



Policy Title: City of Calgary Half-Mast Flag Policy

Policy Number: CC037

Report Number: PAC2009-10

Approved by: Council

Effective Date: 2009 March 16

Business Unit: City Clerk's Office

BACKGROUND

The flying of flags at half-mast is strong visual statement that speaks to the sense of loss shared by all citizens.

The City of Calgary's Half-Mast Flag Policy is adapted to incorporate practices by both Alberta Protocol and Canadian Heritage.

PURPOSE

The purpose is to establish policies and procedures when half-masting flags at City of Calgary properties and buildings to ensure The City's practice of lowering flags to half-mast is exercised in a consistent and appropriate manner.

POLICY

- The City of Calgary will fly flags at half-mast lower flags to half-mast on specific occasions to commemorate a solemn occasion.
- The jurisdiction of flags at The City of Calgary falls under the directive of the Mayor's Office acting through The City Manager's Office and City Clerk's - Protocol.
- This policy takes precedence over all other half-mast policies at The City (policies or procedures which departments or business units may have for half-masting). There are exceptions to this statement as noted under the Guidelines section #5 which accommodates departments in specific circumstances who have Flag policies.
- City Clerk's - Protocol administers the flag policy and is the principle contact for all flag protocol. Concerns regarding flag decisions are to be directed to the City Clerk's Office.
- City Clerk's - Protocol consults with the Government of Alberta Protocol Office in situations requiring advice regarding half-masting.
- Flags shall be lowered following notification by e-mail from City Clerk's - Protocol to the affected areas. Depending on the circumstance flags may be lowered only at specific City locations (i.e. City Hall or Municipal Complex) or lowered at all City properties and buildings.
- This policy may be revised or updated as circumstances require.



GENERAL HALF-MAST GUIDELINES

- The lowering of flags to half-mast is at the directive of:
 - the Prime Minister's Office acting through Canadian Heritage;
 - the Premier's Office acting through Alberta Protocol or;
 - the Mayor's Office acting through The City Manager's Office and City Clerk's Office - Protocol.

- Alberta Protocol advises The City of Calgary through an e-mail distribution when The Province is placing flags at half-mast and for what period. This does not include occasions which are directly related to The City of Calgary.
- Flags may be flown at half-mast at City Hall, the Municipal Building or all City facilities depending on the circumstance.
- On the occasion requiring that flags be flown at half-mast, all flags in a group or those which are together shall be flown at half-mast.
- In the case of a banner, the banner is removed (see definitions of a banner pg. 7)

CITY OF CALGARY HALF-MAST GUIDELINES

- 1. Flags will be flown at half-mast on *all* City of Calgary properties and buildings from the time of notification of death until sunset the day of the funeral or the memorial service for the following individuals:**
 - the Sovereign
 - Member of the immediate Royal Family
 - Governor General of Canada or former Governor Generals
 - Prime Minister of Canada or former Prime Ministers
 - Lieutenant Governor of Alberta or former Lieutenant Governors
 - Premier of Alberta or former Premier
 - Mayor of Calgary (current)

- 2. Flags will be flown at half-mast at City Hall and any City of Calgary properties and buildings in their ward from notification of death until sunset for:**
 - Members of Council (current)

- 3. Flags will be flown at half-mast at City Hall on the day of the funeral or the memorial service for the following individuals:**
 - Federal Cabinet Minister from Alberta
 - Provincial (Alberta) Cabinet Minister
 - a Calgary MP or a Calgary MLA, including City buildings in the member's riding
 - a Senator from Calgary
 - Former Mayor of Calgary



4. City of Calgary Employees

- When a City employee from any business unit dies in the line of duty by any position he or she occupies within our organization, The City may lower flags.
- City Clerk's - Protocol will consult with the Mayor and City Manager regarding the decision for the extent of half-masting and its duration. Guidelines are as follows:
 - If the business unit/department headquarters have flags, those flags at the headquarters may be lowered to half-mast upon notification of death until sunset the day of the funeral or memorial service.
 - Flags at City Hall will be flown at half-mast from sunrise to sunset on the day of the funeral or memorial service.
 - Flags will not be lowered at all City properties and buildings.

5. City Departments or Business Units

- The intent of this policy and procedures is to be flexible to the unique circumstances of City business units.
- Flags may be flown at half-mast as a result of a significant event or circumstance to accommodate business units that have half-masting policies or procedures in place which are not included in this policy.
 - Decisions will be made on a case by case basis with City Clerk's - Protocol.
 - City Clerk's - Protocol will send out the notice by e-mail if any flags are to be flown at half-mast.
- Existing flag policies or procedures which departments or business units have for flying flags at half-mast at their headquarters to honour former members on the day of the funeral or memorial service, will continue to be observed (i.e. Calgary Police Service).

6. Special Days: Flags will be flown at half-mast to mark anniversaries or occasions

- **April 9, *National Day of Remembrance of the Battle of Vimy Ridge:***
Flags at the Municipal Complex will be flown at half-mast from sunrise to sunset.
- **April 28, *National Day of Mourning*** (for those who have suffered and died in the workplace):
Flags at all City properties and buildings will be flown at half-mast from sunrise to sunset.
- **June 23, *National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism:***
Flags at the Municipal Complex will be flown at half-mast from sunrise to sunset.
- **Last Sunday in September of each year, *Police and Peace Officers National Memorial Day*** (to honour fallen Canadian Police and Peace Officers)



Flags will be flown at half-mast at the Municipal Building Complex, Police Stations, Fire and EMS from sunrise to sunset.

- **November 11, *Remembrance Day*:**

Flags will be flown at half-mast from sunrise to sunset at all City properties and buildings.

