

WHAT IS ★ ★ ★ THE FLAG CODE?

Americans have a deep sense of reverence for their flag. It is a central part of the nation's heritage. In 1923, the United States government adopted a set of rules and regulations governing the display and care of the flag.

These regulations are known as the National Flag Code. Although the flag code is by definition federal law, there is no enforcement provision because of the Supreme Court's rulings on flag desecration. That said, the guidelines and advisory rules are binding on federal government employees who handle the flag. States also have individual laws regarding the handling of the flag, although these laws may not conflict with the court's ruling.

Here are some key highlights of the U.S. Flag Code, as outlined by the Congressional Research Service, an arm of the U.S. Congress:

- ★ The code provides guidelines for the display and respect of the flag. It covers much of the minutiae of the protocol for using the flag, including saluting, hoisting and lowering the flag, parading the flag, the pledge of allegiance, the national anthem and when the flag should be displayed.
- ★ Other areas covered include protocols for the use of the flag during funerals and the display of the flag indoors.
- ★ The code spells out the names of government locations authorized to fly the flag 24 hours day. These include the Marine Corps War Memorial in Arlington, Va., and Fort McHenry in Maryland.



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