

Flag at Half-Mast

Flying at half-mast, halfway up the staff, a national flag is a signal of mourning. The flag should be hoisted to the top of the staff for an instant before being lowered to half-mast. It should be hoisted to the peak again before being lowered for the night. By tradition, the national flag flies at half-mast only when the entire country mourns. If local flags are flown at half-mast, the national flag may be flown at full mast with them. Citizens may salute and pledge allegiance to the flag when it flies at half-mast.

In the United States, the U.S. flag flies at half-mast:

1. For 30 days after the death of the President or a former President.
2. For 10 days after the death of the Vice President, the Chief Justice or a retired Chief Justice , or the speaker of the House of Representatives.
3. From the day of death until burial of an associate Justice of the Supreme Court, a former Vice President, a member of the Cabinet or a secretary of the army, navy or air force.

In addition, the flag flies at half-mast in the District of Columbia from the day of death until burial of a United States Senator or Representative, a territorial delegate or the resident commissioner from Puerto Rico. Flags in a state or territory fly half-mast from the day the governor dies until burial.

REFERENCE: World Book Encyclopedia