



British Columbia Rules for Half-Masting – see separate policy for half-masting at offices abroad

Procedures:

Flags are flown at the half-mast position as a sign of respect and mourning for an individual of precedence.

The position of the flag, when flying half-mast will depend on its size, the length of the flagstaff and its location. As a general rule, the centre of the flag should be exactly halfway down the flagstaff or pole. The flag must be lowered at least to a position recognisably “half-mast” to avoid the appearance of a flag that has accidentally fallen away from the top of the mast/staff owing to a loose flag rope.

The flag is brought to the half-mast position by first raising it to the top of the mast/pole and then immediately lowering it slowly to the half-mast position.

On occasions requiring that one flag be half-masted, all flags flown together should also be half-masted. Where the direction is to lower the National (Main) Flag and only the Provincial Flag is flying, the notice shall apply to the Provincial Flag. Flags will only be half-masted on those flagpoles fitted with halyards and pulleys. Some buildings fly flags from horizontal or angled poles, without halyards, to which flags are permanently attached; flags positioned as such will not be half-masted.

Flags are not normally half-masted in British Columbia for the death of a current or former foreign or Commonwealth Head of State or Government as they are recognised by Federal jurisdiction; nor for Federal Ministers, Senators or Members of Parliament who are not from British Columbia. (However, the Premier has discretionary provisions in these cases.)

As soon as the Department of Canadian Heritage is advised of the death of a person mentioned below, or of a person whom it is desired to honour, they will inform all federal agencies and the British Columbia Office of Protocol. The Protocol office will then inform, by E-mail and if necessary, by phone or facsimile, all Province of British Columbia offices, Crown Corporations and Agencies, Courts and other Government Institutions through the British Columbia Buildings Corporation, which provides direction to BLJC WSI (Brookfield Lepage Johnson Controls Workplace Solutions Incorporated).

In regards to half masting the **Canadian Flag**: it is at the discretion of whomever owns the flag pole and/or the property on which the flag pole resides.

Statutory Holidays, Heads of State Visits and Death of the Sovereign:

During periods of half-masting, the flag is raised to full-mast on all Provincial Government buildings including the Legislative Building on the following legal holidays Victoria Day, Canada Day and British Columbia Day. It is also raised to full-mast at the Legislative Building while a Head of State is visiting British Columbia. These procedures do not apply while flags are half-masted for the death of the Sovereign when they are only raised to full-mast for the day on which the accession of the new Monarch is proclaimed.

Flags will be flown at half-mast at all provincial government buildings, Crown corporations and agencies, courts and institutions in British Columbia on the following special days and in the case of the death of certain people as indicated below:

Special days flags are half-masted:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • April 9 – Vimy Ridge Day (<i>at Leg only</i>) • April 28 – Workers’ Mourning Day • June 23 – National Day of Remembrance for Victims of Terrorism • Second Sunday in September – Firefighters’ National Memorial Day • Last Sunday in September – Police and Peace Officers’ National Memorial Day • November 11 – Remembrance Day • December 6 – National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women 	<p>Location: Within the Province of British Columbia on all Provincial Government Buildings, including the Legislative Building</p> <p>Duration: From sunrise to sunset on the designated day. Same for Police and Peace Officer’s National Memorial Day and Remembrance Day unless half-masting occurs near cenotaph or place where remembrance or memorial is being observed, then half-masting can occur at 11: 00 am or according to the prescribed order of service, until sunset.</p> <p>Discretion: no Initiated by: the Federal Government</p>
--	--

Days the Union Jack is flown (should be 4.5X9)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dec 11 – Anniversary of the proclamation of the Statute of Westminster • The second Monday in March – the date of the official observance of Commonwealth Day* 	<p>Location: Where physical arrangements allow, be flown along with the Provincial and Canadian flag thin the Province of British Columbia at the Legislative Building only on Courtesy Flagpole #4 *Exception is Commonwealth Day in which it should be flown within the Province of British Columbia on all Provincial Government Buildings, including the Legislative Building</p> <p>Physical arrangements means the existence of at least two flag poles. The Canadian flag will always take precedence and will not be replaced by the Union Jack. Where only one pole exists, no steps shall be taken to erect an additional pole.</p> <p>Duration: From sunrise to sunset on the designated day.</p> <p>Discretion: no Initiated by: the Federal Government</p>
---	---

