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Snippet #113 US Flag Protocol

Have you ever arrived at a meeting and seen confusion over how to display the flag?

The laws concerning the flag of the United States of America can be found in the United States Code. Title 4, Chapter 1 pertains to the flag; Title 18, Chapter 33, Section 700 regards criminal penalties for flag desecration; Title 36, Chapter 3 pertains to patriotic customs and observances. These laws have been supplemented by Executive Orders and Presidential Proclamations.

Here are a few of the rules for displaying the flag of the United States of America indoors:



When the flag of the United States of America is displayed with another flag against a wall with crossed staffs, it should be on the flag's own right (the viewer's left), and its staff should be in front of the staff of the other flag. The flag of the United States of America should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of states or localities or pennants of societies are grouped and displayed from staffs.



When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staffs of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International custom forbids the display of the flag of one nation above that of another nation in peacetime. The order of precedence for flags generally is national (US first, then others in alphabetical order in English), states (host state first, then others in the order of their admission to the Union) and territories (Washington DC, Puerto Rico, etc.), military (Army, Marine Corps, Navy, Air Force, Coast Guard), then other flags.



The flag of the United States should always be at the peak, when flags of states, cities, localities, or societies are flown on the same halyard. When the flag is at half-mast, all flags are at half-mast, with the US flag at the mid-point and the other flag(s) below. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted/posted first and lowered/removed last. No flag or pennant may be placed above or to the right of the flag of the United States.



When the flag of the United States is displayed from a staff projecting horizontally or at an angle from the wall, the union of the flag should be placed at the peak of the staff unless the flag is at half-staff.



When displayed from a staff in a church or meeting room, whether on or off a platform, the flag of the United States of America should hold the position of prominence at the clergyman's or speaker's right. Any other flag should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker, to the right of the audience.