

Corporate Policy and Procedure



Policy	City Flag Policy
Category	Corporate
Authority	City Clerk's Office
Related Policies	Bereavement Policy ; City Flagpole Procedures
Approved By	CAO
Effective Date	Wednesday, January-24-2024
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Policy Statement

This policy applies to occasions for the raising, displaying, and half-masting of all city flags and authorized provincial and Canadian flags at all municipal facilities. This policy supersedes all previous policies or resolutions.

Purpose

To define the criteria and process for displaying, half-masting, raising or ordaining flags at City properties and facilities of the Corporation of the City of Guelph.

Definitions

The Canadian Flag: Approved by Parliament and proclaimed by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, Queen of Canada, on February 15, 1965.

The Ontario Flag: Proclaimed by the Flag Act on May 21, 1965.

The Guelph Flag: Adopted by the Guelph City Council in April 1979. The original crest on the flag was adopted when Guelph became a city, in 1879.

Cravat: Decorative piece of black fabric draped around the base of a finial, as a sign of mourning, on flag poles that cannot be flown at half-mast.

Procedures

The City of Guelph municipal facilities shall fly the Canadian, Ontario, and City Flags where provision for the display of such flags has been made in accordance with the following rules:

Appearance and Protocol for Displaying Flags

1. No flag should be displayed above or higher than the Canadian flag
2. Flags that are noticeably colour faded, torn, with holes or frayed seams, should be removed and replaced when they become unfit for service.
 - ❖ Removed damaged flags are to be neatly folded in a large envelope and sent to the City Clerk's Office for proper disposal
 - ❖ City Clerk's Office will follow [Heritage Canada guidelines](#) for disposing flags

Number of Flag Poles and Configurations

1. The Canadian Flag, takes precedence over other national flags flown on Canadian soil, and therefore will always take the position of honour
2. The position of honour changes depending on the number of flags flown
3. The orientation of the flags is determined by the viewer facing the flags
 - ❖ The viewer will be considered located at the street view and facing the front door of the City owned facility
4. In locations with only one flagpole, the Canadian flag shall be flown
5. In locations with two flagpoles, the Canadian flag should always be flown on the left flagpole
6. In locations with three flagpoles, the Canadian flag should be flown on the centre pole and the other lower tier flags on either side
7. In locations with more than three flagpoles, the Canadian flag shall be located at the farthest left flagpole, followed by flags representing other sovereign nations ordered alphabetically, followed by flags of provinces/territories, then cities, then organization
 - ❖ An additional Canadian flag may be flown at the end of the line, when there are more than three flagpoles
8. In front of City Hall where the flagpoles are perpendicular to the building's frontage, the position of honour, for the Canadian flag, is placed at the corner of Wilson and Carden street, which is a place of precedence as seen by approaching visitors
 - ❖ The order of the flags following is the Ontario flag, the City of Guelph Flag, and finally [the courtesy pole flag](#)
9. Municipal sites with more than one flagpole shall fly the Canadian flag and may choose which other flags they want to fly, so long as they follow the rules for displaying flags, as per this policy.

