


SECTION:	Organization	APPROVED BY:	County Council
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REFERENCE POLICY:		REVISED:	August 9, 2023

### Flag Protocol Policy

#### PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a standard for which flag raising requests for events, organizations or community groups of significance, as well as for how flag lowering in recognition of individuals are administered for Oxford County properties bearing flags.

#### PROCEDURE

##### 1.0 For the purposes of this Policy,

1.1 “**County**” shall mean the County of Oxford.

1.2 “**Flag**” means a piece of cloth (usually rectangular) of distinctive colour, design, emblem or symbol to represent nations, provinces, states or municipalities. “Flag” is also used to describe a banner which looks like a flag bearing a symbol, logo, slogan or other message to represent charitable or non-profit organizations but does not have a flag status.

1.3 “**National Flag of Canada**” shall mean the flag approved by the Parliament of Canada as a national symbol of Canada.

##### 2.0 Flag Protocol – National Flag of Canada

The National Flag of Canada should be displayed on County owned property only in a manner befitting this important national symbol; it should not be subjected to indignity or displayed in a position inferior to any other flag or ensign. The National Flag always takes precedence over all other national flags when flown in Canada. The only flags to which precedence is given over the Canadian flag are the Queen’s Personal Canadian Flag, the Governor General’s Flag, the Flags of the Lieutenant Governors (within their province) and the Personal Canadian Flags of the other members of the Royal Family.

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The National Flag of Canada should always be flown on its own mast - flag protocol states that it is improper to fly two or more flags on the same mast (e.g. one beneath the other). Further, the following points should be kept in mind:

- The National Flag of Canada should not be used as table/seat cover, as a masking for boxes or as a barrier on a dais or platform or to cover a statue, monument or plaque for an unveiling ceremony;
- Nothing should be pinned to or sewn on the National Flag of Canada;
- The National Flag of Canada should not be signed or marked in any way (A border could be attached to the outside edge of the flag on which it would be acceptable to have signatures leaving the flag itself untouched).

When the National Flag of Canada is raised or lowered, or when it is carried past in a parade or review, everyone present should face the Flag, remain silent and remove their hats, and all should remain silent. Those in uniform should salute.

Refer to the website below for additional information regarding flag etiquette:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/canadian-heritage/services/flag-canada-etiquette/flying-rules.html>

### **3.0 Flag Protocol – Oxford County Flag**

The Oxford County Flag should be displayed in accordance with the National Flag of Canada protocol as follows:

- It is improper to fly two or more Flags on the same mast.
- The County Flag should not be used as table/seat cover, as a masking for boxes or as a barrier on a dais or platform.
- Use of the County Flag to cover a statue, monument or plaque for an unveiling ceremony is not permitted.

The County Flag should not be signed or marked in any way (a border could be attached to the outside edge of the flag on which it would be acceptable to have signatures leaving the flag itself untouched).

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#### **4.0 Half-Masting for Mourning**

Flags are flown at the half-mast position as a sign of mourning.

The following Federally accepted half-mast for mourning protocol will be followed for all County owned facilities bearing flags.

- The flag is brought to the half-mast position by first raising it to the top of the mast then immediately lowering it slowly to the half-mast position.
- The position of the flag when flying at half-mast will depend on the size of the flag and the length of the flagstaff. It must be lowered at least to a position recognizably "half- mast" to avoid the appearance of a flag which has accidentally fallen away from the top of the mast owing to a loose flag rope. As a general rule, the centre of the Flag should be exactly half-way down the mast.
- On occasions requiring that one flag be flown at half-mast, all flags flown together should also be flown at half-mast. Flags will only be half-masted on those flagpoles fitted with halyards and pulleys. Some buildings fly flags from horizontal or angled poles, without halyards, to which flags are permanently attached. Flags on these will not be half-masted.
- Flags on federal government buildings, airports, military bases and other establishments are flown at half-mast when directed by the Department of Canadian Heritage. The following are examples of the practice:
  - Across Canada and abroad, on the death of the Sovereign or a member of the Royal Family related in the first degree to the Sovereign (spouse, son or daughter, father, mother, brother or sister), the Governor General, the Prime Minister, a former governor general, a former prime minister, or a federal cabinet minister;
  - Within a province, on the death of the Lieutenant Governor, the Premier or another person similarly honoured by that province;
  - Within his/her own riding, on the death of the Member of the House of Commons, or the Member of the Provincial/Territorial Legislature;

