



Policy

Policy Name:	Community Flag Raisings and Flag Protocol Policy
Policy Owner:	Corporate & Financial Services, Director, Council Support Services/Town Clerk
Approved by:	Council
Effective Date:	December 10, 2012
Date of Last Revision:	Initial Policy
Review Date:	
Policy Status:	New

PURPOSE:

The Community Flag Raisings and Flag Protocol Policy establishes a framework to govern requests for flag raisings received from the community, and to establish a consistent protocol for the flying of flags at all municipal buildings, properties, and facilities.

POLICY PRINCIPLES:

Richmond Hill recognizes that flags, as symbols of nations, territories and community organizations, are important to residents of the municipality. Richmond Hill is committed to building upon and maintaining the rich heritage of protocol associated with the flying of flags. As a matter of practice, Richmond Hill has used special flag raisings to enhance public awareness of activities such as national holidays, multicultural events, fundraising drives, and historical commemorations important to the residents of Richmond Hill. The municipality has also flown flags at half-mast to mark periods of official mourning or commemorate solemn occasions important to the residents.

DEFINITIONS:

Clerk:	Means the Town Clerk appointed by the Council of the Corporation of the Town of Richmond Hill, or his/her designate.
Community Flagpole:	Means the flagpole at the Richmond Hill Town Offices designated for Community Flag Raisings.
Flying a Flag at Half-mast:	Means 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.
National Flag of Canada:	Means the flag approved by the Parliament of Canada as a national symbol of Canada.
Provincial Flag of Ontario:	Means the flag approved by the Legislative Assembly of Ontario as a national symbol of Ontario.

Town of Richmond Hill Flag: Means the flag approved by the Council of the Town of Richmond Hill containing the approved Town Crest.

SCOPE:

This Policy applies to Community Flag Raisings held at the Richmond Hill Town Offices, and to the flying of flags at any municipal building, property, or facility.

POLICY

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The following general principles will apply in respect to all aspects of this Policy, and be used when interpreting the Policy:

- The municipality will use flags to celebrate Richmond Hill's diversity and honour those who have contributed to the life of the Town;
- The flying of flags at any municipal facility will not be contrary to the principles of any other Town policy; and,
- The municipality will only fly flags that are approved or recognized by federal and provincial governments of Canada.

2. COMMUNITY FLAG RAISINGS

Richmond Hill has designated one (1) Community Flagpole at the Richmond Hill Town Offices.

A. Community Flag Raising Criteria

The Criteria for approving or denying a request to use the Community Flag Poles will be:

The Community Flagpole may be used to fly flags significant to the residents of Richmond Hill:

- in honour of national holidays;
- in support of fundraising drives; and
- to celebrate multi-cultural and civic events.

The Community Flagpole will not be used to fly flags:

- of Political Parties;
- of Religious Groups;
- in support of fundraising drives that are political or religious in nature; and
- in support of groups, organizations, or events that promote beliefs contrary to any other Town policy.

The Clerk will be responsible for providing advice, as necessary, on the applicability of any of the above criteria to any application received for Community Flag Raisings.

B. Application Process for the Use of the Community Flagpole

Previously Approved Flag Raising Request:

If it is determined that a flag raising request has been granted in the past five (5) years, the request will be reviewed by the Clerk against the approved eligibility criteria and will be presented to the Mayor for approval. In the absence of the Mayor, the approval will be delegated to the Deputy Mayor.

Not Previously Approved Flag Raising Request:

When a request is received that has not been previously granted by Council in the last five (5) years, the request will first be reviewed by the Clerk against the approved eligibility criteria and if eligible, the Clerk will place the request on an agenda for Committee of the Whole and/or Council for consideration. If a flag raising request is denied by the Clerk as part of the eligibility review, the Clerk shall advise the Mayor.

Application Process for use of the Community Flagpole

All requests for use of the Community Flagpole will be made in writing to the Clerk. Requests are to be submitted at least three (3) weeks prior to the day requested for the raising of the flag. If the request is associated with a Proclamation, please see the Town of Richmond Hill Proclamation Policy for further information regarding proclamations. This application will be retained by the Office of the Clerk and will be reviewed as part of the approval process.

- The Clerk will review all applications to determine consistency and eligibility with this Policy;
- During the summer recess of Council, the Clerk or Chief Administrative Officer will decide to approve or deny any flag raising not previously approved by Council within the last five (5) years, any decisions will be noted on a Council Agenda for information purposes;
- All organizations and/or persons submitting a Flag Raising request shall complete the Flag Raising Application attached as Appendix “C” to this Policy.

C. General Rules for the Community Flagpole

The general rules for the use of the Community Flagpole are as follows:

- i. Flags will be flown for up to one (1) week at a time;
- ii. Approvals and use of the flagpole will be granted on a first come-first served basis; and,
- iii. When more than one (1) flag-raising occurs on the same day (or during the same period of time), the decision of which flag will be flown will be determined as follows:
 - The Community Flagpole will be deemed the position of honour;
 - Flags of other nations will be given higher precedent over non-national flags; and,
 - Where the flags are of the same level of precedent, the position of honour will be assigned to the application received first by the Clerk.
 - Individuals, groups or associations requesting flag raisings are required to provide the flag to be raised.

3. FLAG PROTOCOL

Richmond Hill's protocol for the flying of flags at all municipal facilities, excluding the Community Flagpole at the Town Offices, are incorporated into this Policy as appendices. Appendix "A" is the procedure Richmond Hill will use in honouring contributions to the life of the municipality through Flying a Flag at Half-mast. Appendix "B" is the procedure Richmond Hill will use in determining how flags will be flown at any municipal facility.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Council

Council is responsible for approving and amending this Policy.

The Clerk

The Clerk is responsible for the interpretation and bringing forward information to Council as outlined in this Policy, as well as the development of procedures for the effective and efficient implementation of the Policy. The Clerk is specifically responsible for receiving and processing applications for flag raisings, notifying appropriate staff at Town facilities of periods of official mourning or the commemoration of solemn occasions.

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Procedure - Flying Flags at Half-mast
Procedure - Customary Flag Configuration

Flag Raising Application
Town of Richmond Hill Proclamation Policy



FLAG RAISING APPLICATION

(Please complete and submit your completed form to the Town Clerk @ clerks@richmondhill.ca at least three weeks in advance of the occasion)

Contact Last Name		Contact First Name	
Street Address	City	Province	Postal Code

Daytime telephone	Evening telephone	Mobile	Email Address
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Organization /Group Name			
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Street Address	City	Province	Postal Code
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Please describe the purpose of the flag display (please note if an attachment is included)

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Date(s) Requested from	Date(s) Requested to
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Type of Flag

Additional Information/Comments

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Applicant's Signature	Date
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