Criteria for Flags as Signs of Mourning

1. Exclusively City of Guelph flags shall be flown at half-mast, for the following specific occasions from the day the City is aware of the death until the end of the day of the funeral
 - a. Upon the death of a current or former Mayor
 - b. Upon the death of a current or former member of Council
 - c. Upon the death of a current city of Guelph employee
 - d. Upon request from the family and at the discretion of the Chief Administration Officer (CAO), death of a former City of Guelph employee, who departed from the City within 24 months since their passing
 - ❖ Flags to be lowered for four business days following the announcement of the passing of a staff member
 - ❖ Half-masting instructions, relating to the passing of a City staff person, from the CCO team to be sent to facilities and facility managers only following the CAOs announcement of the passing of the staff person
2. Canadian Flag, Ontario Flag, and City Flags shall be flown at half-mast, for the following specific occasions from the day the City is aware of the death until the end of the day of the funeral
 - a. Upon the death of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, or the Premier of Ontario
 - b. Upon the death of the current Governor General, or the current Prime Minister
 - c. Upon the death of a current local Member of Parliament or local Member of Provincial Parliament
 - d. Upon the death of the current 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), their spouse or their children
 - ❖ Upon death of the current Sovereign, will also dress City Flags on standing flag poles with black crepes at the base of the filial, [in the fashion described by Heritage Canada](#)
 - ❖ City Clerk's Office will store and manage the issuing of black crepes, as required
3. City of Guelph flags may be flown at half-mast in respect of a person or persons not specifically identified in this section, at the discretion of the Mayor and/or the CAO
4. CAO will determine if City Clerk's Office will be asked to contact the Federal and Provincial governments to request approval for half-masting of those flags, in addition to the City of Guelph flag, in the event of an

employee passing away while in the line of duty, as per the [Bereavement Policy](#)

5. Flags flown at City of Guelph Emergency Services stations may be half-masted as a sign of respect upon the death of a first responder in another jurisdiction within Canada. In this instance, approval must be given at the discretion of the Emergency Services' Chiefs in consultation with the Public Service Deputy Chief Administrative Officer (DCAO), based upon agreed upon parameters. Outside the parameters or geographic jurisdiction, ultimate authority to half-mast flags will reside with the CAO.

Federal and Provincial, Half-Masting Dates and Requirements

The following dates and events are identified by both the Federal Government and the Provincial Government as dates of commemoration, where Canadian, Provincial, and organizational flags are to be lowered from sunset to sunrise, or as resources permit:

- April 28th, "The Day of Mourning for Persons Killed or Injured in the Workplace" (a.k.a. Workers' Mourning Day)
- June 23rd, "National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism"
- Second Sunday of September, "Firefighters' National Memorial Day"
- Last Sunday of September, "Police and Peace Officers' National Memorial Day"
- September 30th, "National Day for Truth and Reconciliation"
- November 8th, "Indigenous Veterans Day"
- November 11th, "Remembrance Day"
 - ❖ For planned ceremonial purposes, such as the moment of silence, flags can start at full-mast and be lowered to half mast
- December 6th, "National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women"

Half-Masting of Flags Logistics

1. When hoisted to or lowered from a half mast position, a flag should be first raised to the masthead
2. A flag is at half-mast when the centre of the flag is half-way down the mast
3. The Canadian flag must be lowered last and raised first, when fulfilling half-masting requirements, to ensure compliance that no flag is ever placed higher than the Canadian Flag (see, Appearance and Protocol for Displaying Flags)
4. After or before the Canadian flag, the flag raising and lowering order must comply to the following order: the Province of Ontario Flag, the City of Guelph Flag, other organizational or courtesy flags

- ❖ If a courtesy flag is scheduled for raising on the day of a half-masting, the flag may only be raised to half-mast
- 5. Some flags cannot be lowered to half-mast or removed without the use of an aerial truck. Because the flags cannot be readily lowered to half-mast, they shall always fly at the top of the flagpole.
- 6. Staff in the office of the City Clerk shall be responsible for coordinating the half-masting of flags including:
 - a. Monitoring the Federal and Provincial government notices
 - b. Receiving requests from the CAO, or Mayor's offices regarding deaths of staff or other political figures
 - c. Notifying the relevant staff of all facilities, of the half-masting of flags, with respect to the reason, and the duration that the flag shall be flown at half-mast
- 7. The City Clerk shall maintain an inventory of all government flags flown at all City facilities
- 8. The appropriate staff at each location shall be required to lower and raise the flags upon notification
- 9. In the event the half-masting request falls upon non-working hours for a facility, such as holidays and weekends, the flag can be raised on the earliest available date in advance of the commemorative date and lowered on the earliest available date after the commemorative date