

bequest, or gift shall be for the benefit of persons in hospitals or homes, or other institutions operated by the United States but under the jurisdiction of an official other than the Secretary, the same, less expenses incurred, or the net proceeds thereof which may come into possession of the Secretary, shall be disbursed by transfer to the governing authorities of such institution, or otherwise, in such manner as the Secretary may determine, for the benefit of the persons in the institution indicated by the testator or donor, for proper purposes, as nearly as practicable in conformity with such desire of the testator or donor.

(Pub. L. 85-857, Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1255, §5103; Pub. L. 99-576, title VII, §701(91), Oct. 28, 1986, 100 Stat. 3299; renumbered §8303 and amended Pub. L. 102-40, title IV, §402(b)(1), (d)(1), May 7, 1991, 105 Stat. 238, 239; Pub. L. 102-83, §4(b)(1), (2)(E), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 404, 405.)

AMENDMENTS

1991—Pub. L. 102-40, §402(b)(1), renumbered section 5103 of this title as this section.

Pub. L. 102-83 substituted "Secretary" for "Administrator" wherever appearing.

Pub. L. 102-40, §402(d)(1), substituted "8523" for "5223".

1986—Pub. L. 99-576 substituted "the" for "his" in three places.

§ 8304. Disposition of property

If the Secretary receives any property other than moneys as contemplated by this chapter, the Secretary is authorized in the Secretary's discretion to sell, assign, transfer, and convey the same, or any interest therein claimed by virtue of such devise, bequest, or gift, for such price and upon such terms as the Secretary deems advantageous (including consent to partition of realty and compromise of contested claim of title) and the Secretary's assignment, deed, or other conveyance of any such property, executed in the name and on behalf of the United States, shall be valid to pass to the purchaser thereof such title to said property as the United States, beneficially or as trustee of the General Post Fund, may have by virtue of any such devise, bequest, or gift, and the proceedings incident thereto, subject to the conditions, limitations, and provisions of the instruments so executed by the Secretary.

(Pub. L. 85-857, Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1255, §5104; Pub. L. 99-576, title VII, §701(92), Oct. 28, 1986, 100 Stat. 3299; renumbered §8304, Pub. L. 102-40, title IV, §402(b)(1), May 7, 1991, 105 Stat. 238; Pub. L. 102-83, §4(b)(1), (2)(E), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 404, 405.)

AMENDMENTS

1991—Pub. L. 102-40 renumbered section 5104 of this title as this section.

Pub. L. 102-83 substituted "Secretary" for "Administrator" and "Secretary's" for "Administrator's" wherever appearing.

1986—Pub. L. 99-576 substituted "the Administrator" for "he" in two places, and "the Administrator's" for "his" in two places.

§ 8305. Savings provision

(a) Nothing contained in this chapter shall be construed to repeal or modify any law authoriz-

ing the acceptance of devises, bequests, or gifts to the United States for their own use and benefit or for any particular purpose specified by the donors or testators.

(b) Whenever the United States receives property and it appears that it is, or shall have been, the intention of the testator or donor that such devise, bequest, or gift be for the benefit of those persons described in section 8301 of this title, or any particular hospital or other institution operated primarily for their benefit, such property or the proceeds thereof shall be credited to the General Post Fund, and shall be used or disbursed in accordance with the provisions of this chapter.

(Pub. L. 85-857, Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1255, §5105; renumbered §8305 and amended Pub. L. 102-40, title IV, §402(b)(1), (d)(1), May 7, 1991, 105 Stat. 238, 239.)

AMENDMENTS

1991—Pub. L. 102-40, §402(b)(1), renumbered section 5105 of this title as this section.

Subsec. (b). Pub. L. 102-40, §402(d)(1), substituted "8301" for "5101".

CHAPTER 85—DISPOSITION OF DECEASED VETERANS' PERSONAL PROPERTY

SUBCHAPTER I—PROPERTY LEFT ON DEPARTMENT FACILITY

Sec.

- 8501. Vesting of property left by decedents.
- 8502. Disposition of unclaimed personal property.
- 8503. Notice of provisions of this subchapter.
- 8504. Disposition of other unclaimed property.
- 8505. Sale or other disposition of property.
- 8506. Notice of sale.
- 8507. Payment of small shipping charges.
- 8508. Relinquishment of Federal jurisdiction.
- 8509. Definitions.
- 8510. Finality of decisions.

SUBCHAPTER II—DEATH WHILE PATIENT OF DEPARTMENT FACILITY

- 8520. Vesting of property left by decedents.
- 8521. Presumption of contract for disposition of personalty.
- 8522. Sale of assets accruing to the Fund.
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- 8525. Court actions.
- 8526. Filing of claims for assets.
- 8527. Notice of provisions of subchapter.
- 8528. Investment of the Fund.

AMENDMENTS

1991—Pub. L. 102-83, §4(a)(3), (4), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 404, substituted "DEPARTMENT" for "VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION" in headings for subchapters I and II.

Pub. L. 102-40, title III, §305(b)(2), title IV, §402(c)(1), May 7, 1991, 105 Stat. 210, 239, renumbered items 5201 to 5228 as 8501 to 8528, respectively, and substituted "PATIENT" for "INMATE" in heading for subchapter II.

