



# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240

## Memorandum

To: Regional Directors  
Superintendents

From: Comptroller, Exercising the Delegated Authority of the Director

Subject: Guidance on the Display and Flying of Non-Agency Flags and Pennants within the National Park System

### **Purpose and Duration**

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide guidance to superintendents and site managers on policies and procedures for the display and flying of non-agency flags and pennants. As used in this memorandum, non-agency flags and pennants are defined as flags and pennants that are not (1) the United States of America flag or (2) flags of the Department of the Interior (DOI) as defined in [310 DM 5](#). This memorandum covers both internal and external requests related to flags and pennants.

Our parks and programs occupy General Services Administration (GSA), DOI, and other agency facilities. In some cases, we are not responsible for the flags or pennants flown at those locations. The intent of this guidance is to address flags and pennants flown by the National Park Service (NPS) in public spaces where the NPS is responsible for the upkeep, maintenance, and operation of the flag and flagpole. This responsibility may be delegated to the NPS by another agency, such as the GSA.

This policy does not supersede or amend the policies and procedures in [Director's Order #61](#), [National Cemetery Operations](#), or the associated [Reference Manual 61](#) (RM-61), that govern the NPS management of 14 national cemeteries.

This guidance will remain in effect until superseded.

### **Policy**

Departmental policy on displaying and flying flags is found at [310 DM 5](#). It is DOI policy that bureaus and offices will display and use the U.S. flag as required by the Joint Resolution of June 22, 1942, as amended; [Presidential Proclamation 3044](#) dated March 1, 1954; [4 USC 1-10](#); and [36 USC 173-178](#). The DOI policy for displaying and using the U.S. flag is supplemented by GSA regulations, which govern the display or flying of the U.S. flag at GSA controlled installations. The displaying of the POW/MIA flag is governed by [36 USC 902](#) and [41 CFR 102-74.35](#). In addition, there are instances where a park's enabling legislation may address flags.

This memorandum is not intended to supersede or replace those laws, regulations, or policies. Additional guidance related to flags can be found under the Index of Policy Topics (see Flag Protocol) on the Office of Policy [website](#).

Subject to the below exemptions, only the U.S. Flag, flags of the DOI, and the POW/MIA flag will be flown by the NPS in public spaces where the NPS is responsible for the upkeep, maintenance, and operation of the flag and flagpole.

Per GSA [guidance](#) issued in 2023, flagpoles at buildings under the jurisdiction, custody, or control of the GSA are not intended to serve as a forum for free expression by the public. Rather, approved non-agency flags and pennants may be flown as an expression of the Federal Government's official sentiments, to promote a Federal agency-approved program, to adopt or support a Federal agency policy, or for a specific special occasion. Flagpoles at buildings under the jurisdiction, custody, or control of DOI are also not intended to serve as a forum for free expression by the public.

### **Exemptions**

The flying of non-agency flags and pennants within units of the National Park System on flagpoles, buildings, or other points of display managed, co-managed, or controlled by the NPS that fall under the following categories may also be permitted. These categories include flags and pennants that:

- provide historical context, such as earlier version of the U.S. flag at a historic fort;
- are part of historic reenactments or living history programs;
- are current military branch flags;
- are the flags of federally recognized Tribal nations affiliated with the park;
- are at sites co-managed by other Federal agencies (e.g., Manhattan Project National Historical Park) that may fly relevant non-DOI agency flags;
- are at sites co-managed by a State (e.g., Redwood National and State Park) or city (e.g., Waco Mammoth National Monument) that may fly that State's or city's relevant flag;
- are part of parks with international park designations (e.g., Saint Croix Island International Historic Site) that may fly relevant foreign flags; or
- are provided by agreement between the NPS and the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services related to Naturalization ceremonies.

### **For Further Information**

Questions about this guidance should be sent to the Associate Director, Visitor and Resource Protection, at [NPSADVistor\\_ResourceProtection@nps.gov](mailto:NPSADVistor_ResourceProtection@nps.gov).