

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Purpose: To provide Los Angeles County Fire Department (Department) personnel with the knowledge necessary for the proper display and maintenance for the flags of the United States of America (U.S.), State of California, County of Los Angeles (County), organizational, cities, and localities.
- B. Scope: This instruction applies to all Department personnel who may be called upon to display flags at Department facilities.
- C. Administrator: The deputy fire chief of the Administrative Services Bureau (ASB) shall be responsible for the content, revision, and periodic review of this policy.
- D. Authority: Flag Code, Title 36., Chapter 10 as amended by P.L. 344, 94th Congress, Approved July 7, 1976. Public Law 829, 77th Congress, Chapter 806 – 2nd Session, H.J. Res. 359.

II. RESPONSIBILITY

- A. All personnel shall be responsible for knowing the proper procedures for display, storage, and care of the flags used by the Department.

III. POLICY

- A. Display of the flag:
 - 1. It is the universal custom to display the U.S. flag from sunrise to sunset on stationary flagstaffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed 24 hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness each day of the week at all Department administrative sites that have flagstaffs and meet the requirements herein.
 - 2. The flag shall not be flown during rainy or extremely adverse weather conditions, or when damage to the flag may occur.
 - 3. No other flag or pennant should be placed above, or, if on the same level, to the right of the U.S. flag.
 - a. The U.S. flag, when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs, should be on the right, the flag's own right, and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag.

- b. The U.S. flag should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when several flags of states or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.
 - c. When flags of states, cities or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the U.S. flag, the latter should always be at the peak. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the U.S. flag should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the U.S. flag or to the right of the U.S. flag.
 - d. When used on a speaker's platform, the flag if displayed flat, should be displayed above and behind the speaker.
 - 1) When displayed from a staff in a public auditorium, the U.S. flag should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the speaker's right as they face the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the speaker or to the right of the audience.
4. Flag display: Flags should be flown in the following order starting at the peak of the staff: U.S., State of California, County (if requested), city or locality (if requested). The height of the flagstaff will dictate the number of flags that may be flown; a single flagstaff may accommodate up to three flags. Additional flags may require additional flagstaffs.

B. Respect for the flag:

1. No disrespect should be shown to the U.S. flag; the flag should not be dipped to any person or thing. State flags and organizational flags are to be dipped as a mark of honor.
2. The flag should never be displayed with the union down, except as a signal of extreme danger to life or property.
3. The flag should never touch anything beneath it, such as the ground, the floor, or water.
4. The flag should never be fastened, displayed, used, or stored in such a manner as to permit it to be easily torn, soiled, or damaged in any way.
5. During the ceremony of hoisting or lowering the flag, or when the flags are passing in a parade or in review, all persons present except those in uniform should face the flag and stand at attention with the right

hand over the heart. Those present in uniform should render the military salute.

- C. Half-staff: On Memorial Day, the flag should be displayed at half-staff until noon only, then raised to the top of the staff.
1. By order of the President, the flag shall be flown at half-staff upon the death of principal figures of the U.S. Government and the Governor of a state, territory, or possession, as a mark of respect to their memory. In the event of the death of other officials or dignitaries, the flag is to be displayed at half-staff according to Presidential instructions or orders, or in accordance with a resolution of the County Board of Supervisors. In the event of the death of a present or former official of the government of any state, territory, or possession of the U.S., the Governor of that state, territory, or possession may proclaim that the national flag shall be flown at half-staff.
 2. The flag shall be flown at half-staff 30 days from the death of the President or a former President; ten days from the death of the Vice President, the Chief Justice, or a retired Chief Justice of the U.S., or the Speaker of the House of Representatives; from the day of death until interment of an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a Secretary of an executive or military department, a former Vice President, or Member of Congress.
 3. The flag shall be flown at half-staff from the day of death until interment of the following: Governor, Lieutenant Governor, Presiding Officer of the State Senate, Speaker of the State Assembly, Chief Justice of the State Supreme Court, Member of the County Board of Supervisors, Presiding Judge of Superior Court, and line-of-duty death of a firefighter or peace officer.
 4. The flag shall be flown at half-staff on Fallen Firefighters Memorial Day and Peace Officers Memorial Day.

IV. PROCEDURES

- A. General: Uniform personnel shall salute, and non-uniform personnel shall place their hand over their heart, when:
1. Listening to the National Anthem beginning on the first note and shall be held until the last note.
 2. Saying the Pledge of Allegiance, and held throughout the Pledge.
 3. Hoisting or lowering of the flag.

4. The flag is passing in a parade.

Note: It should be noted that when in uniform, during invocations, benedictions, prayers, and the passing of a funeral procession, it is proper to place the hat over the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart.

- B. Half-staff: The term “half-staff” means the position of the flag when it is one-half the distance between the top and the bottom of the staff.
1. The flag, when flown at half-staff, should be hoisted to the peak for an instant and then lowered to the half-staff position. The flag should be again raised to the peak before it is lowered for the day.
 2. If only one flagstaff is present the U.S. flag will be flown alone at half-staff. If multiple flagstaffs are present, the state flag and/or organizational flags shall also be at one half-staff with the U.S. flag raised slightly above the other flags.
- C. Hoisting and lowering: The flag should be hoisted quickly to the top of the staff and lowered slowly with dignity. Never let the flag touch the ground. The U.S. flag should be folded using the triangular fold union out. When storing the folded flags, the U.S. flag should be stored on top of the other flags.
- D. Disposal of the U.S. flag: The U.S. flag, when it is in such condition that it is no longer a fitting emblem for display, should be destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning during the Disposal of Unserviceable Flags Ceremony. Flags flown by the Department once deemed unserviceable should be wrapped in brown paper, appropriately labeled, and sent to the Pacoima Warehouse for disposal.