



Section: Council

Title: Flag Policy

Policy Number: COR-2023-01

Approved by: Council

Administered by: Legislative Services Division

Effective: July 24, 2023

1. PURPOSE

The Township of Wilmot recognizes that Flags are important symbols of honour and pride and must be treated in a respectful and consistent manner.

The Township supports Half-masting as an expression of collective mourning and sense of loss that is shared by residents of Wilmot.

To celebrate together the strength of Wilmot's diversity and inclusivity, the Township offers the opportunity for residents to raise community flags on the designated Community Flagpole located at the Administration Complex in Baden enhancing awareness of special occasions and activities.

The Township is committed to encouraging community participation and civic pride through various forms of Commemorations and celebrations in a consistent and efficient manner, while protecting outdoor municipal property and municipally-governed properties.

2. SCOPE

This Policy applies to the display, maintenance and disposal of Flags flown at Township facilities.

A community flag raising is limited and specific to the Community Flagpole located at the Administration Complex.

3. DEFINITIONS

3.1 "Administration Complex Flag Display" means the first three flagpoles at the Administration Complex which fly the national flag of Canada, the provincial flag of Ontario and the Township of Wilmot flag.

3.2 "Community Flagpole" means the fourth flagpole designated at the Administration Complex for Community Flag Raisings.

3.3 "Flying a Flag at Half-mast" means the flag action of flying all flags, forming a single display of flags, at a position that is equal distance from the top and bottom of the flagpole, to mark periods of mourning or to commemorate solemn occasions.

- 3.4 “Wilmot Flag” means the flag adopted by Wilmot Council as a symbol of the municipality.
- 3.5 “National Flag of Canada” means the flag approved by the Parliament of Canada as a national symbol of Canada.
- 3.6 “Provincial Flag of Ontario” means the flag approved by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as a provincial symbol of Ontario.
- 3.7 “Volunteers” means volunteers of the Township or of a local board of the Township, as the case may be.

4. PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion – Ensure flag raising celebrates the diversity of the Township and the Township’s commitment to diversity and inclusion through fair and inclusive practices.
- 4.2 Consistency – Ensure flag raising procedures for Flags flown at Township facilities are clear and consistent.
- 4.3 Respect and Dignity – Ensure Flags flown at Township facilities are treated with respect and dignity in accordance with the [National Flag of Canada etiquette](#).
- 4.4 Transparency – Ensure public awareness of the Township’s Flag raising protocols and rationales.

5. ROLES

Nothing in this policy is intended to inhibit either Members of Council or Staff from carrying out their respective roles as defined in the Municipal Act. For the purpose of this policy it is important to identify the boundaries between those roles:

5.1 It is the Role of Council:

- a) Council is responsible for approving this Policy and all subsequent revisions as deemed necessary.

5.2 It is the Role of the Chief Administrative Officer (or designate):

- a) directing compliance and resolving any conflicts with this Policy;
- b) assigning appropriate service departments for the application of this Policy;

- c) establishing procedural guidelines;
- d) provide advice to the Mayor on Half-masting protocols. Flag protocol for dignitary visits, or other requests not identified in this policy.
- e) for making routine changes to the Policy, as required.

5.3 It is the role of the Head of Council:

- a) Discretion for Half-masting and for flying flags for special occasions not identified in the Policy
- b) Discretion to approve a community flag raising request that does not meet the criteria, and to deny a community flag raising request that has reputational risk to the Township.

6. Policy Implementation:

Displaying the Flag(s)

- 6.1 The Township follows the [Order of Precedence](#) established by Canadian Heritage when flying flags.
- 6.2 Flags must be in excellent condition.
- 6.3 The Township of Wilmot Flag will be flown at all Township facilities where there are sufficient flagpoles to do so.
- 6.4 The Township of Wilmot Flag may be displayed indoors, in the Council Chambers, and at special events or ceremonies where Flags have a specific purpose and are required.
- 6.4 The Township of Wilmot Flag shall not be used for commercial purposes by any external organization.
- 6.5 The Township of Wilmot reserves the right to refuse, deny or restrict the use of the Township Flag.
- 6.6 Flags shall be flown in accordance with [the National Flag of Canada etiquette](#).
- 6.7 Maintenance and disposal of Flags must be done in accordance with [the National Flag of Canada etiquette](#).

Flags Flown Permanently at the Administration Complex

- 6.8 The National Flag of Canada, the Province of Ontario and the Township of Wilmot Flags shall be displayed in the Council Chamber, along with any other Flags approved by Council.