If a City facility located by a cenotaph or place where a service is taking place, half-masting is to occur from 11:00 am to sunset or at the time of the service until sunset.

- **December 6, *National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women*:**

Flags at the Municipal Complex are flown at half-mast from sunrise to sunset.

7. Special Circumstances

- Flags may be flown at half-mast as a result of a significant event or circumstance.
- Should such an occasion arise, City Clerk's - Protocol will consult with the Mayor's Office and Alberta Protocol. A decision will be made as to whether any flags at City facilities be flown at half-mast, and if so, the extent and duration.

8. To Commemorate the death of a member of the Canadian Forces (Albertan)

In a show of respect for members of Canadian Forces born or stationed in Alberta, flags will be flown at half-mast as follows:

a. Members of Canadian Forces stationed or born in Alberta (non Calgary):

- Flags will be flown at half-mast at City Hall on the day(s) of the funeral(s).

b. Members of Canadian Forces from Calgary (born in Calgary or has made Calgary home or a Calgary reservist):

- Flags will be flown at half-mast at City Hall upon notification of death until sunset the day of the funeral.
- In the case of a City of Calgary employee on leave as a reservist:
 - Flags at the employee's department headquarters may be flown at half-mast from notification of death until sunset day of the funeral.
 - Flags will be flown at half-mast at all civic properties and buildings on the day of the funeral(s).

c. Special Circumstances related to Members of the Canadian Forces:

- As situations may vary, City Clerk's - Protocol will discuss any special circumstances with the City Manager's Office & Mayor's Office and determine appropriate action.
- Business Units who have inquiries about special circumstances are to contact City Clerk's - Protocol to discuss.



PROCEDURES for LOWERING FLAGS

- City Clerk's - Protocol shall notify City departments and business units (civic properties) by e-mail when flags are to be flown at half-mast at their location. This includes the duration (effective date for lowering as well as the date to raise the flags).
- Where necessary, Protocol will follow up by phone to clarify procedures.
- City business units do not have approval to lower flags and fly at half-mast unless directed to do so by City Clerk's - Protocol, (except in circumstances noted in under City of Calgary Half-mast Guidelines #5 – City Business Units).

Lowering flags to half-mast at the Municipal Complex (City Hall and the Municipal Building)

- City Clerk's - Protocol shall notify Corporate Properties & Buildings by e-mail when flags are to be flown at half-mast at City Hall, and or the Municipal Building. This notification will include the duration (both effective date for lowering as well as the date to raise the flags).
- City Clerk's - Protocol shall inform The Mayor's Office, City Manager's Office and 3-1-1 by e-mail.

Lowering flags at other City properties and buildings

- Other civic properties and facilities may be requested to have flags at their buildings flown at half-mast in addition to those at City Hall and the Municipal Building. Protocol will notify these Business Units / areas directly.
- City Clerk's - Protocol shall notify City business units (civic properties) by e-mail when flags are to be flown at half-mast at specific or all City buildings/facilities. This includes the duration (effective date for lowering as well as the date to raise the flags).
- Business Units must raise their flags to full mast as requested.
- Flags are not to continue to fly at half-mast longer than the timeframe noted.
- Buildings/facilities which are unable to follow procedures are to contact City Clerk's - Protocol so that appropriate arrangements can be made.

RESPONSIBILITIES

City Clerk's – Protocol

- Protocol administers this policy and all half-masting of flags.
- Protocol will notify the Mayor's Office, City Manager's Office and 3-1-1 whenever flags are lowered to half-mast.
- Protocol will contact the Mayor's Office in situations where further discussion or decisions must be made regarding lowering flags at City facilities to half-mast.



- Protocol is responsible for notifying the appropriate areas by e-mail at The City to fly flags at half-mast.
- City Clerk's - Protocol sends out all notices to half-mast flags at all City properties (with the exception of Calgary Police Service when they lower flags for retired members).

City Departments and Business Units

- City departments and business units shall half-mast the appropriate flags in accordance with this policy and upon direction of City Clerk's – Protocol.

DEFINITIONS

Half-mast

- Position of a flag approximately half way up the mast or pole.
- Flying flags at half-mast is a symbol of respect, mourning or distress and observed in many countries.
- The terms half-mast and half-staff are interchangeable terms although countries vary as to which term they use.
- The correct term in Canada is always half-mast; the Government of Canada and provincial governments always refer to flags at half-mast.

City Hall

- 700 Macleod Trail SE (south east corner of 7 Ave and Macleod Trail)
- Sandstone building completed in 1911
- Often referred to as Historic City Hall or Old City Hall

Municipal Complex

- Three buildings make up the Municipal Complex -- City Hall, the Municipal Building and Administration Building

Municipal Building

- 800 Macleod Trail SE
- 12 storey, blue glass building completed in 1985
- The Municipal Plaza is on the west side of the building

Flag

- An emblem or symbol – for this policy we are referring to flags of nations, provinces, states or municipalities.
- Flags consist of a rectangular piece of cloth of distinctive colour and design.



Banner

- A rectangular piece of cloth bearing a symbol, logo, slogan or other message and does not have flag status.
- Examples would be centennial banners, City Department Banners, banners for organizations or companies.

Enquiries

City Clerk's Office - Protocol
The City of Calgary, City Clerk's Office (#8007)
P.O. Box 2100, Stn. M
Calgary, Alberta T2P 2M5

Email: ccecep@calgary.ca
Phone: 403-268-5861
Fax: 403-268-2362

Additional Information

[Department of Canadian Heritage's guidelines for flag etiquette](#)

[City of Calgary Flag Policy](#) (general, dignitaries & flag raisings)

AMENDMENTS

None. New policy