

CHAPTER 10

17 IN THIS VOLUME

Music for the Fallen.

MUSICIANS COORDINATOR

The pipes and drums behind the casket, the organ under the final hymn, the solo cellist at the committal – each one has to arrive, rehearse, be miked, and hit every cue on command.

The Musicians Coordinator turns a list of selected pieces into a flawless live performance: confirming selections with clergy, scheduling rehearsal, hosting the sound technician, reserving parking and seating for the performers, and arranging payment so no one is chasing honoraria a week after the funeral.

Rehearse on the actual instruments in the actual room. Sanctuary acoustics, cemetery wind, and outdoor reverb are all different from the rehearsal hall. Two microphones on every soloist, always.

PRACTICAL GUIDANCE – FROM AGENCIES WHO HAVE DONE THIS

- 01 **Rehearse on the actual instruments, in the actual room.** Sanctuary acoustics, cemetery wind, and outdoor reverb are different from the rehearsal hall.
- 02 **Two microphones on every soloist, always.** One dies. The audience never knows the backup is live.
- 03 **Pipes need space.** A pipe and drum corps in a sanctuary is louder than anyone remembers. Walk the entry and recessional so the volume is deliberate.
- 04 **Protect the bugler.** Lip fatigue, nerves, cold air — all real. Have a second bugler. Have a recorded-taps backup device charged.
- 05 **Pay them before they leave.** A musician chasing an honorarium weeks later is an indignity to avoid. Have envelopes, forms, or transfers ready at load-out.
- 06 **Thank the ensemble in writing.** A handwritten note from the Chief mailed within the week keeps department goodwill for decades.
- 07 **Listen to the rehearsal.** Walk the nave during sound check. Sit in the last pew. Sit in the overflow tent.

MODERN CONSIDERATIONS • 2026

- **Livestream music rights.** Verify performance rights for copyrighted songs (CCLI for churches; individual licensing otherwise).
- **Recording-rights agreement.** Brief musicians on whether their performance may appear on the archive delivered to the family.
- **Digital sheet music.** Tablet / iPad setups for musicians who use digital scores; backup paper copies.
- **Wireless mic interference.** Test alongside press wireless, venue Wi-Fi, and livestream transmitters.
- **Electronic payment.** Zelle, Venmo, or department direct deposit prepared in advance.

TURN THE PAGE FOR THE CHECKLIST →

CHECKLIST 10 • HONORING THE FALLEN

Musicians Coordinator checklist.

A working one-page reference. Begin at first assignment; complete through service close.

SETUP

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| ☐ Confirm music selections with family and clergy. | ☐ Lock Order of Service. |
| ☐ Confirm ensemble (pipes, organist, soloists, orchestra, military band). | ☐ Confirm rehearsal time and venue access. |
| ☐ Confirm AV / sound technician. | ☐ Confirm parking, seating, and payment. |
| ☐ Coordinate with Singers Coordinator on shared rehearsal needs. | ☐ Confirm interment musicians with Honor Guard. |

SERVICE REHEARSAL & DAY-OF

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| ☐ Number of musicians and instruments confirmed. | ☐ Time of arrival and parking reserved. |
| ☐ Equipment needed (stands, chairs, amps, piano tuning, riser). | ☐ Performance seating selected. |
| ☐ Sound check at live volume. | ☐ Wireless frequencies de-conflicted. |
| ☐ Backup playback device for pre-recorded music. | ☐ Live and backup buglers warmed and standing by. |

INTERMENT & POST

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| ☐ Performing at interment confirmed. | ☐ Graveside instruments and time of arrival. |
| ☐ Parking reserved at cemetery. | ☐ Performance location identified. |
| ☐ Weather contingency (tent, reeds, instrument warm-up). | ☐ Coordination with Honor Guard on bugler timing. |
| ☐ Payment delivered at load-out (W-9 / invoice on file). | ☐ Thank-you note to ensemble within 7 days. |