



1.0 AUTHORITY

- *The Flags Act 1953*
- *Australian Flags Booklet* - The Commonwealth protocols for the appropriate use and the flying of the National Flag.

2.0 INTENT

The purpose of this policy is to establish clear, consistent guidelines for the proper use and flying of flags at Mornington Peninsula Shire (Shire) Offices in accordance with the official protocols provided by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet. It affirms the Australian National Flag as the primary and most prominent flag to be flown or displayed at all Mornington Peninsula Shire Council buildings, sites, events, and communications where flags are used.

3.0 SCOPE

This policy applies to the following:

- Shire employees responsible for managing flags at Shire Offices.
- Any staff or contractors involved in the production of digital, printed, or graphic materials that feature flag imagery, ensuring compliance with Part 2 of the *Australian Flags Booklet* (Protocols).
- All representations of flags across Shire-managed sites, signage, events, and communications, whether physical or digital.
- Shire owned flagpoles at war memorials and other locations across the Mornington Peninsula, excluding those managed by community groups and other organisations such as the Returned Service League.

4.0 GOVERNANCE PRINCIPLES

Under the *Local Government Act 2020*, Council must give effect to the following overarching governance principles:

- Council decisions are to be made and actions taken in accordance with the relevant law.
- collaboration with other Councils and Governments and statutory bodies is to be sought.
- regional, state and national plans and policies are to be taken into account in strategic planning and decision making the transparency of Council decisions, actions and information is to be ensured.

5.0 POLICY STATEMENT

5.1 Flags Flying Protocol

The Mornington Peninsula 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.

All flags flown on flagpoles managed by the Shire are displayed in accordance with the protocols specified in Part 2 of the *Australian Flags Booklet* (Protocols). The Protocols, administered by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, ensure the proper and respectful display of the Australian National Flag.

These Protocols support the flying of the Australian National Flag alone or alongside other flags, including the Victorian State Flag, Australian Aboriginal Flag, Torres Strait Islander Flag, Shire Flag, house flags, club pennants, corporate flags, and company flags. The Protocols provide a clear framework for the respectful display and positioning of these flags.

5.2 Shire Offices

Shire Offices have six flagpoles positioned at the entrance.

These flagpoles permanently display the following flags in the order of precedence:

- Australian National Flag
- Victorian State Flag
- Australian Aboriginal Flag
- Torres Strait Islander Flag
- Intersex Inclusive Progress Pride Flag, and
- Shire Flag.

5.3 Flying Flags at Half-Mast

The Governance Team is responsible for facilitating and administering the flying of flags at half-mast in accordance with this policy and the Protocols.

Flags may be flown at half-mast in the following circumstances, as a symbol of mourning or in response to specific events:

5.3.1 Direction from the Prime Minister and Cabinet or Victorian Department of Premier

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.

5.3.2 Commemorating Local Elders

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.

5.3.3 Community Members, Councillors and Shire Staff

The Shire may fly its flags at half-mast on the passing of a significant community members.

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.

5.3.4 Discretionary Requests

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.

5.4 Request to Fly other Flags

Community groups may request permission to fly other flags on Shire managed flagpoles. Examples include acknowledging the Italian Republic Day or sporting grand finals.

Requests to fly other flags can be made to the Governance Team. The CEO, in consultation with the Mayor, will review these requests and the Governance Team will facilitate the decision.

Such requests will not be approved if they, in the sole discretion of the CEO, may cause offense to any community sectors or if they are inconsistent with the Shire's values and commitment to inclusiveness.

5.5 Communication of Flag Protocol and Notifications

The Governance Team is responsible for providing information about the Protocol, Flag Notifications and any situations where flags are flown at half-mast.

Communications will be posted to the Shire's website and internally.

5.6 Flagpole Locations New/Relocation

The installation of additional flagpoles or the relocation of existing ones must be conducted in compliance with the Protocols. This includes the placement of new flagpoles, changes to current flagpole locations, and any modifications to associated lighting and plaque arrangements.

Consultation with the Manager Governance and Risk must take place before any decisions are made regarding flagpoles.

5.7 Management and Maintenance

Flagpoles – The Governance Team is responsible for reporting any required repairs and maintenance of flagpoles to the appropriate Contract Coordinator for action.

Flags – The Governance Team is responsible for the replacement of worn and damaged flags.

5.8 Use and Display of Flags in Digital, Printed and Graphic Materials

Where flags are used in digital, printed, and graphic content including on the Shire's website, social media channels, newsletters, brochures, flyers, posters, and physical signage, they must reflect appropriate flag protocols to ensure respectful, consistent, and inclusive representation.

- The Australian National Flag must always be included and displayed in the most prominent position, in line with the Commonwealth's flag protocols.
- Where used, other flags such as the Australian Aboriginal Flag, Torres Strait Islander Flag, Intersex Inclusive Progress Pride Flag, and the Victorian State Flag must be displayed in accordance with the protocols outlined in Part 2 of the Australian Flags Booklet.



- Flag images and graphics (e.g. icons, illustrations, stickers) must not be altered, distorted, recoloured, cropped, or overlaid. They must always be displayed with appropriate dignity.
- Flags must not be used in any context that could be seen as disrespectful, politically motivated, or inconsistent with the intent of this Policy or Commonwealth protocols.
- Flag imagery should not be used in general or day-to-day communications unless clearly relevant to the content or intent of the material.

5.9 Complaints

Concerns or complaints about the flying of flags, the placement of flagpoles or any other matter regarding flags, should be made in the first instance to the Manager Governance and Risk.

6.0 HUMAN RIGHTS CHARTER COMPATIBILITY

This policy has been assessed as being compatible with the *Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006 (Vic)*.

7.0 ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- *Recognition and Achievements Policy*.
- *Australian Flags Booklet*
- *Flags Act 1953*

8.0 DEFINITIONS

Australian Flags Booklet Protocols

The set of guidelines and protocols outlined in Part 2 of the *Australian Flags Booklet*, administered by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet. These Protocols govern the proper handling and display of the Australian National Flag and ensure compliance with national standards.

<https://www.pmc.gov.au/sites/default/files/resource/download/australian-flags-booklet-2024-11-18.pdf>

See Part 2 of the *Australian Flags Booklet*.

Shire Offices

Shire Offices located at 90 Besgrove Street, Rosebud, 2 Queen Street, Mornington; and 21 Marine Parade, Hastings.



Worn and Damaged Flags

Refers to flags that are no longer in a presentable or usable condition due to wear, tear, or damage. These flags need to be replaced to maintain the proper

dignity of flags at Shire Offices and other locations in accordance with the Part 2 of the *Australian Flags Booklet* – Dignity of the flag.

Digital, Printed and Graphic Materials

Content produced by the Shire for communication, promotional, or informational purposes, including but not limited to websites, social media posts, brochures, flyers, posters, stickers, signage, and internal publications.

9.0 POLICY SPONSOR

The Manager Governance and Risk is responsible for overseeing the application and review of the Flags Policy.

10.0 DOCUMENT CONTROLS

Council will review this policy every four years or earlier as required.

10.1 Document Version Table

Document Version Control				
Version	Section	Revision Description	Date Revised	Approved by

Administrative Updates

It is recognised that, from time to time, circumstances may change leading to the need for minor administrative changes to this document. Where an update does not materially alter this document, such a change may be made administratively. Examples include a change to the name of a Shire department, the change to an existing policy or document referred to in this policy, and minor updates to legislation and the like which does not have a material impact. However, any change or update which materially alters the document must be by endorsement of the Council.