

Facilities 6005 Flag Etiquette	Administrative Application	
	Last Reviewed / Approved on:	October 21, 2024
	References:	Canadian Heritage: National Flag of Canada Etiquette Government of Saskatchewan: Flagging Protocols and Procedures Displaying of National Flag Reference Policy 12 – Role of the Director
	Status:	Operational

Application

National Flag of Canada Protocol

1. Dignity of the Flag

- a. The National Flag of Canada should be displayed only in a manner befitting the national emblem; it should not be subjected to indignity or displayed in a position inferior to any other flag or ensign.
- b. The Canadian 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 personal standards of members of the Royal Family and of Her Majesty's representatives in Canada. The Canadian flag should always be flown aloft and free.
- c. It is improper to use the National Flag of Canada as a table or seat cover or as a masking for boxes, barriers, or intervening space between floor and ground level on a dais or platform.
- d. While it is not technically incorrect to use the National Flag of Canada to cover a statue, monument or plaque for an unveiling ceremony, it is not common practice to do so and should be discouraged.
- e. When the National Flag of Canada is raised or lowered, or when it is carried past in a parade or review, those present should face the flag, people should remove their hats, and all should remain silent. Those in uniform should salute.

2. Displaying the Flag

The manner in which flags may be displayed in Canada is not governed by legislation but by established practice and convention. Given the important symbolism of flags, they should always be treated with respect.

The National Flag of Canada can be flown day and night without needing illumination after sundown.

a. Flat Against a Surface Horizontally or Vertically

When flown horizontally, the National Flag is flown with the maple leaf pointing upwards. When hung vertically, the flag should be placed so that the upper part of the leaf points to the left, from the point of view of the observer facing the flag.

b. On a Staff/Flag Pole

The top left (first) quarter or canton should be placed in the position nearest the top of the staff. When carried, the flag should be aloft and free.

When possible, the National Flag will be flown on its own flagpole, with the sleeve nearest to the pole. The canton should be placed in the position nearest the top of the flagpole or mast.

The canton, which is the most important position on a flag, should always be located in the top left, regardless of how the flag flies. That is why, when the National Flag of Canada is flown vertically, the maple leaf must point to the left, so that the canton remains in the upper left corner.

c. On a Flag Rope (Halyard)

If flown on a flag rope (halyard), either horizontally or at an angle, the flag is flown in the same manner as on a flagpole. The canton should be raised as closely as possible to the top with the flag rope taut.

d. Sharing the Same Base as Other Flags

When two flags are displayed, the position of honour is the farthest to the left when an observer is facing the display. When three flags are flown, the position of honour is in the centre. When more than three flags are displayed, the position of honour is the farthest to the left when an observer is facing the display.

e. Position of Honour

Due consideration should be given to flag etiquette and precedence whenever the National Flag of Canada or other sovereign national flag or provincial/territorial flag is displayed. If a purely decorative effect is desired without the involvement of precedence, it is better to confine the display to flags of lesser status; for example, house flags, pennants or coloured bunting.

f. Displayed Alone

- i. It is improper to fly the National Flag with another flag and it shall always be flown on its own flagpole.
- ii. When the National Flag of Canada is flown alone on top of or in front of a building where there are two flagpoles, it should be flown on the flagpole to the left of the observers facing the flag.
- iii. When the National Flag of Canada is displayed in the church or on a speaker's platform, it should be against the wall, or on a staff on the celebrant's or speaker's right as he/she faces the audience.

g. Displayed with Provincial, Territorial, Or Other Flags

- i. The National Flag of Canada, when flown or paraded, takes precedence over all other national flags. When flown with other flags, all flags should be flown on separate staffs when possible and at the same height, all being of the same size, with the National Flag of Canada occupying the position of honour.
- ii. The National Flag should be raised first and lowered last, unless the number of flags permits their being raised and lowered simultaneously.
- iii. With another flag, the National Flag of Canada should be on the left of the observer facing the flags; both should be at the same height.
- iv. When crossed with another flag, the National Flag of Canada should be on the left of the observer facing the flags; the staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.
- v. When provincial and territorial flags are flown with the National Flag of Canada, the order is based on precedence, which is determined by the date of entry into Confederation of the provinces and the creation of the territories.

3. **Flag Carried in Procession**

If carried with other flags, in a single file, the National Flag of Canada should always lead.

4. Half-Masting for Mourning

The following are examples of practices for half-masting of the flag:

- a. 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.
- b. Within a province, on the death of the Lieutenant Governor, the Premier or another person similarly honoured by that province.
- c. Within the member's own riding, on the death of the Member of the House of Commons, or the Member of the Provincial/Territorial Legislature.
- d. On the death of a Canadian Privy Councillor, a Senator, or a Member of the House of Commons.
- e. On the death of a person whom it is desired to honour.

Note: "Death" may be taken to include the day of death and up to and including the day of the funeral.

5. Disposal of the Flag

Flags made of natural fibres (wool, cotton, linen) should be burned in a dignified manner, privately, without ceremony or public attention being drawn to the destruction of the material.

Flags made of synthetic material (nylon or polyester) should not be burned due to environmental damage and potential fire hazard. They should be respectfully torn into strips, with each element of the flag reduced to a single colour, so that the remaining pieces do not resemble a flag. The individual pieces should then be placed in a bag for disposal – the shreds of fabric should not be reused or fashioned into anything.