SUBCHAPTER I—PROPERTY LEFT ON DEPARTMENT FACILITY

AMENDMENTS

1991—Pub. L. 102-83, §4(a)(3), (4), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 404, substituted "DEPARTMENT" for "VETERANS' ADMINISTRATION".

§ 8501. Vesting of property left by decedents

(a) Personal property left by any decedent upon premises used as a Department facility,

which premises are subject to the exclusive legislative jurisdiction of the United States and are within the exterior boundaries of any State or dependency of the United States, shall vest and be disposed of as provided in this subchapter, except that—

(1) if such person died leaving a last will and testament probated under the laws of the place of such person's domicile or under the laws of the State or dependency of the United States within the exterior boundaries of which such premises or a part thereof may be, the personal property of such decedent situated upon such premises shall vest in the person or persons entitled thereto under the provisions of such last will and testament; and

(2) if such person died leaving any such property not disposed of by a last will and testament probated in accord with the provisions of paragraph (1) such property shall vest in the persons entitled to take such property by inheritance under and upon the conditions provided by the law of the decedent's domicile. This paragraph shall not apply to property to which the United States is entitled except where such title is divested out of the United States.

(b) Any officer or employee of the United States in possession of any such property may deliver same to the executor (or the administrator with will annexed) who shall have qualified in either jurisdiction as provided in subsection (a)(1); or if none such then to the domiciliary administrator or to any other qualified administrator who shall demand such property. When delivery shall have been made to any such executor or administrator in accordance with this subsection, neither the United States nor any officer or employee thereof shall be liable therefor.

(Pub. L. 85-857, Sept. 2, 1958, 72 Stat. 1256, § 5201; Pub. L. 99-576, title VII, § 701(93), Oct. 28, 1986, 100 Stat. 3299; renumbered § 8501, Pub. L. 102-40, title IV, § 402(b)(1), May 7, 1991, 105 Stat. 238; Pub. L. 102-83, § 4(a)(3), (4), Aug. 6, 1991, 105 Stat. 404.)

AMENDMENTS

1991—Pub. L. 102-40 renumbered section 5201 of this title as this section.

Subsec. (a). Pub. L. 102-83 substituted "Department" for "Veterans' Administration" in introductory provisions.

1986—Subsec. (a)(1). Pub. L. 99-576 substituted "such person's" for "his".

§ 8502. Disposition of unclaimed personal property

(a) Notwithstanding the provisions of section 8501 of this title, the Secretary may dispose of the personal property of such decedent left or found upon such premises as hereafter provided in this subchapter.

(b) If any veteran (admitted as a veteran), or a dependent or survivor of a veteran receiving care under the penultimate sentence of section 1781(b) of this title, upon such person's last admission to, or during such person's last period of maintenance in, a Department facility, has personal property situated on such facility and shall have designated in writing a person (natural or corporate) to receive such property when

such veteran, dependent or survivor dies, the Secretary or employee of the Department authorized by the Secretary so to act, may transfer possession of such personal property to the person so designated. If there exists no person so designated by such veteran, dependent, or survivor or if the one so designated declines to receive such property, or failed to request such property within ninety days after the Department mails to such designate a notice of death and of the fact of such designation, a description of the property, and an estimate of transportation cost, which shall be paid by such designate if required under the regulations herein-after mentioned, or if the Secretary declines to transfer possession to such designate, possession of such property may in the discretion of the Secretary or the Secretary's designated subordinate, be transferred to the following persons in the order and manner herein specified unless the parties otherwise agree in writing delivered to the Department, namely, executor or administrator, or if no notice of appointment received, to the spouse, children, grandchildren, parents, grandparents, siblings of the veteran. If claim is made by two or more such relatives having equal priorities, as hereinabove prescribed, or if there are conflicting claims the Secretary or the Secretary's designee may in such case deliver the property either jointly or separately in equal values, to those equally entitled thereto or may make delivery as may be agreed upon by those entitled, or may in the discretion of the Secretary or the Secretary's designee withhold delivery from them and require the qualification of an administrator or executor of the veterans' estate and thereupon make delivery to such.

(c) If the property of any decedent is not so delivered or claimed and accepted the Secretary or the Secretary's designee may dispose of such property by public or private sale in accordance with the provisions of this subchapter and regulations prescribed by the Secretary.

(d) All sales authorized by this subchapter shall be for cash upon delivery at the premises where sold and without warranty, express or implied. The proceeds of such sales after payment of any expenses incident thereto as may be prescribed by regulations, together with any other moneys left or found on a facility, not disposed of in accordance with this subchapter, shall be credited to the General Post Fund, National Homes, Department of Veterans Affairs, a trust fund provided for in section 1321(a)(45) of title 31. In addition to the purposes for which such fund may be used under the existing law, disbursements may be made therefrom as authorized by the Secretary by regulation or otherwise for the purpose of satisfying any legal liability incurred by any employee in administering the provisions of this subchapter, including any expense incurred in connection therewith. Legal liability shall not exist when delivery or sale shall have been made in accordance with this subchapter.

(e) If, notwithstanding such sale, a claim is filed with the Secretary within five years after notice of sale as herein required, by or on behalf of any person or persons who if known would have been entitled to the property under section 8501 of this title or to possession thereof under this section, the Secretary shall determine the