



Mayor of Providence

Brett P. Smiley

Executive Order

2025-1

May 23, 2025

### Display of Flags at City Hall

1. The City of Providence ("City") traditionally displays three flags on City Hall: the flag of the United States, the Prisoner of War and Missing in Action (POW/MIA) service members flag, and the flag of the City which shall be displayed in conformance with applicable federal, state and local laws [as stated in the federal "Our Flag" publication of the Congress, House Document No. 96-144 and RI Gen L § 42-4-3; *and*
2. The United States Supreme Court ruled in May of 2022 that where a government does not speak for itself through ordinance, policy or a vote relating to flag type, then the government cannot exclude flags based on the flag's content; *and*
3. Historically, the City has on occasion flown flags in addition to or in place of the flag of the City on the smaller Eastern Flag pole; *and*
4. It is important that City Hall, as a public building, remain inclusive and welcoming with the ability to express its official support of other nations, and to express other official, City-endorsed messages from the Mayor and/or City Council that may be appropriately accompanied by ceremonial flag-raising; *and*
5. For these expressions of official City sentiment to be clearly construed by the residents of Providence, it is also important to clearly establish and demarcate that the City's flagpoles are not intended to serve as a forum for free expression by the public; *and*

***NOW, THEREFORE;*** I hereby order and direct the following, commencing immediately:

6. The following flags may be displayed by the City as an expression of the City's official sentiments:
  - a. *Flags of Governments Recognized by the United States.* Flags of governments recognized by the United States may be displayed upon the proclamation of the Mayor

or by resolution passed and approved by the Providence City Council for a period of no more than twenty-four (24) hours unless outlined in the proclamation or resolution.

- b. *Flags Displayed in Conjunction with Official Events or Ceremonies as Announced by Mayoral Proclamation or City Council Resolution.* By proclamation of the Mayor or by resolution passed and approved by the Providence City Council, other flags may be displayed at official City events or ceremonies for a period of no more than twenty-four (24) hours unless outlined in the proclamation or resolution.

So Ordered:

  
Brett P. Smiley, Mayor