

Subject: Municipal Flag Protocol and Proclamation Policy

Policy Number: 1.3

Date Approved:

Date Last Revision: Community Flag Raising and Flag Protocol Policy - July 9, 2019

1. Purpose

To provide a standard protocol by which flags are flown and half-masted at all Elgin County owned facilities, and to establish a standard for how proclamation requests received by the County of Elgin are processed and issued.

2. Scope

This policy relates to half-masting of flags, displaying flags/flag raising ceremonies at the Elgin County Heritage Centre, the Elgin County Administration Building, the Elgin County Provincial Offences Court, and Elgin County's Long-Term Care Homes (Terrace Lodge, Elgin Manor, Bobier Villa).

This policy also relates to proclamation requests and lighting of the Elgin County Administration Building (450 Sunset Drive).

3. General Rules

The National Flag of Canada, the Provincial Flag of Ontario, and the County of Elgin Flag must be flown at all times at the Elgin County Administration Building, the Elgin County Provincial Offences Court, and Elgin County's Long-Term Care Homes.

Flags shall only be raised and lowered on those business days that the County of Elgin is open.

Flags raised or half-masted to commemorate awareness days or mark solemn occasions that fall on a Saturday or Sunday, will be raised on the Friday preceding and lowered on the first business day directly following that the County is open for business.

4. Procedure for Half-Masting

The Canadian Flag will be lowered to half-mast to recognize a period of official

mourning or to commemorate solemn occasions and significant dates.

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

Upon notice of the death of an individual noted in this section, municipal facilities staff shall, at the direction of the Warden, be immediately notified to take action to lower the Canadian flag at all County facilities. Flags shall only be lowered on the business days that the County Administration Building is open. A flag may be removed, for a period of time, due to inclement weather.

Flags will be flown at half-mast from the time of notification of passing to sunset on the day of the funeral for the following individuals:

- the current Warden or a Member of County Council;
- a current County of Elgin employee;
- a former Warden or a Member of County Council;
- a current resident of Elgin County killed in the line of duty for the Canadian Armed Forces;
- on the death of the Sovereign or members of the immediate Royal Family, the Governor General, the Prime Minister, a former Governor General or a former Prime Minister;
- on the death of the Lieutenant Governor of Ontario or the Premier of Ontario;
- on the death of the local Member of Parliament or local Member of Provincial Parliament; and
- the commemoration of other periods of official mourning and solemn occasions, in keeping with the principles of this Policy, may be approved by the Warden. County Council will be advised of the circumstances surrounding the other solemn occasion. In the event that the Warden is not available, the Deputy Warden shall have the delegated authority to decide on circumstances not identified within this policy.

Flags will also be flown at half-mast, in recognition of the following dates:

- Last Sunday in September: National Peace Keepers and Police Officers' Memorial Day;
- November 11: Remembrance Day; and
- December 6: National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

5. Process for Half-Masting

Once approved by the Warden, the Clerk or his or her designate will be responsible for notifying the appropriate staff, including facilities staff, regarding the half-masting of flags with respect to the reason and the duration that the flag will be flown at half-mast.

6. Procedure for Displaying Flags/Flag Raising

Flags from organizations and groups will be displayed on the community flagpole at the Elgin County Heritage Centre.

Elgin County Council reserves the right to determine which flags will be displayed at the Elgin County Heritage Centre and will strive to accommodate and provide opportunities for community groups to display their flags.

Approvals and use of the Elgin County flagpole at the Heritage Centre will be granted by County Council on a first come first served basis.

When possible, flag raisings will be scheduled to correspond with an Elgin County Council meeting.

An organization's flag shall be flown no more than once per calendar year and organizations shall be required to submit flag raising requests on an annual basis.

A flag shall be flown for a period of up to one week, or for the duration of the associated event, whichever is less.

The maximum number of community flags to be flown at any one time will be one (1).

The Clerk or his or her designate will maintain an inventory of all flags flown at the Elgin County Heritage Centre.

The following flags shall be permitted to be flown at the Elgin County Heritage Centre at 460 Sunset Drive, St. Thomas, including the:

1. National Flag of Canada, or the flag approved by the Parliament of Canada as a national symbol of Canada.
2. Provincial Flag of Ontario, or the flag approved by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as a provincial symbol of Ontario.

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3. County of Elgin Flag, or the flag adopted by Council of the County of Elgin as a symbol of the municipality.
 4. Flag of a charitable or non-profit organization to help increase public awareness of their programs and activities; an organization that has achieved national or international distinction or made a significant contribution to the community, or an organization that has helped to enhance the County of Elgin in a positive manner.

Flags will also be raised in recognition of:

- April 28: National Day of Mourning (to commemorate workers killed or injured on the job); and
- September 30: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Requests for displaying flags and flag raisings may be approved for:

- Non-profit or charitable organizations;
- Recognition of an important visit to the Warden and Members of Council; and
- Public Awareness

Campaigns Requests will NOT be approved:

- For organizations that are political or partisan in nature, including political parties or political organizations;
- Matters of political controversy;
- Individual convictions;
- Organizations that promote hatred, violence, racism, or discrimination of any kind;
- For flags of nations other than Canada. This may be reconsidered, at the Warden's discretion, in the event of a visiting dignitary.
- For religious organizations or the celebration of religious events;
- Celebrations, campaigns or events intended for fundraising or profit making purposes;
- If the intent is contrary to Municipal policies or by-laws;
- If the intent is to defame the integrity of Council;
- If the event or organization has no direct relationship to the County of Elgin; and
- Matters or organizations that have already received a flag raising within the same calendar year.

