



POLICY NAME:	Flag Protocol
Effective Date:	September 28, 2022
Policies Rescinded:	Old Policy 1408
Document Owner:	Administration
Required Review Date:	June 2027
References:	

PURPOSE

Woodlands County recognizes etiquette for flags flown at Woodlands County properties and facilities, including when flags will be half-masted. This Flag Protocol outlines the flying of national, provincial, municipal, and commemorative flags, as well as the half-masting of flags in accordance with recognized occasions of mourning or solidarity.

POLICY STATEMENT

Woodlands County is committed to demonstrating respect, inclusivity, and civic pride through the dignified and consistent display of flags at all municipal properties.

This policy ensures that flag-related decisions are made with transparency, fairness, and in alignment with national and provincial protocols, while recognizing the importance of flags as symbols of identity, unity, and shared values.

DEFINITIONS

Chief Administrative Officer means the duly appointed Chief Administrative Office (CAO) of Woodlands County or their designate.

County means Woodlands County as a municipal corporate and the geographical area within its jurisdiction boundaries, as the context requires.

Half-Mast means the position of a flag being flown approximately halfway down a flagpole, as a symbol of respect, commemoration, or collective mourning.

Municipal Office means the Woodlands County Administration office located at 1 Woodlands Lane, Whitecourt, Alberta.

Order of Precedence means the positioning of flags in priorities of importance, order of rank as per protocol established by the Government of Canada and the Province of Alberta.



Regional Municipal Office means the Woodlands County Administration office located at 61053A Highway 33, Fort Assiniboine, Alberta.

ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY

Chief Administrative Officer

Direct that flags at Woodlands County properties and facilities be half-masted in circumstances deemed appropriate by the CAO and when not otherwise required by this Policy. The CAO may designate another member of Administration to direct in accordance with this Policy.

Council & Administration

Bring to the CAO's awareness circumstances under which consideration should be given to half-masting flags at Woodlands County properties and facilities.

Communications

Shall communicate to the public the purpose for half-masting flags and provide a brief biography, when available.

Economic Development Coordinator

Shall include in the annual operating budget and ensure ample supply of each designated flag is available for Woodlands County's properties and facilities and for community groups, when appropriate.

Properties and Facilities

Designated members of Administration from each of the identified Woodlands County properties and facilities shall half-mast in accordance with this Policy.

GUIDELINES

General Flag Protocol

- 1.1 The flags flown at Woodlands County buildings 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.
- 1.2 The flying of flags at half-mast is a strong visual statement that speaks to the sense of loss shared by citizens, and so must be implemented only in circumstances that have exceptional importance to Woodlands County. The County will lower flags to half-mast to commemorate solemn occasions in accordance with this Policy.
- 1.3 Flags at Woodlands County properties and facilities are raised, lowered, flown, maintained, and disposed of in accordance with the established flag protocols, practices and etiquette outlined by the Government of Canada and the Province of Alberta, primarily the National Flag of Canada Etiquette and the Government of Alberta Flag Etiquette guidelines.
- 1.4 Flag poles at Woodlands County properties and facilities will be used only in accordance with this Policy.

Woodlands County flag poles will be used only to fly the flags of Canada, Alberta, Woodlands County, Treaty 6, and Treaty 8.

1.5 Requests for other flags to fly on County-owned flagpoles or properties not otherwise outlined in this Policy will not be considered.

Half-Masting

2.1 Woodlands County will lower flags to half-mast on all its properties and facilities where flag poles are present:

- From the time of notification of death until sunset the day of the funeral or memorial service, unless otherwise established by the appropriate federal or provincial authorities for:

Mandatory Half-Masting

- 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;

Discretionary Half-Masting

- i) a current or former Member of Parliament representing Woodlands County;
- ii) a current or former Member of the Legislative Assembly of Alberta representing Woodlands County;
- iii) a current or former member of Woodlands County Council;
- iv) a current or former employee of Woodlands County;
- v) a Whitecourt or Barrhead RCMP member who dies in the line of duty;
- vi) a Woodlands County or Whitecourt fire department member who dies in the line of duty;
- vii) a resident of Woodlands County who is a member of the Canadian Armed Forces, killed while deployed on operations.

2.2 Where there is no funeral or memorial service, the period the flag shall be flown at half-mast shall be at the discretion of the CAO.

2.3 From sunrise to sunset on special days prescribed by the Government of Alberta.

- i) National Day of Remembrance of the Battle of Vimy Ridge (April 9)
- ii) National Day of Mourning for Those Who Have Suffered and Died in the Workplace (April 28)
- iii) National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism (June 23)
- iv) Firefighters' National Memorial Day (Second Sunday in September)
- v) Police and Peace Officers National Memorial Day (Last Sunday in September)
- vi) National Day of Truth and Reconciliation (September 30)
- vii) Remembrance Day (November 11)
- viii) National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women (December 6)

3 According to rules established by the federal government under the *Holidays Act*, the Canadian flag must always be flown at full mast on Victoria Day in May and Canada Day on July 1, unless the flag is at half-mast for the death of a British monarch; the Canadian Prime Minister; or the Governor General.

4 The Chief Administrative Officer may direct for flags to be half-masted at any or all Woodlands County properties and facilities, for such time and under such circumstances as directed.



- 5 Administration shall only lower or fly flags as directed by the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 6 Notification to the public regarding the half-masting of flags shall occur on Woodlands County's website and social media, wherever possible.

Woodlands County Flag Locations

- 7 At the Municipal Office, and Regional Municipal Office, the County permanently flies the:
 - i) National Flag of Canada
 - ii) Province of Alberta Flag
 - iii) Woodlands County Flag
 - iv) Treaty 6 Flag
 - v) Treaty 8 Flag
- 8 The County permanently flies the National Flag of Canada, the Province of Alberta Flag, and the Woodlands County Flag at:
 - i) YZU Airport Terminal
 - ii) Anselmo Fire Department
 - iii) Blue Ridge Fire Department
 - iv) Goose Lake Fire Department
 - v) Fort Assiniboine Fire Department
- 9 In Council Chambers, at the Municipal Office and the Regional Municipal Office the National Flag of Canada, the Province of Alberta Flag, and the Woodlands County Flag are always displayed, unless Council or the Chief Administration Officer directs otherwise.

Use of Woodlands County Flag

- 10 Woodlands County's flag may be displayed indoors, in Council Chambers or any place where such flags may be required or deemed appropriate by the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 11 The County flag may be used at County-organized events, or other events deemed appropriate by the Chief Administrative Officer.
- 12 Woodlands County reserves the right to refuse, deny, or restrict the use of the Woodlands County Flag with respect to where or how it will be flown or displayed.

Replacement & Disposal

- 13 Any flag on Woodlands County flagpoles shall be disposed of once they become faded, develop a hole, or the outermost seam becomes frayed. When a flag becomes tattered and is no longer in suitable condition for use, it shall be disposed of in a dignified manner.

CAO Signature

END OF DOCUMENT



<i>Version</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Approved by</i>	<i>Type of Change</i>	<i>Summary of Change</i>	<i>Reference</i>
1.0	September 28, 2022	Council	Original Policy	Initial Policy Adopted by Council	Resolution # C-
1.1	June 23, 2025	Administration	New Format	Copied and added the policy statement	N/A