

Flag Presentation Protocol

Occasionally, the family does not choose to have a military presence at the funeral, but does request presentation of the American flag by the funeral director. This brochure is a quick reference for such occasions.



An American flag drapes the casket of deceased veterans to honor the memory of their service to their country. The ceremonial folding and presentation of that flag is a moving tribute of lasting importance to the veteran's family.

The flag is placed so the union blue field is at the head and over the left shoulder of the deceased.

Usually after Taps has been played, the flag is carefully folded into the symbolic tri-corner shape.

It is then presented as a keepsake to the next of kin or an appropriate family member using the protocols prescribed in this pamphlet.

The following presentation protocols are used when presenting the American flag to the family member of a veteran to honor his or her service:

- Generally, the flag is presented to the appropriate family member after Taps is played.
- The presenter should stand facing the flag recipient and hold the folded flag waist high with the straight edge facing the recipient.
- The presenter leans toward the flag recipient and solemnly presents the flag to the recipient.

Funeral honors ceremonies conducted by the Department of Defense will use the following standardized language for the presentation of the flag to the designated flag recipient:

"On behalf of the President of the United States, [the United States Army, the United States Marine Corps, the United States Navy or the United States Air Force] and a grateful nation, please accept this flag as a symbol of our appreciation for your loved one's honorable and faithful service."

A funeral director making the presentation may use his or her own words or use the following language:

"Please accept this flag as a symbol of our appreciation for your loved one's honorable and faithful service."



FLAG PRESENTATION PROTOCOL





To properly fold the flag, follow these directions:



1 Begin with one person at each end of the flag. Hold the flag waist high so that its surface is parallel to the ground.



2 Fold the lower half of the striped section lengthwise over the field of stars, holding the bottom and top edges securely.



3 Fold the flag again, lengthwise, now with the blue field on the outside.



4 Make a triangular fold by bringing the striped corner of the folded edge to meet the open (top) edge of the flag.



5 Turn the outer (end) point inward, parallel to the open edge to form a second triangle.



6 Continue the triangular folding until the entire length of the flag is folded in this manner.



7 When the flag is completely folded, only a triangular blue field of stars should be visible. If a hem protrudes beyond the blue field, it should be neatly tucked inside the folds of the flag so it does not show.

The folded flag is then presented to the next of kin.

