



City of Riverside FLAG POLICY

Approved by the City Council on January 17, 2023

I. POLICY:

A. Purpose

To provide the designated facility contact a set of guidelines to ensure the uniform handling and display of flags at City facilities.

B. Authority

This policy was approved by City Council on January 17, 2023.

II. POLICY GUIDELINES:

This policy establishes formal guidelines and procedures to handle and display the flag of the United States as well as the flag of the State of California and the flag of the City of Riverside per Federal and State statutes and regulations, including, but not limited to, United States Code, Title 4, Chapter 1 and California Government Code section 430 et seq., and compliance with Public Law 94-344 "Federal Flag Code." This policy also provides guidelines and procedures on commemorative flags.

1. Per California Government Code section 431(a), the flag of the United States and the flag of the State of California shall be prominently displayed upon or in front of the public buildings of the City.
2. Per California Government Code section 434.7, any flag of the United States or the flag of the State of California purchased by the state or local government shall be made in the United States.
3. The flag of the United States may only be flown at half-mast in accordance with the guidelines set forth at <https://www.usa.gov/flag>, which is an official website of the United States Government the flag of the State of California shall be flown at half-mast if the flag of the United States is flown at half-mast or on order of the Governor.

At City facilities, except for City Hall, there may be one flagpole where the flag of the United States shall be flown, and the flag of the State of California may be flown.

At City Hall, the flag order will be the United States flag, the flag of the State of California, the flag of the City of Riverside, and any City Council approved commemorative flag.

The City flag, if displayed, must be the redesign approved by City Council on December 8, 2020, which has a large gold bell and rain cross floating on a dominant navy blue background. The wavy powder blue line symbolizes the Santa Ana River, and the wavy gold line symbolizes the prominent hills around the City, among them Mount Rubidoux and Box Springs Mountain.

Proper Handling and Display of Flags

The following are the guidelines for the proper handling and display of the flags:

1. The flags should be raised and lowered by hand.
2. Display flags only from sunrise to sunset unless they are properly illuminated during darkness.
3. When displayed with State, City, or commemorative flags, no such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the right of the flag of the United States. In addition, no such flag shall be larger than the flag of the United States.
4. When flags are displayed on a single pole, the order from top to bottom shall be the flag of the United States, the flag of the State of California, and if displayed, the flag of the City of Riverside and then, the commemorative flag.
5. All flags shall be lowered slowly and with dignity.
6. The flag should not be displayed on days when the weather is inclement unless it is an all-weather flag.
7. The flag may be flown at half-mast only by order of the President of the United States or the Governor of the State of California. (Notifications to lower the flag to half-mast will be sent via e-mail distribution by a General Services staff member).
8. When it is to be flown at half-mast, the flag should be hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-mast position; but before lowering the flag for the day, it should again be raised to the peak.
9. Half-mast is meant as hauling down the flag to one-half distance between the top and bottom of the staff. On Memorial Day, display the flag at half-mast until noon only; then hoist to the top of the staff.
10. When flown from adjacent staffs, the stars and stripes should be hoisted first and lowered last.
11. Do not let the flag touch anything beneath it: ground, floor, water.
12. When it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, the flag should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.

Improper Handling and Display of Flags

The following are examples of the improper handling and display of the flag:

1. Never dip the flag of the United States for any person or thing, even though state flags, regimental colors and other flags may be dipped as a mark of honor.
2. Do not display the flag of the United States with the union down, except as a signal of distress.

3. The flag of the United States should never be draped or drawn back in folds. Draped red, white, and blue bunting should be used for decoration, with the blue at the top and red at the bottom.
4. The flag of the United States may be carried horizontally, but always aloft.
5. Do not fasten or display the flag of the United States in a way that will permit it to be damaged or soiled.

Commemorative Flags

A commemorative flag under this policy means a flag that identifies with a specific date, historical event, cause, or group of people, whereby the City honors or commemorates the date, event, cause, or people by flying the flag. Commemorative flags shall be displayed at City Hall and where possible at other City facilities upon City Council action, consistent with the City's vision, mission, and strategic plan. Following are the guidelines for the approval and display of commemorative flags.

1. Commemorative flags shall be displayed only at City Hall and select City facilities that have multiple flagpoles and/or a flagpole tall enough to accommodate multiple flags.
2. No more than one commemorative flag shall be displayed on a flagpole concurrently.
3. Commemorative flags may be displayed only as authorized by resolution of the City Council and as an expression of the City's official sentiments.
4. The City will not display a commemorative flag based on a request of a third party or to sponsor the expression from a third party.
5. Commemorative flags shall be displayed for a period of time that is reasonable or customary for the subject that is to be commemorated, but no longer than 30 continuous days with the exception of Parks facilities and the Veteran's Memorial that continuously display the Prisoner of War flag.
6. In January of each year, the City Council will consider the display of commemorative flags for the upcoming year. After an initial agendaized discussion, staff will return to a subsequent City Council meeting with a resolution supporting the City's display of the flag(s) chosen. A majority of the City Council must vote affirmatively for said resolution.
7. In addition to the annual consideration, a Council Member may, at any time during the year, suggest the display of additional flags meeting the criteria of this policy. Consideration would be by a two-step process where on an agenda the Council considers the request, and if supported by a motion approved by a majority of the Councilmembers, staff would return with a formal resolution authorizing display of a commemorative flag. A majority of the City Council must vote affirmatively for said resolution.

Responsibility:

1. Designated Facility Flag Contact: Verify the correct method of handling and displaying flags per City policy.
2. General Services Department: Notify departments through blanket email when the President of the United States or the Governor of the State of California issues a proclamation to lower the flag to half-mast.
3. City Council: In January of each year, and as needed, review and provide direction on the display of commemorative flags. No commemorative flag may be displayed without City Council approval.