

TYPE: Administrative
TITLE: Flag Protocol
NO.: ADMIN-212
RESPONSIBILITY: Associate Vice-President, Communications and Marketing
APPROVED BY: Durham College Leadership Team
EFFECTIVE DATE: February 2026

1. Introduction

Adhering to appropriate flag etiquette signals respect for nations, causes and individuals and marks significant events to the campus community. In keeping with this approach, the flags at Durham College (DC) are displayed consistently and in accordance with appropriate national protocol.

2. Purpose

This policy and procedure aim to regulate the display, raising and lowering of flags at DC campuses.

3. Definitions

Refer to [Durham College's Standard Definitions](#).

4. Policy statements

- 4.1. This policy applies to flags located at the corner of Conlin Road and Simcoe Street, the flag near the B-wing entrance at the Oshawa campus and the Champlain Avenue entrance bus loop at the Whitby campus.
- 4.2. Except where expressly noted, the College generally follows the rules for flying flags as established by the federal government.
- 4.3. At all times, the Canadian flag will be displayed in a respectful manner. It will not be subjected to indignity or shown in an inferior position to any other flag or symbol.
- 4.4. When only one flagpole is available, the Canadian flag will be flown.
- 4.5. Only one flag will be flown on each flagpole.
- 4.6. Flags will never be used as table coverings, drapery or for demeaning purposes.
- 4.7. All flags will be lowered at the Whitby campus on the day of repatriation of the remains of an active member of the Canadian Armed Forces.

5. Procedure

5.1. Displaying flags on our campuses

5.1.1. Oshawa campus

At the corner of Conlin Road and Simcoe Street, the following flags are typically flown from left to right if one faces the flagpoles from the roadway: DC, Ontario Tech University, Canada, Ontario, and Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation.

The furthest right pole is reserved for flying flags that represent special circumstances. This pole will fly the Region of Durham flag as a default when special circumstances are not in place.

The Canadian flag is flown at the B-wing entrance.

5.1.2. Whitby campus

At the Champlain Avenue entrance, the following flags are typically flown in order from left to right if one is facing the flagpoles from Champlain Avenue, front row: Ontario, Canada, DC, back row: Mississaugas of Scugog Island First Nation.

The furthest right pole in the back row is reserved for flying flags that represent special circumstances. This pole will fly the Region of Durham flag as a default when special circumstances are not in place.

5.1.3. When Canadian and Ontario flags are displayed on walls or as stage dressing, the Canadian flag will be on one's left as one faces the stage.

5.1.4. Guidelines for the order of multiple flags:

- When there are two flagpoles, the Canadian flag should be flown on the left-hand pole – to an observer facing the flags from the roadway – and the Ontario flag flown on the right-hand pole.
- When there are three flagpoles, the Canadian flag should be flown in the position of honour, which is the centre.
- When there are more than three flagpoles, the Canadian flag should be flown in the position of honour which is the furthest left when facing the flagpoles.

5.1.5. Given the vast number of organizations and groups with specific days, weeks and months to honour, it is difficult for the College to recognize every day of awareness. As such, these commemorative days/months will be acknowledged on the courtesy pole:

- February, Black History Month;
- May 17, International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia and Biphobia;
- June, Pride Month; and
- September 30, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation – Orange Shirt Day.

5.1.6. All flags must be 45"x 90" with grommets.

5.2. Foreign flags

The flag of a foreign nation may be flown to mark the visit to the College of that nation's head of state or as a courtesy for lesser-ranking officials. A foreign flag will neither be flown higher nor larger than the Canadian flag. If possible, both flags will be the same size.

The order of foreign flags will be flown from left to right – to an observer facing the flags from the roadway, in alphabetical order next to the Canadian flag.

5.3. Half-masting flags

5.3.1. National, provincial, or regional mourning

Durham College follows federal and provincial protocols ([Canadian Heritage Flag Etiquette](#) and [Province of Ontario Flag Protocol](#)). If Canada, Ontario or local municipalities lower their flags, we align with them.

