

Flag Policy

Purpose	The purpose of this policy is to establish the guiding principles that will govern the flying of flags on flagpoles under the direct management of the Darebin City Council.
Scope	This policy applies to flagpoles managed directly by Council at <i>Municipal Flag Sites</i> nominated within this policy. This policy applies to Councillors and employees of the Darebin City Council. This policy does not apply to flags flown on flagpoles: • At sites where Council is the owner or manager of a building, and use of that building is under direct control of an alternate manager or tenant; or • The commemorative flagpole at the cenotaph located on High Street outside the Preston Civic Centre. Directions to Council employees that ensure effective implementation of this policy may be documented in separate procedures and guidelines.
Definitions and Abbreviations	• Act – Flags Act 1953 • Australian Flag Booklet - The booklet produced by the Australian Government (as published by the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet) outlining the protocols for the appropriate use and flying of the Australian flag, located via https://www.pmc.gov.au/publications/australian-flags-booklet • Australian National Flag Protocols – A set of Commonwealth regulations governing the correct use, precedence, and handling of flags at government and civic sites. • Community Flagpoles – Flagpoles erected and managed by Council at the Preston Civic Centre and Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre for the purpose of flying flags other than National flags. • Council – Darebin City Council • Days of Observance – Specific days for recognising significant cultural, national, and international events through flag displays. • Flag - A piece of cloth, typically oblong in shape, attachable by one edge to a pole or rope and used as a symbol or emblem of a country, group or institution. • International Flags – Flags that are (i) formally adopted by a country other than Australia to represent that country or (ii) recognised as the flag of a nation-state or sovereign-state. • Municipal Flag Sites – Council managed sites including the following locations: ○ Civic Centre Preston ○ Operations Centre Reservoir ○ Bundoora Park ○ Narrandjeri Stadium Thornbury ○ Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre (with four flagpoles) • National Flags – National Flags include the Australian National Flag, Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Flag.

Policy Statement(s)	Flying of National Flags Council acknowledges that <i>National Flags</i> should be treated with respect and dignity. The Australian National Flag will always be flown in a position superior to that of any other flag or ensign in accordance with the <i>Australian Flag Booklet</i>. It will be raised first, lowered last, and no other flag will fly higher than the Australian National Flag. Flying the Aboriginal Flag and the Torres Strait Islander Flag re-affirms Council's Statement of Commitment to Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People 2019. Flying these flags is also a visible demonstration of Council's respect and recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities' values, living culture and practices, including their continuing spiritual connection to the land and waters and their right to self-determination. Council will fly <i>National Flags</i> at <i>Municipal Flag Sites</i> in accordance with the <i>Australian Government's Flag Protocols</i>: • Continuously where there is illumination; and • During business hours where flagpoles are not illuminated. National flags will be of standard size and in good repair. Flying of National Flags at Half-Mast Council will fly National Flags at half-mast in accordance with the <i>Australian Government Protocols</i> and the <i>Australian Flag Booklet</i>, including but not limited to the following: • When directed by the Australian Government or Victorian Government; or • When commemorating Anzac Day and Remembrance Day, in consultation with the Returned Serviceman's League; or • When directed by the Chief Executive Officer, following consultation with the Mayor and Councillors, on the day, or part of the day, to recognise the death of: ○ A local citizen widely recognised as having made a notable contribution to the municipal community. ○ A current or former Councillor or member of Council staff, on the day of their funeral. ○ An Aboriginal elder or significant community member's funeral, upon request from relevant community members. In accordance with Commonwealth regulations and protocols, when flying the Australian National Flag with other flags, all flags in the set should be flown at half-mast, with the Australian National Flag being raised first, and lowered last. To bring the flag to the half-mast position, the flag must first be raised to the top of the mast (the 'peak'), then immediately lowered slowly to the half-mast position. Council recognises that the Commonwealth Government may change legislation, regulation or protocols with respect to flying National Flags, and specifically the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flags. If these changes occur Council will consult directly with representatives of Darebin's Traditional Owners and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisors and partners on appropriate arrangements
-----------------------------------	--

including but not limited to occasions when the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags might be flown at half-mast independently of the Australian Flag.

Community flagpole at Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre

The Progress Pride Flag will be continuously flown at the fourth flagpole at Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre.

Proposals to fly alternative flags on this flagpole to highlight or recognise special events shall be submitted for consideration and approval or decline through Council resolution.

Alternative flags shall not be flown for more than seven (7) consecutive days in a calendar year.