Saskatchewan Provincial Flag Protocol

1. Introduction

Rules of flag etiquette are not mandatory for all organizations or individuals but are intended as guidelines for the flying of flags by the Government of Saskatchewan. General guidelines are as follows:

- a. Flags should be treated with dignity and respect and be flown or displayed properly.
- b. Responsibility for interpreting policy and guidelines for the flying of flags rests with the Protocol Office.

2. Half-Masting of Flags

- a. Flags are half-masted as a sign of respect and mourning upon death.
- b. Flags are normally flown at half-mast from the time of notification of death, up to and including the day of the funeral. Normally at any death involving half-masting of flags at provincial government buildings, Regional Directors will be notified from SaskBuilds and Procurement, following direction from the Protocol Office.
- c. When a flag is flown at the half-mast position or lowered from it, it is first raised to the full-mast height and then lowered. At half-mast, the centre of the flag should be exactly halfway down the mast height.
- d. Flags will be flown at half-mast at all provincial government buildings, unless otherwise specified below, in the case of the death of:
 - i. The Sovereign, or a member of the Royal Family related in the first degree to the Sovereign.
 - ii. Governor General or former Governor General of Canada.
 - iii. Prime Minister of Canada.

- iv. Chief Justice of Canada.
- v. Lieutenant Governor or former Lieutenant Governor of Saskatchewan.
- vi. Premier or former Premier of Saskatchewan.
- vii. Chief Justice or former Chief Justice of Saskatchewan.
- viii. Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.
- ix. Provincial Cabinet Ministers.
- x. Members of the Legislative Assembly, at the Legislative Building and at public buildings in the Member's constituency.
- xi. Federal Cabinet Ministers from Saskatchewan.
- xii. Senators from Saskatchewan, at public buildings in the place of residence of the Senator.
- xiii. Members of Parliament from Saskatchewan, at public buildings in the Member's constituency.
- xiv. Chief Justice of the Court of King's Bench, Justices of the Court of Appeal and the Court of King's Bench, and Chief Judge of the Provincial Court, at the Legislative Building and at the Court House where the Chief Justice, Justice or Chief Judge presided.
- xv. Provincial Court Judges, at the Court House where the Judge presided.
- xvi. Mayor of a city, town or village, at public buildings in the municipality concerned.

Note:

Flags are not normally half-masted for foreign or Commonwealth heads of state or government, as these are recognized by federal jurisdiction; nor for federal Ministers, Senators or Members of Parliament who are not from Saskatchewan.

3. Precedence and Etiquette

a. Order of Precedence

When the provincial flag is flown in display with one or more other flags, the order of precedence is:

- i. The National Flag of Canada
- ii. Other national flag (e.g. visit of foreign ambassador)

- iii. The Provincial Flag
- iv. Other flags, in order of seniority.
- b. Lieutenant Governor's Standard

The Lieutenant Governor's Standard, or vice-regal flag, is the personal emblem of the Sovereign's representative in Saskatchewan. It may only be used when the Lieutenant Governor is present. It may be flown at the Lieutenant Governor's residence and office; at the Legislative Building during vice-regal occasions such as the Opening of the Legislature; at or in other public buildings when the Lieutenant Governor is personally present in official capacity; and on the Lieutenant Governor's vehicle or the provincial landau. The vice-regal flag takes precedence over others. It is not half-masted.
- c. Displays
 - i. Flag may be placed flat against the wall, horizontally or vertically. The Saskatchewan flag, when horizontal, shows the Shield of Arms on its left. When flags are vertical, they should be displayed as follows (as viewed by spectators):
 - (1) Canadian flag – upper part of the Maple Leaf to the left and the stem to the right.
 - (2) Saskatchewan flag – upper part of the Shield of Arms should be on the left.
 - ii. When used:
 - (1) In the chancel of a church, or on a speaker's platform – flag should be displayed to the right of the clergyman or speakers.
 - (2) In the body of the church or auditorium – flag should be displayed to the right of the audience or congregation.
 - (3) Horizontally flat against the wall, at rear of platform – flag should be above the speaker.
 - iii. Flags should never be used to:
 - (1) Cover a speaker's table
 - (2) Drape the front of a platform
 - iv. **Under no circumstances should flags be allowed to touch the floor.**
 - v. Flags used as an unveiling drape for monuments, tablets, pictures or caskets of the dead, must be properly draped and prevented from falling

to the ground or floor.

4. **Storage and Disposal**

a. Folding Flag for Storage

Follow this procedure:

- i. Fold flags lengthways in half.
- ii. Fold again lengthways, in half.
- iii. Depending on size of flag – continue to fold lengthways until size is at manageable proportions (e.g. 4" to 6").
- iv. Now fold flag in half vertically.
- v. And fold flag once more vertically.
- vi. Take loose halyard (rope) and wrap it around the flag one complete turn and halfway again. Then slip a loop through the previous rope turn.
- vii. Flag can now be stored and is ready for use.

b. Disposal of Flags

Disposal of worn, faded or frayed flags should be only by burning and be carried out quietly and without ceremony. It is not considered an act of disrespect to burn an unserviceable flag.