Township Facilities

- 6.9 Departments shall consult with the Chief Administrative Officer, or designate, when planning to add or remove Flags or flagpoles outside the premise(s) or existing or new Township facilities.
- 6.10 Where external tenants are located at Township properties and facilities wish to fly Flags outside the buildings, they shall consult with the Chief Administrative Officer, or designate, prior to displaying their Flags, and are subject to approval by the Township.
- 6.11 Maintenance and disposal of Flags must be done in accordance with [the National Flag of Canada etiquette](#).

7. Half-masting

- 7.1 Half-masting denotes a period of official mourning.
- 7.2 Where located on municipal property, the National Flag of Canada will be flown at half-mast:
- On Remembrance Day, November 11 occurring at 11 a.m.
 - On Indigenous Veterans Day, November 8 occurring at 11 a.m.
 - On special circumstances as issued by the Federal or Provincial Government
 - Upon the death of:
 - the Sovereign or member of the Royal family related in the first degree (husband, wife, son, daughter, mother, brother or sister);
 - the current or former Governor General or Prime Minister
 - a current or former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, the Premier of Ontario or another person similarly honoured by the Province of Ontario; or
 - a sitting local member of Parliament or local member of Provincial Parliament.
- 7.3 Where located on municipal property, the Township of Wilmot Flag will be flown at half-mast upon the death of:
- a current or former Mayor, member of Council, School Board Trustee or Staff;
 - a citizen at large of the Township at the discretion of the Mayor;
 - an active or retired Township firefighter or Waterloo Region Police Officer; or
 - to mark significant events as deemed appropriate by the Mayor or council.
- 7.4 When the National Flag of Canada is flown at half-mast, all other flags must also be flown at half-mast and at no time should the National Flag of Canada be flown lower than any other flag.

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- 7.5 Flags shall be flown at half-mast from the notification of death until the end of the day of the funeral or until such time as determined by the Mayor, with recommendation from the Chief Administrative Officer if necessary.
- 7.6 The flags at municipal fire station(s) may be flown in recognition of line-of-duty deaths of fire fighters in other municipalities and in special circumstances outside of Ontario at the discretion of the Fire Chief. The half-masting of such flags and the notification to the members of the public shall be performed by Fire staff.

8. Flag Flying on the Community Flagpole

- 8.1 The Township has designated one (1) community flagpole at the Administration Complex.
- 8.2 The number of days that a community flag will be flown is based on the request. If multiple requests are received for the same time period, the Mayor determines the time period each flag is flown.
- 8.3 Community flags shall only be raised and lowered on those business days that municipal officers are open.
- 8.4 Requesters are responsible for:
- a) submitting flag flying requests on an annual basis, and approvals shall be based on a first come first served basis. An organization's flag shall be flown no more than once per calendar year;
 - b) providing the flag in good condition, i.e., no discolour or tears;
 - c) organizing activities and for all associated costs, including providing the flag to be flown and notification to the media.
- 8.5 The Township is not responsible for lost or damaged flags.
- 8.6 The Township reserves the right to cancel a flag raising in the case of an unforeseen circumstance.
- 8.7 The Mayor, in consultation with the Chief Administrative Officer, may use discretion to approve or deny a request for a flag raising based on reputational risk to the Township.
- 8.8 The Township will not approve requests for flag raisings on the Community Flag Pole requested by:
- a) Organizations or groups that are political or partisan in nature, including political parties or political organizations;
 - b) Organizations that promote hatred, violence, racism, or discrimination of any kind;

- c) Religious organizations;
- d) Organizations that have already flown a Flag on the Community Flag Pole within the same calendar year; and/or
- e) Commercial entities.

8.9 The Township will not approve requests for use of the Community Flag Pole for Flags that:

- a) Belongs to nations not recognized by the Government of Canada;
- b) Represent political causes;
- c) Celebrate religious events;
- d) Celebrate corporate events;
- e) Support of groups, organizations, or events that promote beliefs contrary to any other Township policy or pose a reputational risk to the Township; and/or
- f) Belongs to nations that have already flown on the Community Flag Pole within the same calendar year.

9. References and Resources

9.1 This Policy should be read and applied in conjunction with the following references and resources as updated from time-to-time. Please note that some of the following documents may not be publicly available.

9.2 External Resources

[National Flag of Canada etiquette.](#)

[Position of Honour, Canadian Heritage](#)

[Rules for half-masting the National Flag of Canada](#)