Deaths where flags are half-masted:

	EVENT	HALF-MASTING PROTOCOL FOR BC
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death of a Sovereign • Death of the Sovereign's spouse, heir to the Throne and heir of the Sovereign's heir to the Throne • Death of the current or a former Governor General • Death of the current or a former Prime Minister • Death of the Chief Justice of Canada • Death of a Federal Cabinet Minister from a British Columbia Constituency 	<p>Location: Within the Province of British Columbia on all Provincial Government Buildings, including the Legislative Buildings.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service.</p> <p>Discretion: no</p> <p>Initiated by: the Federal Government</p>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death of a member of the Royal Family other than those related in the first degree to the Sovereign 	<p>Half-masting not explicitly recommended but general discretionary powers of Prime Minister could be invoked when necessary.</p> <p>Discretion: yes (Prime Minister then Premier*)</p> <p>Initiated by: the Federal Government</p>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death of the current or a former Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia • Death of the current or a former Premier of British Columbia • Death of serving Speaker of the Legislative Assembly • Death of a member of the Executive Council of the Government of British Columbia • Death of the Leader of the Opposition of British Columbia 	<p>Location: Within the Province of British Columbia on all Provincial Government Buildings, including the Legislative Building.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of memorial service.</p> <p>Discretion: no</p> <p>Initiated by: the Provincial Government</p>

3a	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death of the current or former Chief Justice of the Appeal Court British Columbia • Death of the current or former Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of B.C. 	<p>Location: Within the Province of British Columbia on all Provincial Courthouses.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of memorial service.</p> <p>Discretion: no</p> <p>Initiated by: the Provincial Government</p>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death of a member of The Queen's Privy Council for Canada** residing in British Columbia • Death of a Senator from British Columbia • Death of a member of the House of Commons from a British Columbia constituency 	<p>Location: On all provincial buildings and establishments in the community of his or her place of residence (riding in the case of a member of the House of Commons), excluding the Parliament Buildings if the place of residence is Victoria.</p> <p>Duration: from the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service. At the Legislative Building only from sunrise to sunset on the day of the funeral or memorial service.</p> <p>Discretion: no</p> <p>Initiated by: the Federal Government</p> <p>Note: Decision to half-mast at the Legislative Building should be reviewed as well as half-masting everywhere in the community or just a place of residence (i.e. office in that community)</p>

5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death of a senior representative within the Province of British Columbia, of the house of faith. 	<p>Location: Only at place of residence on buildings owned by the individual house of Faith.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of memorial service.</p> <p>Note: Flags are not half-masted on any Province of British Columbia Building or at the Legislative Building.</p>
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death of a Justice of the Court of Appeal of British Columbia • Death of a Puisne Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia • Death of the Chief Judge of the Provincial Court of British Columbia 	<p>Location: Provincial Government buildings at the place of residence only where Justice presided.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service.</p> <p>Discretion: no</p> <p>Note: Flags are not half-masted on any other Province of British Columbia Building or at the Legislative Building.</p>
7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Death of a Member of the Legislative Assembly in office 	<p>Location: At the Legislative Building and at Provincial Government buildings in the member's constituency.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service</p> <p>Discretion: no</p> <p>Initiated by: the Provincial Government</p>

8	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of the Commander Maritime Forces 	<p>Location: Flag to be flown half-mast at the Discretion of the Armed Forces Command.</p> <p>Note: Flags are not half-masted at the Legislative Building or at Provincial Government Buildings.</p> <p>Initiated by: the Federal Government</p>
9	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of a member of the Canadian Forces <p>CF Policy - A. All flags within the task force to which a member is assigned at the time of death shall be half-masted from the day of death until sunset the day of the funeral b. All flags at the home base/station of the member shall be half-masted from the day of death until sunset the day of the funeral c. All flags within the environment (sea, land or air) to which the member was assigned shall be half-masted from sunrise to sunset on the day of the funeral and d. All flags at ndhq (101 colonel by drive only) shall be half-masted from the day of death until sunset the day of the funeral</p>	<p>Location: Provincial Government buildings at the place of residence only where the member resided.</p> <p>Duration: From sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service taking place in B.C.</p> <p>Discretion: no</p> <p>Note: Flags are not half-masted on any other Province of British Columbia Building or at the Legislative Building.</p>
10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of a Mayor of a City or Municipality within British Columbia 	<p>Location: At Provincial Government Buildings within the city or municipality, excluding the Legislative Building if the city is Victoria.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset of the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service.</p>

