

Flag Raising

Regina

Regina's Flag Protocol Guideline¹ provides extensive detail on flag raising practices and procedures, including the positioning of flags in relation to each other to signify order of precedence, half-masting, and a detailed description of the application process for ethnic, cultural or community organizations' request to have a flag raised. Some of the criteria that is used in determining whether an application will be accepted is also included, as are departmental responsibilities.

The Guideline lists the following among its criteria for determining whether to approve a flag raising request:

"The City of Regina receives requests to raise a flag on behalf of an outside organization. These organizations include charitable or non-profit organizations, community businesses, another city, province or nation.

[...]

- Flags of organizations which may be considered controversial, contentious or divisive within the community shall not be flown at City Hall;
- No flags of commercial, religious, or political organizations shall be flown;
- No flags of a group or organization whose undertakings or philosophy are contrary to City of Regina policy or bylaws, or espouse hatred, violence or racism shall be permitted;"

Flag raising requests are approved by the Office of the City Clerk. In the event of a dispute between the applicant and the City Clerk as to the eligibility of a request, the Office of the City Clerk will consult with the Provincial Protocol Office.

Calgary

Calgary's Flag Policy² is similar in comprehensiveness to Regina's Guideline and contains, more or less, identical content. One notable addition is that Calgary's Policy contains a list of half-mast days which are observed annually as days of mourning.

As to criteria for guest flags, sections 5.3.1(c) and 5.3.3 of the Policy state as follows:

"Protocol will assess flag raising requests based on the following criteria:

- i. The City will not fly flags of nations with whom Canada does not have diplomatic relations as recognized by the federal government.

¹ <https://www.regina.ca/export/sites/Regina.ca/city-government/administration/.galleries/pdfs/Flag-Protocol-Guidelines.pdf>

² <http://www.calgary.ca/CA/city-clerks/Documents/Council-policy-library/CP2016-07-Flag-Policy.pdf>

- ii. The City may not normally fly flags which may be considered controversial or divisive.
- iii. The City will not fly a flag of an organization whose undertakings or philosophy espouse violence, hatred or racism or are contrary to City bylaws or policies.
- iv. The City will not fly flags of a commercial, religious or partisan nature.

[...]

5.3.3 Flags of Organizations

- (a) The City may fly the flag of a charitable or non-profit organization, to celebrate a special occasion or achievement in Calgary.
- (b) It is the responsibility of the requesting organization to submit an application for a flag to be flown, as well as supply the flag to represent the organization or event.
- (c) If a flag raising is requested as part of a larger ceremony, applicants must make appropriate arrangements in accordance to the Municipal Complex Bylaw for the use of the Municipal Plaza."

The Office of the City Clerk administers and approves flag raising requests under the Calgary Flag Policy. The policy contemplates the City Clerk's Office contacting the Mayor's Office where "further discussion or decisions must be made regarding the displaying or raising of flags".

Edmonton

Edmonton's Civic Protocol Policy³ addresses only "Official Flag Raisings" (defined as "the ceremonial raising of another country's flag on an officially designated flag pole and when an appropriate authority from that country is present). The policy does not contemplate other flag raisings or specify an exact process or procedure for "Official Flag Raisings". The distribution of responsibilities among Council and various departments is outlined.

The City has a designated Protocol Office, and the Office's portion of the City website⁴ details certain specific rules related to flags, including the positioning of flags in relation to each other to signify order of precedence, and half-masting. The site also provides contact information to request that a particular community flag be flown on the designated, separate "community flag pole". There is no indication of a catch-all

³ https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/documents/PoliciesDirectives/C419A.pdf

⁴ https://www.edmonton.ca/city_government/city-protocol.aspx

procedure for determining if or when any given community flag raising or half-masting will take place.

Winnipeg

Winnipeg does not appear to have a specific policy document related to flag raisings, although its Municipal Manual⁵ indicates that it has a Protocol Office as a branch of its City Clerk's Department, and that this Office is responsible for organizing flag raising ceremonies, and other ceremonies, presentations and special events.

Toronto

The "Flag-Raising & Half-Masting" section of the City of Toronto's website⁶ lists its policy criteria for flag raising. The policy is similar in comprehensiveness to Regina's Guideline and contains, more or less, identical content. Additionally, Toronto lists half-mast days that are observed annually as days of mourning.

The webpage lists the following criteria for determining whether a flag raising request will be approved:

"Non-profit or charitable organizations may request for the City of Toronto to fly the following flags on its courtesy flag poles, for up to two weeks:

- Flags of nations recognized by the Government of Canada on a country's national day or on the anniversary of a special occasion; or
- Flags of non-profit or charitable organizations.

[...]

