

Symbols of Honor: Blue Star and Gold Star Service Flags

- Blue Star Service Flag: Patented by retired Army CPT Robert Queissner in 1917, the Service Flag, also known as a Blue Star Flag or Service Banner, represents a family member serving in the Armed Forces during a time of conflict.



- The Gold Star Service Flag: Created in 1918 after President Woodrow Wilson approved a suggestion allowing mothers who lost a child serving in the war to wear a gold gilt star on the traditional black mourning arm band.



- Officially authorized by Congressional Act 36 U.S.C. 179-182 (1967), the Service Banners are usually displayed in a window of a home where an immediate Family member of a service member resides. Service flags may be displayed for the duration of the conflict.
- The number of blue stars corresponds to the number of individuals from the immediate Family who currently serve in the Armed Forces.



- The flag may be displayed vertically or horizontally. A horizontally displayed flag will have the stars arranged in a horizontal line with one star point up.



- If an individual is killed or dies while serving, (from causes other than dishonorable) the star representing that individual will have a gold star placed over the blue so that the blue forms a border. (The Blue Star Service Flag now becomes a Gold Star Service Flag)



**Note: Blue border
around the Gold Star**

- Organizations may also display service flags. These include, but are not limited to: churches, schools, colleges, fraternities, sororities, societies, and places of business from which the member of the Armed Forces was or is associated.
- Instead of using a separate star for each member, one star may be used with the number of the members indicated by blue Arabic numerals placed below the star.
- If any members are killed or died while serving, from causes other than dishonorable, a smaller gold star will be placed over the blue with Arabic numerals below to indicate the number of Fallen.



- The service flag shall be treated with dignity and respect. When displayed with the flag of the United States, the service flag shall be of approximately equal size but never larger than the flag of the United States. The flag of the United States will occupy the position of honor.
- When the service flag is displayed other than by being flown from a staff, it will be suspended either horizontally or vertically

The flag will not be embroidered on such articles as cushions, handkerchiefs, or otherwise printed on anything that is designed for temporary use and discarded; or used as any portion of a costume or athletic uniform.

[Official Fact Sheet](#)