		<p>Discretion: no</p> <p>Initiated by: the City/Municipality</p>
11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of one of the Chancellors of a B.C. University (5) 	<p>Location: At the University only.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset of the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service</p> <p>Note: No half-mast at Province of British Columbia Buildings or at the Legislative Building.</p> <p>Initiated by: the University.</p>
12	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of a special person as designated by the Premier of British Columbia and in instances not provided for and which warrant half-masting for “special consideration” 	<p>Location: The Premier of British Columbia* may determine to have flags at half-mast (for this one occurrence only) at either all Provincial Buildings or at the Legislative Building only.</p> <p>No anniversary of this occurrence.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset of the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service.</p> <p>Discretion: yes (Premier)</p> <p>Initiated by: the Provincial Government</p>
13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of a current or former Commonwealth Head of Government or State Death of a current or former Head of State other than the Commonwealth 	<p>Flags are not normally half-masted in British Columbia for the death of a current or former foreign or Commonwealth Head of State or Government as they are recognised by Federal jurisdiction.</p>

	of Countries	Discretion: yes (Premier)
14a)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of a senior permanent officer of the Legislature, while in service of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia 	<p>Location: The main flag pole at the Legislature only.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset of the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service.</p> <p>Discretion: yes (Speaker on behalf of the Legislative Assembly)</p> <p>Initiated by: the Legislative Assembly</p>
14 b)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of an employee, while in the service of government, of the Province of British Columbia 	<p>Location: On those buildings and establishments affiliated to the concerned Ministry, Agency, Crown Corporation in British Columbia and at the place of work of the employee.</p> <p>Duration: From the time of notification of death until sunset on the day of the funeral or from the time of notification of death until sunset of the following day and from sunrise to sunset on the day of the memorial service.</p> <p>Discretion: yes (Minister)</p> <p>Initiated by: the Provincial Government</p>
15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of a City/Municipal Councillor 	<p>Location: At Discretion of the Mayor of the City/Municipality. Generally, for a serving councillor flags are half-masted the place of residence for that councillor (City/Municipal Hall) only.</p> <p>Half-masting for the death of former Mayors or Councillors is at the Discretion of the serving Mayor and Council. It should be noted that a decision to half-mast in a particular situation can set precedence and should be carefully reviewed.</p>

16	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Death of an accredited head of consular post in Vancouver while in British Columbia (i.e. Consul General) 	<p>Location: At the Legislative Building only.</p> <p>Duration: From sunrise to sunset on the day of the funeral/memorial service or, should there be no such service scheduled, on the day that the remains depart Canada. (Should a service be scheduled on a date different from the one that will witness the departure, half-masting would take place on the day of the service and not on the day that the remains depart Canada.)</p> <p>Discretion: yes</p> <p>Initiated by: the Provincial Government</p>
----	---	--

Notes:

No half-masting for former members of Executive Council of British Columbia, for former leaders of the opposition of British Columbia, or for former Chief Justices of the Appeal or Supreme Courts of British Columbia.

*** In areas where the Premier has discretion, the process for making a recommendation to the Premier is by the Director and Chief of Protocol through the Deputy Minister of Intergovernmental Relations.**

**** The Queen's Privy Council for Canada** – On the advice of the Prime Minister, the Governor General appoints new ministers to the Queen's Privy Council before they are sworn in as ministers. The Prime Minister of the day may choose to recommend the appointment of other persons of distinction as a special form of honour. The Queen's Privy Council for Canada thus includes not only members of the present ministry (cabinet) but also former ministers and other distinguished persons.

Should a half-masting need to be commenced on a weekend or statutory holiday, in addition to an e-mail being sent out by the Office of Protocol, Security at the Parliament Buildings 387-5516 and at Government House 387-2079 will be telephoned. Flags are permitted to be lowered on the Friday evening prior to the half-masting date and raised again on the morning of the next business day in order to avoid high overtime costs.

Original dated June 11, 2004
Updated December 2012