



## **CITY OF WEST HOLLYWOOD POLICY FOR RECOGNITIONS AND MEMORIALS**

**Adopted November 4, 2024**

### **I. PURPOSE**

To establish a formal policy and procedures for recognitions (proclamations, certificates, plaques, or other documents/items) and memorials (adjournments, services). Multiple types of recognition may be utilized by the City Council. This policy is intended to help ensure the appropriate level of recognition is extended to designated individuals, organizations, groups, and events.

### **II. POLICY**

The City Council regularly recognizes individuals and organizations who have made or have demonstrated significant contributions to the community; to honor dignitaries; to recognize significant achievements, milestones or events; and to recognize significant community members who have died.

### **III. RECOGNITIONS**

Recognitions are strictly honorary and are issued as a courtesy. Recognitions will not be issued if the request promotes political campaigns, events or ideological and political beliefs that are contrary to the policies or positions of the City of West Hollywood.

The City of West Hollywood may modify, edit, amend, or deny any recognition request and shall make the final determination whether the recognition will be presented at a Council meeting, a Commission or Advisory Board meeting, at an event, or mailed to the requester.

Types of Recognitions include:

- Certificate of Recognition or Commendation
- Proclamation
- Plaque
- Official Key to the City

Definitions and procedures for each type of recognition are provided below.



## **Certificates of Recognition & Proclamations**

A **certificate of recognition** or commendation can be requested to recognize individuals celebrating significant milestones, in recognition of individual contributions to society, as a statement of congratulations, or in recognition of community events. A certificate can be issued by the full City Council or one Councilmember.

A **proclamation** is a ceremonial document issued by the full City Council that can be requested to commemorate community or organizational milestones or events with historic and/or unique importance to the citizens of West Hollywood. Proclamations can be requested to recognize the work of an individual, organization, extraordinary achievement, or commemorative date.

Certificates and proclamations can be requested by members of the public, City staff, and Councilmembers. Recognition requests in the form of proclamations, certificates, or other documents, must be transmitted to the City's Community and Legislative Affairs Division at least two weeks prior to the requested completion date. The request shall be sent using the request form found on the City's website, under the main webpage for the City's Community and Legislative Affairs Division. As indicated in the request form, requests shall include sufficient information to assist staff in preparing the appropriate document. It is our general policy to only issue certificates and proclamations that have a direct tie to the West Hollywood community.

## **Plaque**

A plaque is available for presentation to visiting or outgoing dignitaries, outgoing appointed officials, and is also used to commend individuals and businesses for outstanding community achievement at specific City events. Plaques cannot be requested by members of the public; they are available for internal requests only. Approval of these types of requests are at the discretion of the City Manager in consultation with the Mayor and/or Vice Mayor.

## **Official Key to the City**

Awarding the Key to the City is the highest honor which the Mayor and City Council can bestow upon an individual and/or an organization. Keys are typically presented to honor outstanding service by citizens and dignitaries or elected officials visiting the community as a token of friendship, esteem, and recognition for their distinguished service to humanity. This recognition is awarded on rare occasions.

Key to the City requests must be transmitted to the City's Community and Legislative Affairs Division at least six weeks prior to the requested date of presentation. The requests are presented to an internal review committee including the City Manager,



Communications Director, and Community Services Director. The internal review committee will consult with the Mayor and/or Vice Mayor before approving or denying the request. Upon the committee's approval of a request for a Key to the City, all City Councilmembers shall be invited to attend the event at which the Key to the City is to be awarded if other than at a scheduled Council Meeting.

#### **IV. MEMORIALS**

Memorials are meant to honor and remember prominent community members who have died and may include events or actions in the immediate or short-term after someone has passed away.

A **prominent community member** is someone who has served the City of West Hollywood in an official capacity or is a well-known and respected individual who has contributed to the City of West Hollywood. Prominent community members include noted individuals with well-documented service to the City of West Hollywood. Each type of memorial and eligibility criteria are further defined below.

Types of Memorials include:

- Services
- Adjournment motions
- Display of Flags at Half-Staff
- Flowers/Cards

The City has a "Commemorations, Tribute Trees, and Plaques Policy Guideline" (Resolution No. 20-5350) as well as a "Naming Policy" (Resolution No. 21-5376) which provides additional ways to recognize and honor the legacy of deceased individuals in more permanent ways.

#### **Services**

Members of the public can reserve City facilities to hold memorial services. Memorial services held in City facilities are required to comply with the facility use rules and regulations and pay the facility use fees except as noted below.

The City Manager may waive the requirement to reserve a City facility at least two weeks in advance if needed and pending facility availability.

The City Manager will authorize the waiver of facility use fees for memorial services held for certain prominent community members, including:

- Current or former City Councilmembers



- Current or former appointed officials
- Current or former City employees
- Other prominent community members at the discretion of the City Manager in consultation with the Mayor and/or Vice Mayor

### **Adjournment Motions**

The City Council, Commissions, or Advisory Boards may adjourn their meetings in memory of a person who has died. This is a mark of respect and a way to pay tribute to the person who has died and express condolences to their family and friends. If the adjournment motion is made at a City Council meeting, the City will send a letter and certificate to the family of the person who has died in recognition of the adjournment.

Adjournment motions can be requested by directly contacting a Councilmember or appointed official.

### **Display of Flags at Half-Staff**

Flags are flown at half-staff, or half-mast, when the country or a state is in mourning. The President, a State Governor, or the Mayor of the District of Columbia can order flags to fly at half-staff. In most cases, an American flag at half-staff marks one of three observances: 1. The death of a governmental official, military member, or emergency first responder; 2. A national tragedy; or 3. Memorial Day or another national day of remembrance.

The City of West Hollywood follows the direction of the President, California Governor, and Mayor of the District of Columbia in determining when the flags in the City should be flown at half-staff.

In addition, the City Manager may also direct flags to be flown at half-staff and determine the corresponding duration following the death of certain prominent community members, including:

- Current or former City Councilmembers
- Current City employees
- West Hollywood Sheriff's Deputies, Firefighters, or other employees of the City's contract service agencies killed in the line of duty or who have died as a result of injuries incurred while in the performance of official duties
- A West Hollywood resident serving in the U.S. military killed in the line of duty
- Other prominent community members at the discretion of the City Manager in consultation with the Mayor and/or Vice Mayor
- On other occasions or to mourn a tragedy at the direction of the City Manager in consultation with the Mayor and/or Vice Mayor



It is important to remember the flag should be displayed at half-staff on rare occasions in order to maintain the honor and reverence of this solemn act. When the flag is displayed at half-staff, the City will share information about who is being honored and for how long on its website and/or social media.

The City of West Hollywood also has a “Uniform Policy for the Outdoor Public Display of Governmental and Non-Governmental Flags” (Resolution No. 22-5499), which outlines the location of the flags and the type of flags that should be displayed throughout the year.

### **Flowers/Cards**

Following the death of a prominent community member, the City Manager is authorized to approve the purchase of flowers, condolence cards or other similar and customary recognition of condolence on behalf of the City of West Hollywood and in accordance with the City’s finance policies.

This act of condolence may be extended to the following individuals:

- Current or former City Councilmembers, or their immediate family members
- Current or former appointed officials
- Current or former City employees
- Other prominent community members at the discretion of the City Manager in consultation with the Mayor and/or Vice Mayor