Council will publish an application form on its website to enable applications to be made for consideration of an alternative flag to be flown at Bundoora Homestead Arts Centre.

Submissions for approval shall include explanation about how the event aligns to key strategic objectives of the Council Plan or key strategies.

Community Flagpoles at Preston Civic Centre

Council has two *Community Flagpoles* that are primarily used to recognize *Days of Observance*, at the following locations at the Preston Civic Centre:

- 284 Gower Street, Preston (City Hall flagpole)
- 350 High Street, Preston (High Street flagpole)

These community flagpoles may be used, in accordance with this policy, for flying:

- Flags associated with Days of Observance (as scheduled); or
- Community flags (through Council resolution); or
- International Flags (when required by legislation)

Flags associated with Days of Observance

Council shall fly flags relating to nominated *Days of Observance* in accordance with Appendix A to this policy. These flags will be flown on at least one of the two *Community Flagpoles* at the Preston Civic Centre during the nominated day(s).

Where the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander flags are flown at have mast under the *Days of Observance* (see Appendix A) this will apply at all *Municipal Flag Sites*.

Community-nominated flags

When the *Community Flagpoles* are not being used to fly flags associated with the *Days of Observance*, these flagpoles will be available for recognising events and issues that are deemed to be significant to a large proportion of municipal residents.

Requests from community groups and community members that reside within the municipality to fly flags on the *Community Flagpoles*. Council will publish an application form on its website to enable applications to be made for consideration of flags to be flown on *Community Flagpoles*. All requests shall be determined through Council resolution.

	In considering community requests, the Councillors will have regard to previous Council resolutions and the strategic objectives in the Council Plan. In general, the Council will not support requests to fly other flags where a request is linked to: • Views that do not align with Council's views on promoting a diverse and inclusive community. • Activities for commercial gain or individual advancement. Flags flown on Community Flagpoles in response to a community request will not be flown for more than seven (7) consecutive days in a calendar year, including flags currently flying on Community Flagpoles. International Flags Council will only fly international flags when required by legislation.
Responsibilities	Councillor Responsibilities Councillors are responsible for: • Adoption of this policy and participating in scheduled reviews; and • Ensuring any Notices of Motion are consistent with this policy. Officer Responsibilities Council Officers are responsible for the following: • Employees involved in event planning, governance, or facility management must ensure that flag displays align with this policy. • Employees must also report any issues related to flag maintenance or incorrect displays to the General Manager Community.
Organisational Values	Council's values enable and support the effective design and application of this policy by guiding staff in the course of their work. We Make a Difference: We are driven by our desire to make a difference for the people we serve. Our work is purposeful and creates a positive impact for the community. We are proud to work here. Our work matters. We are Accountable: We are empowered to own and take responsibility for our actions. We follow through on our commitments and deliver on our promises. We make it happen. We are Collaborative: We are united by a common purpose to serve the community. We work together, connecting within our teams and across the organisation. We are inclusive and collaborative. We are one. We have Integrity: We act with integrity and transparency in conversations and decision-making. Through open and clear communication, we build trust. We're honest. We walk the talk. We show Respect: We are diverse, inclusive, respectful and caring. We encourage everyone to have a voice and we listen to each other. We recognise one another's contributions and treat people fairly. We look after each other. We are Creative: We are bold, courageous and innovative. We try new things, experiment and continuously improve. We are open-minded, creative and forward-thinking. We are leaders.

Breach of Policy	Breaches of policies are treated seriously. Where potential breaches relate to Councillors who seek to directly influence officers in relation to raising or lowering flags, these matters will be referred to the Mayor or Councillor Conduct Officer, whichever is most appropriate. Where potential breaches relate to officers who raise or lower flags outside of this policy, these matters will be referred to the General Manager Community.
-------------------------	---