5.3.2. Annual days of remembrance

Every year, we lower flags from sunrise to sunset on these dates to align with federal and provincial protocols:

- April 28: National Day of Mourning (workers killed or injured on the job)
- June 23: National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism
- Second Sunday of September: Firefighters' National Memorial Day

- Last Sunday of September: Police and Peace Officers' Memorial Day
- September 30: National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
- November 11: Remembrance Day
- December 6: National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women

5.3.3. Mourning

Following identification or notification to Communications and Marketing (C+M), the following will take place after considering any sensitivities concerning the family of the deceased:

- Flags will be lowered to half-mast following notification provided or as identified by C+M.
- Flags are to be returned to full mast 24 hours later.
- The Canadian flag should be raised first and lowered last unless the number of flags permits them being raised and lowered simultaneously.

5.3.4. Durham College flag

The DC flag will be lowered to half-mast upon the death of one of the following:

- Current DC student;
- Current DC employee;
- Current or former College President;
- Current member of the Board of Governors; or
- Former member of the Board of Governors, on a case-by-case basis as determined by the College President.

5.3.5. In exceptional circumstances, the College President may approve lowering flags in situations not provided for in this policy.

5.3.6. Notices about half-masting are shared with the campus community through official communications channels as appropriate in each situation.

5.4. Request for raising a specialty or non-governmental flag

- 5.4.1. Internal departments wishing to request a flag-raising covered by this policy should coordinate their request with C+M.
- 5.4.2. Requests to raise flags for one day on the courtesy pole to observe occasions not listed in this policy should be submitted to C+M via the Specialty Flag Raising Request Form.
- 5.4.3. In situations where there is a flag-raising not accompanied by an event, it is the responsibility of C+M to coordinate the flag raising.
- 5.4.4. A request for a specialty flag not covered in this policy must be submitted via the form by October 31 of each year. C+M will consult with the Ontario Tech University C+M team and present final agreed-upon submissions to the Durham College Leadership Team (DCLT) for approval in December of each year.
- 5.4.5. The Department or Faculty whose portfolio included oversight for the College activities related to the commemorative days/months outlined in the policy is responsible for informing C+M of the dates and details related to the flag raising a minimum of 15 business days before the raising/event.
- 5.4.6. Approved submissions will serve as the College's plan for the year forward.

Requests will not be approved for:

- Matters of political controversy, ideological or religious beliefs, or individual conviction;
- Political parties or organizations;
- Events or organizations with no direct relationship to DC;
- Campaigns intended for profit-making purposes;
- Commercial entities or in celebration of corporate events;
- Intent that is contrary to College values, policies or bylaws;
- Organizations requesting flag raisings that espouse discrimination, hate, violence or racism; or
- Flags of nations that have already flown on a courtesy flag pole within the same calendar year.

Required information in flag-raising requests:

- Confirmation that the recognition event/day of awareness is federally or provincially acknowledged;
- Endorsement from DC Departmental/Faculty head;
- Proposed date, time and details of the flag-raising ceremony (if

- required);
- Purpose of the flag raising;
 - Equipment required for the flag-raising ceremony;
 - Name of the flag to be raised;
 - Photo/picture of the flag to be raised; and
 - Relationship of the organization to DC and how it supports the College's mission and vision.

C+M will notify the portfolio owner of DCLT's decision regarding special flag requests.

C+M will communicate with the campus community when a flag is raised.

6. Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act considerations

Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) standards have been considered in the development of this policy and procedure and it adheres to the principles outlined in the College's commitment to accessibility as demonstrated by the Multi-Year Accessibility Plan.

7. Non-compliance implications

Identify the possible consequences of non-compliance with this policy and procedure and any timelines associated with compliance. These implications could include financial, reputational and human rights challenges, or potential legal or other sanctions against the college.

8. Related forms, legislation or external resources

- [Rules for flying the National Flag of Canada - Canada.ca](#)
- [Position of honour of the National Flag of Canada - Canada.ca](#)
- [Specialty Flag raising request form](#)