

## Basic rules for the use of flags

### 1. Meaning of the German federal flag

The German federal flag, just like every other national flag, represents the living state as a political unit. Therefore every national flag is entitled to a high measure of respect and deference.

### 2. Who is entitled to use flags or banners?

Apart from the obligation for all public authorities to flag on regular, general flagging days, every German citizen is free to use the federal, state or city flag, in so far as it is not an official flag. In addition, flags may be shown in ecclesiastical colours, with or without an emblem, or in addition club or association flags. Every private person may use the flags or pennants of friendly countries for outdoor flagging or as a table flag.

### 3. Time for flagging

Flags should be raised at dawn and lowered at sunset. In the case of special events, the flagging may also be continued after sunset if and so long as the flags are illuminated.

### 4. When is flagged?

a) on the regular, general flagging days:  
(for public authorities obligation to flag)

**27th January International Holocaust Remembrance Day**  
**1st May Labour Day**  
**9th May Europe Day**  
**23rd May anniversary of the Proclamation of the Basic Law**  
**17th June anniversary of the 17th June 1953**  
**20th July anniversary of the 20th July 1944**  
**3rd October Day of German Unity**  
**November (National Remembrance Day, 2nd Sunday before the 1st Sunday in Advent)**  
**Day of an Election to the German Bundestag**  
**Day of an Election to the European Parliament**

b) for special events:

- 1. for state visits by government leaders and heads of state**
- 2. for visits by foreign economic delegations in industry and trade**
- 3. for national and regional mourning as well as in cases of local bereavements**
- 4. for trade fairs and exhibitions**
- 5. for church festivals**
- 6. for local festivals and jubilees**
- 7. for sporting events, especially those of an international character.**

## **5. Order of precedence of the German federal flag**

In the case of national flagging, the official federal flag and the federal flag are entitled to the place of precedence if other flags (e.g. state, city or association flags) are shown in addition. In the case of international flagging the arrangement of national flags is from right to left, in accordance with the French alphabet. Following them, the official federal or federal flag is shown, then the European flag, state, city, club flags, etc. The order of precedence of from right to left in each case (seen from the building). These rules apply correspondingly for the arrangement of flags for interior decoration.

## **6. Flagging for mourning**

Hoisted flags are hoisted to the tip of the flagpole and then slowly brought down to the position "half mast". In this case, the lower edge of the hoisted flag should be at the level of the pole middle. Suspended flags, banners and hoisted flags in upright format are not put to "half mast". In the case of suspended flags, a black ribbon is put on the tip of the flagpole, in the case of banners, black ribbons are placed at the left and right ends of the wooden cross pole, with which about one third of the length of the flag. In the case of hoisted flags in upright format, the black ribbon is fastened to the upper end of the mast. Its length should not exceed that of the short side of the flag.

## **7. Draping with federal flags**

The federal and official federal flag should never be used to decorate a speaker's podium or table. In such a case, the federal flag should be set up behind the podium or to the right of it.

## **8. Use of the German federal colours**

The German federal colours may not be used together with an association, club or company emblem in a flag. The association's, club's or company's own flags should be used for this purpose.

## **9. Damaged and worn-out flags**

Care should always be taken to ensure that the flag is in an impeccable state which is achieved by regular cleaning and repair. Flags which have become shabby should no longer be hoisted, but replaced by new ones.

State 11/06