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- At his/her place of residence, on the death of a Senator, a Canadian Privy Councillor, or a Warden.
- Flags at federal government buildings and other locations are also half-masted subject to special instructions on the death of some other person whom the government desires to honour.
- During periods of half-masting, the Flag is raised to full-mast on all federal government buildings, airports, and military bases and establishments on statutory holidays, and also on the Peace Tower while a Head of State is visiting Parliament Hill. These procedures do not apply while flags are half-masted for the death of the Sovereign when they are only raised to full-mast for the day on which the accession of the new Monarch is proclaimed.
- The flag will be half-masted on all federal buildings and establishments in Canada, including the Peace Tower, from sunrise to sunset on the following days:
  - April 28, Day of Mourning for Persons Killed or Injured in the Workplace (Workers' Mourning Day);
  - June 23, National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism;
  - Second Sunday in September, Firefighters' National Memorial Day, unless half-masting occurs near the place where a memorial is being observed, then half-masting can occur according to the prescribed order of service, until sunset;
  - Last Sunday in September, Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day, unless half-masting occurs near the place where a memorial is being observed, then half-masting can occur according to the prescribed order of service, until sunset;
  - November 11, Remembrance Day, unless half-masting occurs at the National War Memorial or a place where remembrance is being observed, then half-masting can occur at 11:00 or according to the prescribed order of service, until sunset;
  - December 6, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

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- In locations where the County of Oxford Flag is flown beside the National Flag, the federally adopted National Flag half-mast protocol will apply to the County of Oxford Flag.

In addition to the events described in the National Flag half-mast protocol, the County of Oxford Flag, along with any other Flags flown adjacent to it, will also be flown at half-mast on the following occasions:

- On the death of a Warden or former Warden of the County of Oxford;
- On the death of a Member of the County of Oxford Council;
- On the death of an active employee of the County of Oxford;
- On the death of a person whom it is desired to honour at the discretion of the Warden and CAO.

## **5.0 Flag Raisings**

On occasion, the County receives a request for the Flag of an organization to be flown. Flag raisings enhance public awareness of activities such as fundraising drives, multi-cultural events and national or independence days. To acknowledge an event, cause or campaign, a Flag can be hoisted up at the Oxford County Administration Building.

### **5.1 Flag Raisings Criteria:**

Requests for raising Flags from community organizations will be forwarded to the County Warden. The decision of the Warden is final.

Requests for Flag raising will not be forwarded to the Warden for approval for any of the following:

- Political parties / organizations, election campaigns
- Public demonstrations or rallies
- Promotion of private / profit-making business
- Religious organizations, celebrations, events or holidays
- Any event contrary to the County's policies, procedures and by-laws

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- Events or organizations not directly aligned with Oxford County services and /or Strategic Goals
- National, Independence or Republic Days
- Illegal matters, including matters contrary to corporate policies or by-laws
- Discriminatory or inflammatory matters
- Matters intended to incite hatred or disorder
- Matters which are untruthful

## 5.2 Process:

The request for a Flag raising must be submitted using the online form that shall include:

- Purpose of Flag raising
- Name of Flag to be raised
- Proposed date and duration of Flag raising (up to one week maximum)
- Organizations may request one Flag raising within one calendar year (January 1 to December 31)
- If approved by the Warden, the Clerk's Office will notify the organization, Facilities, Customer Service and the Communications Team of the approved request.
- It is the responsibility of the organization making the request to provide the appropriate Flag to the County at least one week prior to the Flag raising. Organizations are also responsible for collecting their Flag once the flag raising period has passed.
- The County of Oxford Flag will be temporarily removed to permit approved Flags to be flown in accordance with the Policy. The National Flag will not be removed under any circumstances.

# Flag Protocol Policy 3.05 August 2023

Final Audit Report

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