7. Process of Displaying Flags/Flag Raisings

Requests to use the County of Elgin flagpole must be submitted to the Clerk or his or her designate through the **Flag Raising/Proclamation Request Form (Appendix A)**, at least 4 (four) weeks prior to the day requesting the flag to be displayed.

The Clerk or his or her designate will ensure that the request for flag raising is eligible in accordance with the criteria in Section 6.

Eligible requests will be added to the agenda of the next Regular Council Meeting for consideration by County Council.

The Clerk or his or her designate will inform the group or organization of Council's decision and make appropriate arrangements for the flag raising.

Individuals, groups, or associations approved for flag raisings are required to provide the flag to be raised and must pick up the flag once it is removed.

8. Proclamation Procedure

Proclamations that demonstrate an interest in, or relationship with the County of Elgin, and that demonstrate respect and tolerance for the residents of the County may be issued, at the discretion of County Council, to bring awareness to the programs and activities of not-for-profit or charitable organizations.

Proclamation requests from organizations that have achieved national or international distinction, made a significant contribution to the community, or have helped to enhance the County of Elgin in a positive manner will be considered.

Organizations, or groups wishing to have Elgin County Council issue a proclamation may provide a written proclamation to be read by the Elgin County Warden. This written proclamation will be subject to approval by the Clerk and the Warden.

Organizations or groups that do not provide written proclamation will have the proclamation issued in the form of a Council Resolution.

Proclamations accompanying a flag raising request will be read immediately prior to the flag raising.

Proclamations that do not accompany a flag raising request will be read during a

regular Council Meeting that falls during the period requested.

Proclamations read during a Regular Council Meeting will be issued directly after the meeting is called to order.

Requests for Proclamations may be approved for:

- Non-profit or charitable organizations;
- Recognition of an important visit to the Warden and Members of Council; and
- Public Awareness Campaigns.

Requests will NOT be approved:

- For organizations that are political or partisan in nature, including political parties or political organizations;
- Matters of political controversy;
- Individual convictions;
- Organizations that promote hatred, violence, racism, or discrimination of any kind;
- For religious organizations or the celebration of religious events;
- Celebrations, campaigns or events intended for fundraising or profit making purposes;
- If the intent is contrary to Municipal policies or by-laws;
- If the intent is to defame the integrity of Council;
- If the event or organization has no direct relationship to the County of Elgin; and
- Matters or organizations that have already received a proclamation within the same calendar year.

9. Process for Proclamation

Requests for Proclamations must be submitted to the Clerk or his or her designate through the **Flag Raising/Proclamation Request Form (Appendix A)**, at least 4 (four) weeks prior to the day requesting the proclamation be issued.

The Clerk or his or her designate will ensure that the request for proclamation is eligible in accordance with the criteria in Section 8.

Eligible requests will be added to the agenda of the next Regular Council Meeting for consideration by County Council.

The Clerk or his or her designate will inform the group or organization of Council's decision and make appropriate arrangements for the proclamation.

10. Lighting of the Elgin County Administration Building

The County of Elgin is able to light the façade of the Elgin County Administration Building with colourful LED technology.

Only Organizations or groups who meet the criteria for a flag raising and/or proclamation are also eligible to request that the Administration Building be lit with a significant colour to enhance their awareness campaign.

The Elgin County Administration Building will be lit for the duration of the requested flag raising and/or proclamation, not exceeding one week. The Elgin County Administration Building will be lit from sunset until midnight during the requested period.

Colour requests are subject to availability.

Organizations or groups wishing to light the Elgin County Administration Building in conjunction with a flag raising and/or proclamation must indicate the colour and timeframe on the Elgin **County Flag Raising/Proclamation Form (Appendix A)**.

The County of Elgin may also light the County of Elgin Administration Building to mark certain events/occasions including but not limited to:

- Victoria Day
- Canada Day
- Remembrance Day
- The Holiday Season (December 1-31)

11. Conflicts

Conflicts with the dates requested for flags to be flown by two or more organizations on the Elgin County Heritage Centre flagpole shall be settled in favour of the organization which first made its request.

In the event there is a dispute between an organization and the Clerk or his or her designate as to the eligibility of a request, the appeal process shall be that County Council as a whole will consider the request, having full and final say as to whether or not the request to fly a flag will be granted.



Municipal Flag Protocol and Proclamation Policy (1.3) Request Form

Please complete this form and submit it to adminteam@elgin.ca.

Organization: _____

This Organization is:

Charitable Organization

Not-for-profit Organization

Event/Occasion: _____

Purpose of Event/Occasion:

Proposed Date for Flag Raising and/or Proclamation: _____

(all flag raisings/proclamation dates are subject to availability in accordance with the Policy).

Contact Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

My organization is requesting (please check all that apply):

Flag Raising

Proclamation

Lighting the Elgin Administration Building

If your organization has a written proclamation you wish to be read, please include a copy with this form.