GOVERNANCE

Parent Strategy/ Plan	The Flag Policy aligns with Darebin City Council's broader governance, inclusion, and community engagement strategies. It is guided by the Australian National Flag Protocols, ensuring compliance with national regulations on flag precedence, display, and handling. The policy also supports the objectives outlined in the Darebin Council Plan, reinforcing the Council's commitment to diversity, inclusion, and the recognition of culturally significant events. By embedding this policy within these strategic frameworks, Darebin City Council ensures that flag protocols are respectful, inclusive, and compliant with national and local regulations.
Related Documents	This policy should be read in conjunction with Council's Governance Framework, Council Plan, Balit Marra (Aboriginal Action Plan) and Community Engagement Policy. These documents provide the broader strategic context for the respectful and appropriate display of flags at Council sites.
Supporting Procedures and Guidelines	This policy is supported by the following procedures and guidelines, which are essential to ensure the respectful, consistent, and compliant display of flags across all registered Civic Flag Sites and community flagpoles: Australian Flag Booklet: This booklet outlines the official procedures and protocols for the proper handling, display, and maintenance of the Australian Flag. All Council staff are required to adhere strictly to these protocols when managing flags at the Civic Centre and other Council facilities to ensure national standards are upheld. Flag Display and Handling Procedures: These procedures detail the correct methods for raising, lowering, and maintaining flags in accordance with the Australian National Flag Protocols. Employees must follow these guidelines to ensure flags are displayed with the utmost respect and dignity. Community Flag Requests and Approval Process: This process provides the procedure for requesting the display of community flags at the Preston City Hall Community Flagpole. It outlines the criteria for eligibility, the steps for formal submission, and the process for Council endorsement. All community flag requests must meet the outlined requirements and obtain approval before display. Annual Days of Observance Schedule: This schedule is reviewed annually in accordance with this policy and specifies the events and cultural observances for which flags may be flown. This ensures that flag displays align with Council's commitment to inclusivity and recognition of significant events.
Legislation/ Regulation	This policy is governed by national and state legislation, ensuring that flag displays adhere to official protocols and regulatory requirements. Compliance is mandated under the Australian National Flag Protocols, which outline the precedence, positioning, and handling of flags at government and civic sites. The Commonwealth

	<i>Flags Act 1953</i> provides the legal framework for the use of the Australian National Flag and other officially recognised flags. In addition, this policy aligns with the <i>Local Government Act 2020</i> (Victoria), which sets out governance responsibilities for councils, including civic recognition and community engagement. The <i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975</i> and the <i>Charter of Human Rights and Responsibilities Act 2006</i> (Victoria) provide further guidance on ensuring flag displays support principles of inclusion, respect, and cultural recognition. Council must also adhere to directives from the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet, which provides guidance on flag etiquette, including the lowering of flags for official mourning periods or significant national events. Any modifications to flag displays outside of standard protocol must be reviewed and endorsed by Council to maintain compliance with these legislative frameworks.
Author	Chief Executive Officer
Policy Owner/ Sponsor	This policy has been commissioned by Darebin City Councillors and has been developed in alignment with Council's governance responsibilities and commitment to civic recognition, community inclusion, and compliance with national flag protocols.
Date Effective	7 April 2026
Review Date	31 December 2029
Version Number	1.0
Document ID	TBC
Content enquiries	Office of CEO

Appendix A – Days of Observance Schedule			
Key dates	In recognition	Flag	Council resolution
January/February for three weeks	Midsumma Festival (notes dates are adjusted annually to align to festival and includes the day of Midsumma Pride March)	Intersex Inclusive Progress Pride Flag	
26 January	Survival/Invasion Day	Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander flags at half mast	 
13 February	National Apology - Apology to the Stolen Generations	Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander flags at half mast	 
31 March	International Transgender Day of Visibility	Transgender Flag	
15 April	Anniversary of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody	Aboriginal Flag at half mast	

Appendix A – Days of Observance Schedule			
Key dates	In recognition	Flag	Council resolution
25 April	ANZAC Day	Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander flags at half mast	 
17 May and for one full week	International Day Against Homophobia, Biphobia and Transphobia (IDAHOBIT) – 17 May	Intersex Inclusive Progress Pride Flag	
26 May	National Sorry Day	Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander flags at half mast	 
As prescribed	Kings Birthday	Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander flags at half mast	 

Appendix A – Days of Observance Schedule			
Key dates	In recognition	Flag	Council resolution
6 August	International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN)	ICAN Flag	
Last Friday in August	Wear It Purple Day – to support young LGBTI people	Intersex Inclusive Progress Pride Flag	
26 October – 8 November	Intersex Awareness Week (incorporating Intersex Awareness Day & Intersex Day of Awareness)	Intersex Flag	
11 November	Remembrance Day	Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander flags at half mast	

Appendix A – Days of Observance Schedule			
Key dates	In recognition	Flag	Council resolution
* 13 – 20 November	Transgender Day of Remembrance (20 November) / Transgender Awareness Week	Transgender Flag	
9 December	International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime, as well as the 73rd anniversary of the <u>1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide</u>	Aboriginal Flag and Torres Strait Islander flags at half mast	 