

	Policy Title: Flag Protocol	Policy No: CO-004
	Authority: Council	Classification: Chief Administrative Officer
	Date Adopted: September 30, 2019	Motion No: 0340-20
Historical Changes: • Amended October 28, 2019 – add new section 5. • Amended July 12, 2021 – Addition of fourth flagpole to fly T’Sou-ke Nation Flag, changes to General Flag Etiquette section to reflect protocol changes when moving from three flags to four.		

Purpose:

To establish protocol for the flying of flags at the District of Sooke Municipal Hall and municipally owned properties, and to ensure the practice of raising and lowering of flags is exercised in a consistent manner.

Scope:

This policy applies to all flags flown by the District of Sooke and falls under the directive of the Chief Administrative Officer.

Principles:

1) General Flag Etiquette

- a) The District of Sooke flies the Canadian Flag, the Province of British Columbia Flag, the T’Sou-ke Nation Flag, and the District of Sooke Municipal Flag at the municipal hall located at 2205 Otter Point Road.
- b) Only flags in good condition will be displayed. Flags that are tattered, faded, or stained are to be replaced.
- c) The Canadian Flag shall always be displayed in the position of honour.
 - When four or more flags are displayed, the Canadian Flag is flown on the left of an observer facing the flags. For clarity, this policy places the observer looking towards the municipal hall from Otter Point Road.
 - No flag should be flown in a higher position than the Canadian Flag.
- d) The Provincial Flag is to be flown in the second position of priority, to the immediate right of the Canadian Flag. The T’Sou-ke Nation Flag is flown in the third position of priority, to the immediate right of the Provincial Flag, and the District of Sooke Municipal Flag is flown in the fourth position.
- e) Only one flag shall be flown from each flagpole.

2) Municipal Flag

- a) The District of Sooke reserves the right to refuse, deny or restrict the use of the Municipal Flag with respect to where or how it will be flown or displayed.

3) Lowering of Flags

- a) Flags are flown at half-mast as a sign of official mourning or commemoration.
- b) When lowering to half-mast, the flag should be raised fully to the top of the flagpole, then lowered immediately to the half-mast position.
- c) When one flag is flown at half-mast, all flags flown together must also be at half-mast.
- d) The flags will be flown at half-mast from sunrise to sunset on the following occasions:
 - Workers' Day of Mourning (April 28)
 - Firefighters' National Memorial Day (second Sunday in September)
 - Remembrance Day (November 11)
- e) The flags will be flown at half-mast in the case of the death of the following people:
 - Federal:
 - An immediate member of the Royal Family
 - The current Governor General
 - The current Prime Minister
 - The current Lieutenant Governor
 - The current Member of Parliament (MP) for Sooke
 - Provincial:
 - The current Premier
 - The current Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) for Sooke
 - Municipal:
 - A past or present Mayor
 - A current Member of Council
 - A current employee, firefighter, or RCMP member of the District of Sooke (in a work-related accident)
- f) In the case of a death, flags will be flown at half-mast from the time of death notification until sunset on the day of the memorial services, unless other arrangements have been specified.
- g) The decision to lower flags on municipal property on occasions not provided for in this policy will be made by the Chief Administrative Officer, in consultation with the Mayor.
- h) When half-masting is deemed appropriate the Chief Administrative Officer or designate will notify the following by email:
 - Mayor and Council
 - All staff (for information)
 - Media and general public via a Media Release

4) Courtesy Flags

- a) The intent of a courtesy flag is to recognize visiting dignitaries, District events, and to allow not-for-profit community groups to promote local events.
- b) Community requests to use the flagpole must be in writing to the Corporate Officer 30 days prior to the requested date. If more than one flag raising request is received and the requests meet the eligibility and assessment criteria, then each flag will be flown for an equal percentage of the available time. The District will endeavor to fly courtesy flags as scheduled; however, no courtesy flags will be flown during times of half-masting. Civic uses (visiting dignitaries, civic events) and emergencies will also take precedence.

Courtesy Flag Requirements:

- Courtesy flags must be in excellent condition and not exceed three feet by six feet in size.
 - If approved, the flag must be delivered to the District Office a minimum of one week in advance of the flag being flown and picked up no later than one week after the flag has been lowered.
 - Events must not be commercially oriented and must be of general interest to the community at large.
- c) The District reserves the right to reject any application and/or flag that does not comply with District policies or bylaw; or that espouse racism, personal discrimination, violence or hatred. Flags shall not promote a point of view or organization of a political, ethical, religious nature or directly encourage, or exhibit obvious indifference to unlawful behavior.
- d) Permitting a courtesy flag does not constitute an endorsement from the District of Sooke or its employees. It is forbidden to give the impression that an event, service, or product is endorsed or associated with the District in any way if such endorsement has not been given in writing.
- e) The District will make every effort to accommodate flag-raising ceremonies based on availability and operational feasibility but cannot guarantee a ceremony for each courtesy flag event.
- f) Courtesy Flags will be flown in the fourth position of priority and will replace the District of Sooke Municipal Flag.

5) Pride Flag

Supplemental to section 4, Council directs a Pride (Rainbow) flag be flown for a period of seven (7) days to coincide with the beginning of the Victoria annual Pride Week. The District will be responsible for providing the flag. In the event the Pride flag cannot be flown due to a half-masting requirement, the Pride flag will be flown for 7 days immediately following the half-masting.

6) Responsibility and Maintenance of Flags

- a) The Chief Administrative Officer, in consultation with the Mayor, has the responsibility and authority for making decisions regarding the flying of courtesy flags, flying flags at half-mast, and any other discretionary matters.
- b) Maintenance of the flags flown at the Municipal Hall is the responsibility of the Fire Department.

References:

Policy Number:	CO-004
Policy Owner:	Chief Administrative Officer
Endorsed by:	Council
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Date Approved:	September 30, 2019
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Related Policies:	
Related Publications:	

Contact Information:

Position: Chief Administrative Officer