



Council Policy

WEST WIMMERA SHIRE COUNCIL

COUNCIL POLICY

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| FLAG FLYING AND USE OF COUNCIL OWNED BANNER POLES POLICY | Policy No: | |
| | Adopted by Council: | 15 April 2026 |
| | Next review date: | April 2030 |
| Executive Director: | Director of Corporate and Community Services | |
| Responsible Officer: | Manager Community Development | |
| Functional Area: | Community Development | |
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| Introduction and Background | <p>The West Wimmera Shire Council proudly affirms its commitment to the Australian National Flag as the nation’s symbol of unity and identity. It is Council’s position that the Australian National Flag must always be displayed in the most prominent position at all Council buildings, sites and events where flags are flown.</p> <p>The West Wimmera Shire Council has three flag poles located inside both the Edenhope and Kaniva Council Chambers. The Australian Flag will always be flown on the middle flagpole inside the Council Chambers. Other official flags such as, but not limited to, the Victorian Flag, Aboriginal Flag, Torres Strait Islander Flag and Local Government Flag may be flown on the other two flagpoles.</p> <p>There is one flagpole located outside the Kaniva Council Chambers. The Australian Flag will take precedence on this flagpole.</p> <p>There are two flagpoles outside the Edenhope Council Chambers. The Australian Flag will take precedence on the first flagpole. Other official flags may be flown on the second flagpole.</p> <p>To accommodate requests for the flying of non-official flags, Council has made provision for a ‘Community Flagpole’ in Edenhope, Kaniva, Apsley, Goroke and Harrow.</p> <p>Council also has several banner poles in locations across the shire. Banner poles are used to display decorations, events and celebration materials that are not flags.</p> | |
| Purpose and Objectives | <p>This policy ensures that flags on Council property are flown in accordance with this policy and with the Australian Government’s flag protocols.</p> <p>When considering requests for flying official and non-official flags, guidelines will be used which are outlined in this Policy.</p> | |



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| Definitions | <p>For interpretation purposes, a flag is defined as a piece of cloth attached by one edge to a staff, rope, or pole, and which bears a distinctive design that is adopted by a recognised body as representative of a body or cause.</p> <p>Council West Wimmera Shire Council</p> <p>Non-Official Flags Flags representing a community event, charity days, commemorations, or celebrations.</p> <p>Non-Official flagpole Dedicated Community Flag Poles in Edenhope, Kaniva, Gorokey, Harrow and Apsley (marked "Community Flagpole")</p> <p>Official Flags Flags of countries, states or those formally proclaimed by the Governor General in accordance with the <i>Flags Act 1953</i>.</p> <p>Banner A banner is not a flag and is used to decorate or recognise a celebration or event.</p> <p>Approval A written application must be approved by Council and repeat applications may be approved by the Chief Executive Officer.</p> |
| Policy Details | |
| 1. | <p>Australian National Flag</p> <p>The Australian National Flag was proclaimed by the Governor-General on 28 August 1996. The Australian National Flag was raised for the first time on 3 September 1901. This symbol of nationality stands for the democracy which allows Australians to discuss its meaning and origins.</p> <p>The Australian National Flag consists of three elements: The Union Jack, The Commonwealth Star and The Southern Cross. The Union Jack is to acknowledge the history of British settlement in Australia. The Commonwealth Star on the Australian National Flag, created in 1901 had six points representing the states. The seventh point was added in 1908 to represent Commonwealth territories.</p> |
| 2. | <p>State of Victoria Flag</p> <p>The State of Victoria Flag was the first Australian colony to have its own flag. It consists of a blue background with the Union Flag in the top pole-side quarter. In the background area there are five white stars representing the Southern Cross. Above the stars is a St Edward's Crown.</p> |
| 3. | <p>Order of Precedence</p> <p>The Australian National flag takes precedence in Australia over all other flags when it is flown in company with other flags. Thereafter when flown in the community, the order of precedence of flags is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Australian National Flag |



