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## Flag and Lighting Protocol

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**References:** Canada Heritage Online Guidelines: Flag Etiquette in Canada  
Canada Heritage Online Guidelines: Rules for Flying the Flag

### Policy Statement

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The flags flown at Strathcona County facilities are to be treated with respect and dignity. Proper flag etiquette is required to ensure that the presentation and cultural significance of the flags are honoured.

The flying of flags at half-mast is a strong visual statement that speaks to the sense of loss shared by all citizens, and so must be implemented only in circumstances that have exceptional importance to the County.

Strathcona County will lower flags to half-mast to commemorate solemn occasions. The lowering of flags to half-mast will be at the direction of the Chief Commissioner.

### Purpose

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The purpose of this policy is to establish when flags at Strathcona County properties and facilities are to be flown at half-mast, and to ensure the use of Strathcona County's flag poles is exercised in a consistent and appropriate manner.

### Definitions

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Community Group means a not-for-profit group, body, or organization established under an Alberta or Canadian statute or enactment, and that carries on activities benefitting the residents of Strathcona County;

County means Strathcona County

RCMP means the Royal Canadian Mounted Police;

### Guidelines

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Flags will be raised, lowered, flown, maintained, and disposed of by Strathcona County in accordance with Canadian Heritage's guidelines on Flag Etiquette in Canada and Rules for Flying the Flag.

#### **I. General Flag Protocol**

1. If multiple flags are flown together in a set, all the flags must be flown at the same height (i.e. full-mast or half-mast).

2. All flags flown together in a set must be the same size.
3. Flags may be flown at night (i.e. flags do not need to be raised at sunrise and taken down at sunset, daily).

## **II. Precedence of Flags**

1. When a single flag is flown, the National Flag of Canada will be flown.
2. When two flags are flown, the National Flag of Canada and the Provincial Flag of Alberta will be flown.
3. When three flags are flown, the National Flag of Canada, the Provincial Flag of Alberta, and the Flag of Strathcona County will be flown.
4. Despite sections 1-3, Canadian Heritage's guidelines on Flag Etiquette and Rules for Flying the Flag may direct that another flag takes precedence (for example, the flag of the Sovereign). Those guidelines take precedence over anything in this Policy.
5. When dignitaries from outside of Canada are visiting County facilities, the Flag of Strathcona County may be replaced by the Flag of the dignitary's country.
6. Only one flag or banner may be flown on each flag pole. Two or more flags or banners may not be flown in a stacked position (one on top of the other).

## **III. Lowering Flags to Half-mast**

### ***Lowering flags in concert with Federal and Provincial governments***

1. Strathcona County will lower flags as directed by the Prime Minister's Office and Canada Heritage (in relation to the Canadian Flag) and the Alberta Premier's Office and Alberta Protocol (in relation to the Canadian Flag and the Alberta Provincial Flag).

### ***Lowering flags at all Strathcona County properties***

2. Strathcona County will lower flags to half-mast on all Strathcona County properties and facilities:
  - a. from the time of notification of death until sunset the day of the funeral or memorial service for:
    - i. the Sovereign;
    - ii. a member of the immediate Royal Family;
    - iii. a current or former Governor General of Canada;
    - iv. a current or former Prime Minister of Canada;
    - v. a current or former Lieutenant Governor of Alberta;
    - vi. a current or former Premier of Alberta;
    - vii. the current Mayor of Strathcona County.
  - b. from sunrise to sunset on:
    - i. April 28, the National Day of Mourning (for those who have died in the workplace);
    - ii. June 23, National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism;
    - iii. November 11, Remembrance Day, except where a Remembrance Day ceremony involves the raising or lowering of a flag or flags as part of the ceremony;
    - iv. December 6, National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

- c. whenever the Prime Minister's Office or Canada Heritage have lowered the flags at all Federal properties and buildings;
- d. whenever the Alberta Premier's Office or Alberta Protocol have lowered the flags at all Provincial properties and buildings.

***Lowering Flags at Council's Direction***

- 3. Council may pass a resolution directing that Strathcona County lower flags to half-mast at any or all Strathcona County properties and facilities, for such time and under such circumstances as Council directs.

***Lowering Flags in Accordance with RCMP Service Customs***

- 4. Existing flag policies or procedures that the RCMP observes for flying flags at half-mast at the County's RCMP headquarters to honour former members on the day of a funeral or memorial service may continue to be observed.

**IV. Community Flag Poles**

- 1. Strathcona County may designate one or more flag poles on County properties as Community Flag Poles.
- 2. A Community Flag Pole may be used to display the flag or banner of community groups. Community groups interested in displaying their flag may apply to the Chief Commissioner for permission to fly their flag or banner.
- 3. Strathcona County will not display a flag or banner if:
  - a. it supports a political party or a cause associated with a political party;
  - b. the flag or banner could be unduly provocative, divisive, or disruptive in the County; or
  - c. the flag or banner promotes a commercial, for-profit enterprise, event, activity, or business.
- 4. Despite the previous section, Strathcona County may approve a flag or banner if it supports a right enshrined in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.
- 5. A flag or banner flown on a Community Flag Pole need not be lowered to half-mast when flags at other County properties are lowered to half-mast. The Community Group that has provided the flag or banner may request that the flag or banner be flown at full-mast or half-mast for the duration of the display or may request that the flag or banner be flown in accordance with the County's flag-lowering guidelines.
- 6. The Chief Commissioner, in consultation with the Office of the Mayor, may direct that the County's flag be flown at half-mast on a Community Flag Pole, under exceptional circumstances including:
  - a. a significant international death or event that has international and local effect or import;
  - b. a significant national death or event that has national and local effect or import; and
  - c. a significant local death or event that affects a significant portion of the residents of Strathcona County.
- 7. Residents may also initiate a request to the Chief Commissioner to have the County's flag be flown at half-mast on a Community Flag Pole under exceptional circumstances as noted in section 6 of this policy.

8. In the event of a decision made to lower the County's flag on a Community Flag Pole, a Community Group's flag or banner may be removed and replaced with the County flag. The Community Group's flag or banner flying may then be rescheduled in consultation between the Community Group and the Chief Commissioner.

#### **V. Festival Place Lighting**

1. The exterior, coloured lights at Festival may be used to display colours related to a Community Group. Community Groups interested in having a colour or colour scheme displayed may apply to the Chief Commissioner to have their colours displayed.

#### **Policy Record**

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**Administrative Review:** Chief Commissioner