Requests will not be approved for:

- Political parties or organizations
- Religious organizations or in celebration of religious events
- Commercial entities or in celebration of corporate events
- Intent that is contrary to City policies or bylaws
- Organizations requesting flag raisings that espouse discrimination, hatred, violence or racism
- Organizations that have already flown a flag on a courtesy flag pole within the same calendar year
- Flags of nations that have already flown on a courtesy flag pole within the same calendar year".

The City of Toronto has a Strategic Protocol & External Relations Office. As a member of that Office, the City's Chief of Protocol has been delegated the authority by City Council to approve flag raising requests.

⁵ <http://winnipeg.ca/clerks/pdfs/2017MunicipalManual.pdf>

⁶ <https://www.toronto.ca/city-government/awards-tributes/tributes/flag-raising-half-masting/>

Ottawa

Ottawa's "Flag Protocol Procedures"⁷ are similar in comprehensiveness to Regina's Guideline and contain, more or less, identical content. One notable addition is that Ottawa's Procedures contain a list of half-mast days which are observed annually as days of mourning.

The Procedures state that "the City will not fly the flag of a group or organization whose undertakings or philosophy are contrary to City of Ottawa policies or by-laws, espouse hatred, violence, or racism, or are politically or religiously motivated or represent other individual conviction".

Similar to the City of Toronto, flag raising requests in the City of Ottawa are provided to the Office of Protocol for consideration.

London

London's "Flags at City Hall" Council Policy (included on its Community Flag Pole Request form⁸), is less detailed than Regina's and Calgary's policies, but is functionally identical and includes a list of annual half-masting and flag raising days.

Section 3(b) of the policy lists the criteria for determining whether a flag raising request will be approved:

"The following guidelines shall be observed for the flying of flags permitted under 3(a)(ii), above:

- (i) flag raisings shall be in connection with a particular event by an organization;
- (ii) no flags of commercial, religious or political organizations shall be permitted;
- (iii) no flags of a group or organization whose undertakings or philosophy are contrary to City of London policies or by-laws, or espouse hatred, violence or racism shall be permitted;
- (iv) an organization's flag shall be flown no more than once per calendar year;
- (v) organizations shall be required to submit flag raising requests on an annual basis;
- (vi) a flag shall be flown for a period of up to one week, or for the duration of the associated event, whichever is less; and,
- (vii) flags shall only be raised and lowered on those business days that City Hall is open".

⁷ <https://ottawa.ca/en/city-hall/your-city-government/policies-and-administrative-structure/office-protocol/office-protocol-procedures#flag-protocol-procedures>

⁸ <https://www.london.ca/city-hall/Licences-Permits/Documents/Community-Flag-Pole-Request.pdf>

The City Clerk's Office is charged with administration of the policy. Disputes between that Office and an organization regarding the eligibility of a request are determined by Council Committee and ultimately City Council.

Surrey

Surrey's Flag Policy⁹ is unique in that it does not permit the flying of any flags on civic property other than those of Canada, its provinces and territories, and those of other sovereign nations:

- 1.3 The City of Surrey will not display other national flags or guest organizational banners on City facility flagpoles [...]

The policy also outlines order of priority and which flags are to be flown at which civic facilities.

Halifax

Halifax does not appear to have a specific policy document relating to flag raisings.

Province of Saskatchewan

The Province of Saskatchewan has a Protocol Office. Protocol Guidelines can be found on-line, including a Flagging Policy and Procedures.¹⁰ The policy speaks to the flying of flags including the use of courtesy flagpoles at various venues, in addition to half-masting and precedence and etiquette when flying a flag.

As with the other jurisdictions, flags flown at half-mast are a sign of respect and mourning upon death. The policy provides the criteria to be used in determining when flags will be flown at half-mast and includes a list of annual occasions.

In respect of courtesy flagpoles at the Legislative Building, they may be used for the following purposes:

- “The Lieutenant Governor’s Standard during official vice-regal occasions such as the Opening of the Legislature. Similar arrangements for visits of the Governor General to the Building.
- Territorial flags of countries, provinces and other jurisdictions, and international organizations during the official visit in the building of their Head of State or Government or other official representatives.
- Officially approved international, national or provincial flags on appropriate occasions as approved by the Protocol Office.

⁹ https://www.surrey.ca/bylawsandcouncilibrary/CR_2014-R104.pdf (see also: http://www.surrey.ca/bylawsandcouncilibrary/MIN_RCPH_2014_06_23.pdf at p. 14)

¹⁰ <https://www.saskatchewan.ca/government/visual-identity-and-protocol/protocol-guidelines/flagging-policy-and-procedures>

The removable flagpole at the Legislative Building may be used for other flags to draw attention to worthy causes, events, campaigns and non-governmental organizations.

Permission must be granted by the Legislative Building Supervisor, Government Services”.