



United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
1849 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20240

IN REPLY REFER TO:
A7623 (2400)

February 7, 2006

Memorandum

To: Regional Directors
Chief, United States Park Police

From: Director /s/ **Fran P. Mainella**

Subject: Line-of-Duty Death Procedures: Flag Lowering/Mourning Bands

Purpose

This policy memorandum establishes procedures for lowering the United States flag to half-staff for National Park Service (NPS) line-of-duty deaths. This memorandum outlines the delegated approval authority to the Deputy Director, Operations, Regional Directors, and Chief, United States Park Police specifically relating to line-of-duty deaths. It also addresses authorization procedures for mourning bands/ribbons.

General

The U.S. flag must be lowered when required by Presidential Proclamation upon the death of certain persons or during specified occasions; and when so directed by the Secretary of the Interior (Departmental Manual 310.5).

Definition

A line-of-duty death is a death occurring during the course of any action in which an employee is obligated or authorized by law, rule, or written condition to perform; or for any action in which the employee is compensated by the National Park Service.

Half-Staffing Circumstances/Authorization Parameters/Notification

National Lowering: The U.S. flag may be lowered nationally (excepting the National Mall) to honor the death of any employee who was engaged in life-saving actions and/or killed feloniously in the line of duty. Authority for national lowering resides with the Deputy Director, Operations.

Regional Lowering: The U.S. flag may be lowered regionally to honor the death of any employee who was killed accidentally while in the line of duty. Authority for regional lowering resides with the affected Regional Director. Regional Directors from other regions where a deceased employee worked previously may also approve flag lowering either region-wide or at individual parks. Regional Directors may also approve the lowering of flags at specific sites under their control when circumstances dictate such as the death of other Federal, state, or local officials adjacent to NPS sites.

United States Park Police (USPP) Facilities: The U.S. flag may be lowered at USPP facilities pursuant to approval from the Chief. The Chief may also approve the lowering of flags at specific USPP facilities when circumstances dictate such as the death of other Federal, state, or local officials.

Requests for flag lowering for circumstances not covered in this document should be directed to the appropriate decision-making level for consideration, i.e., Regional Director for regional/park requests, Chief, USPP for USPP facilities, Deputy Director, Operations for national requests.

Upon approval of flag lowering, the Washington Office or affected region will utilize Inside NPS as a notification tool in addition to any other communication processes they have in place.

Duration

Half-staffing of the flag begins upon approval by proper authority and concludes at sunset on the day of interment.

GSA Controlled Buildings

Regional Directors may authorize the flag to be flown at half-staff, following an employee line-of-duty death, when the NPS is the sole occupant of a building to include GSA-controlled buildings. If the NPS is not the sole occupant of a building, then the GSA Regional Administrator or principal GSA manager should be contacted for approval.

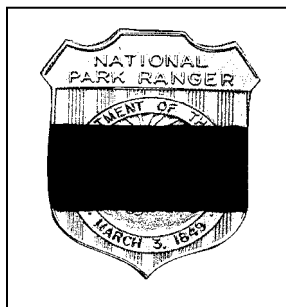
Mourning Bands/Ribbons

Under circumstances involving a line-of-duty death, Regional Directors and the Chief, USPP, may approve the wearing of mourning bands on NPS badges and shields for employees within their respective regions/geographic areas. Mourning bands may also be authorized nationally by the Deputy Director, Operations if warranted.

Mourning bands may be authorized by individual Park Superintendents to honor the deaths of employees from adjacent Federal, state, and local agencies if warranted.

Mourning bands for badges should be black elastic banding up to 3/4" wide and placed horizontally across the middle of the badge or shield (Exhibit 1). Employees not issued badges may wear a 3/8" black satin ribbon, folded in a 1" loop pinned above the nametag. Mourning bands for the USPP are either solid black or black with a blue stripe and placed horizontally across the middle of the shield.

Exhibit-1



Contact

General policy questions or assistance with policy interpretation should be directed through the office of the Associate Director, Visitor Resource Protection Office (202) 565-1020.

Cc: Deputy Director, Operations