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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• State and Territory flags• Other flags prescribed by the Flags Act 1953 including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ The Australian Aboriginal flag and The Torres Strait Islander flag in either order.• The Defence ensigns which should be flown in the following order:<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ Australian Defence Force Ensign;➢ the Australian White Ensign; and➢ the Royal Australian Air Force Ensign• Ensigns and pennants including local government; Commonwealth, state and territory agencies; and non-government organisations. |
| 4. | <p>Flying Non-Official Flags</p> <p>Approved non-official flags will be flown on the dedicated “Community Flagpoles”.</p> <p>Non-official flag flying requests must be submitted to Council in writing four (4) weeks before the requested day to allow sufficient time for Council to consider and approve the application. Applications will be assessed in accordance with the below criteria by the Director Corporate and Community Services and submitted with a report to Council for consideration and approval. Once approved by Council, repeat applications will be approved by Chief Executive Officer. The CEO may also approve an application to fly an official flag on the community flagpole (e.g. Australian Flag on Australia Day).</p> <p>Groups applying to have a non-official flag flown on the Community Flagpole, will be required to provide the flag.</p> <p>The following criteria will be considered during assessment of a request to fly a non-official flag on a Council Community Flagpole:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Promotes respect for all• Is part of an event or ceremony or commemoration• Is consistent with Council’s values and policies• Embraces a sense of belonging and enhanced community life <p>Council will not consider a request to fly a non-official flag that is connected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Individual advancement.• Political or cultural sensitivities.• Exposure to adverse criticism of Council or the Community.• Council may also use the Community Flagpole to fly Official Flags upon written request. |
| 5. | <p>Protocols for Display</p> <p>Official flags should always be flown aloft and free as close as possible to the top of the flag mast with the rope tightly secured.</p> |



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| | <p>The flag may only be flown at night when illuminated. In accordance with National Flag Protocols, street lighting is considered appropriate illumination when the flag(s) are clearly visible. If a flag is not illuminated at night, the flag will be lowered at the end of each day.</p> <p>The flag should not be allowed to fall or lie flat on the ground.</p> |
| 6. | <p>Flags Flying at Half-Mast</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Australian National Flag will be flown at half-mast, following direction from the State or Federal Government. The Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet and/or the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet may issue a Flag Notification instructing flags to be flown at half-mast. Following that, the Shire will lower its flags accordingly and in accordance with the Protocols.• The Shire may fly its flags at half-mast on the passing of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander elder or significant community members. A relevant local Aboriginal community organisation may make the request of the Shire's Chief Executive Officer (CEO). Following CEO approval (and following consultation with the Shire's Cultural Heritage Advisor), the Shire will fly all flags at its Shire Offices at half-mast on the day, or part of the day, of the funeral of an elder or significant community member.• Community Members, Councillors and Shire Staff: The Shire may fly its flags at half-mast on the passing of a significant community member. On request and in consultation with the CEO and the Mayor, the Shire will fly all flags at its Shire Offices at half-mast on the death of a current or former Councillor or member of Shire staff or on the day, or part of the day, of their funeral.• In all other circumstances, the CEO, in consultation with the Mayor, has the authority to make discretionary decisions regarding flying all flags at its Shire Offices at half-mast. |
| 7. | <p>Use of Council owned banner poles in the town's main street precinct</p> <p>Council has several banner poles across the shire in town's main street precincts and provide banners recognising Christmas and other special days as formally approved by Council.</p> <p>Community events supported by Council may apply to display a banner on the main street banner poles, subject to approval by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The CEO will determine the display location and duration, considering competing requests from other events or causes seeking to display banners. Council will maintain a centralised calendar booking system to manage and coordinate approved displays. Bookings are taken on a first in first basis and are for a maximum of 1 month with a maximum of 12 months in advanced.</p> <p>In assessing applications, the CEO will consider the purpose of the display, any potential impacts on risks of discriminatory or inappropriate messaging, and compliance with all relevant legislative requirements.</p> <p>All costs associated with the installation and removal of banners on light-pole banner mounts will be borne by the organisation requesting the display.</p> <p>Banner poles cannot be used for flags or any other purpose other than flying banners as approved by Council.</p> |



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| 8. | References |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Flag Act 1953</i> • <i>Australian National Flag Protocols</i> |
| 9. | Policy Review |
| | This Policy will be reviewed every four years or earlier if the Council so determines. |
| 10. | Policy Amendments |
| | Minor amendments to the Policy may be made by the CEO to reflect legislative or organisational changes. The CEO must notify the Councillors of any such amendments. |

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| Policy Adopted: | Council Meeting 17/02/2022 | Minute Book Page [number] | RecFind |
| Policy Reviewed: | Unscheduled Meeting 9/05/2022 | | E22/000153 |
| | Council Meeting 15/04/2026 | SRV – Governance – Policies and Procedures – Council Policies | |
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