

When to Fly the Flag at Half Staff

Display the American Flag at half staff or half mast

The flag is displayed at half staff as a sign of respect or mourning. Nationwide, this action is proclaimed by the president; state-wide or territory-wide, the proclamation is made by the governor. In addition, there is no prohibition against municipal governments, private businesses or citizens flying the flag at half staff as a local sign of respect and mourning. President Dwight D. Eisenhower issued the first proclamation on March 1, 1954 standardizing the dates and time periods for flying the flag at half staff from all federal buildings, grounds, and naval vessels; other congressional resolutions and presidential proclamations ensued. However, they are only guidelines to all other entities: typically followed at state and local government facilities, and encouraged of private businesses and citizens.

To properly fly the flag at half staff, the protocol is to first hoist it briskly to full staff, then reverently (slowly) lower it to half staff. Similarly, when the flag is to be lowered from half staff, it should be first hoisted briskly to full staff, then lowered reverently to the base of the flagpole.

Federal guidelines state the flag should be flown at half staff at the following dates/times:

- May 15 - Peace Officers Memorial Day
 - Last Monday in May - Memorial Day (until noon)
 - July 27 - Korean War Veterans Day
 - September 11 - Patriot Day^[27]
 - December 7 - Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day
 - For 30 days - Death of a president or former president
 - For 10 days - Death of a vice president, Supreme Court chief justice/retired chief justice, or speaker of the House of Representatives.
 - From death until the day of interment - Supreme Court associate justice, member of the Cabinet, former vice president, president pro-tempore of the Senate, or the majority and minority leaders of the Senate and House of Representatives. Also for federal facilities within a state or territory, for the governor.
 - On the day after the death - Senators, members of Congress, territorial delegates or the resident commissioner of the commonwealth of Puerto Rico
- From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

See also: [Flags of the United States](#)