as well.

## **Royal Canadian Mounted Police Veterans' Association Membership criteria**

### **Active Member:**

*Active membership shall be available only to a person of good character who has had his/her application reviewed and approved by a Division credentials committee. Anyone who ceased to be employed, or has been dismissed or discharged from the RCMP because of discreditable conduct is prohibited from membership in the RCMP Veterans' Association.*

- a former member of the RCMP (RM) (CM),
- a former member of the RCMP Reserve,
- a former member of the RCMP Auxiliary, with minimum of 3 years service,
- a former member of the Federal Public Service (PSE) or Municipal Employee (ME) who has worked in the employment of the RCMP, with a minimum of 5 years service.

### **Associate Member:**

*Associate membership shall be available to a person of good character who has had his/her application reviewed and approved by a Division credentials committee and who is:*

- a serving Regular, Civilian, Reserve or Auxiliary member, Public Service Employee (PSE), or Municipal Employee (ME), with a minimum of 10 years service with the RCMP,
- a former Temporary Civilian Employee (TCE), with a minimum of 5 years service with the RCMP,
- the spouse / partner of an Active Member,
- the spouse / partner of a Life Member appointed prior to the adoption of By-Laws approved at the 2014 AGM,
- the widow / widower of a deceased serving or former member of the RCMP, or of a deceased member of the RCMP Veterans' Association,
- a person not otherwise defined above who is of good character, has demonstrated an affinity to the Association, has been recommended by an Active or Life Member, and has been accepted for Associate membership by ordinary resolution at a Division Meeting.

In cases where a decision is required to clarify and confirm eligibility, any of the Tri-partite partners (RCMP, The Beechwood Cemetery Foundation, RCMPVA) may call for a special meeting of the ODVA policy committee for decision.

This expansion of the eligibility criteria for the RNMC at Beechwood supports a desire to be more reflective of the total RCMP family. This change in policy will elevate interest in the national commemorative nature of the cemetery and result in the welcoming of greater numbers of employees, veterans and families from across Canada to consider the RNMC at Beechwood as their final resting place.