

Why Is the Flag Flying at Full-Staff at Donald Trump's Inauguration?

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SWORN IN AS THE 47TH president of the United States. THIS MOVE TO RAISE THE FLAGS comes despite an order from President [Joe Biden](#) to lower the flags at half-staff in remembrance of the late President Jimmy Carter.

Why Will The Flag Fly At Full Staff?

Speaker of the House [Mike Johnson](#), a Republican, announced the decision to raise the flags in post on X, formerly [Twitter](#). He stated that, "On January 20th, the flags at the Capitol will fly at full-staff to celebrate our country coming together behind the inauguration of our 47th President, Donald Trump."

The post continued that, "The flags will be lowered back to half-staff the following day to continue honoring President Jimmy Carter."

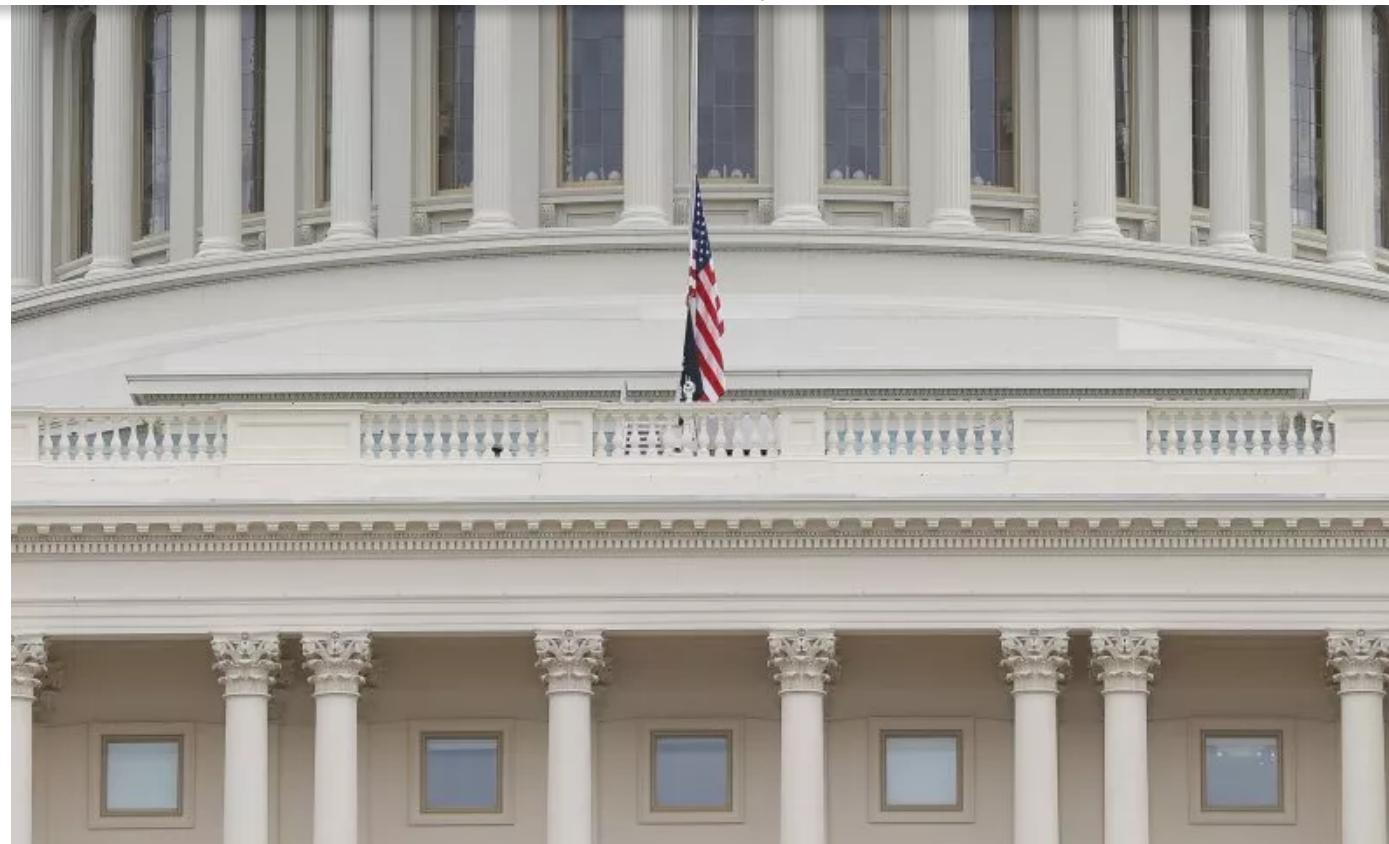
This move marks a departure from tradition. It's not the first time a presidential inauguration has taken place during a mourning period for a former President.

In 1973, when President Richard Nixon was inaugurated, flags at the Capitol Building were flown at half-staff in order to honor the former President Harry Truman, who had died on December 26 prior to Nixon's inauguration.

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, flags should be flown at half-staff for 30 days following the death of the president or a former president. Carter died on December 29, 2024.

The President-elect made clear that he wanted the flag to be flown at full staff during his inauguration, in a post on his platform, Truth Social. He said that [Democrats](#) were "All 'giddy' about our magnificent American Flag potentially being at 'half mast' during my Inauguration."

He said that, "Nobody wants to see this, and no American can be happy about it. Let's see how it plays out."



An American flag flies at half-staff at the U.S. Capitol in honor of the late Senator Dianne Feinstein on October 5, 2023. The flag will fly at half-staff at the Capitol during Donald Trump's inauguration. **AARON M. SPRECHER/CHERA VIA AP**

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Republican governors across eight states have ordered flags to be flown at full-staff during Trump's inauguration.

When Was the Last Time the Flag Was Flown at Half-Staff?

The flag was flown at half-staff to honor of former President [Jimmy Carter](#), who [passed away on December 29](#) at the age of 100.

Carter was the 39th president of the United States. He served one term, between 1977 and 1981, after winning the 1976 election against [Republican](#) incumbent President [Gerald Ford](#).

According to the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the flag should be flown at half-staff after the death of the president or a former president.

The flag continues to fly at half-staff for 30 days at all federal buildings, grounds, and naval vessels throughout the country and its territories following the president's or a former president's passing.

On What Occasions Does the Flag Fly at Half-Staff?

The lowering of a flag is seen as a symbol of mourning, distress, or a salute to the fallen and dates back to the 17th century. Some believe this practice was to make room for an "invisible flag of death," according to flagmakers.com.

This means that flags can also fly at half-staff to serve as solemn tributes to individuals who have served their communities and country and to the memory of significant historical events.

While for the death of a president or former president, the flag is lowered for 30 days, for the death of a vice president, the chief justice or a retired chief justice of the [Supreme Court](#), or the speaker of the House of Representatives, it lasts 10 days.

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Jasmine Laws is a Live News Reporter at Newsweek based in London, U.K. Her focus is reporting on U.S. politics, ... [read more](#)

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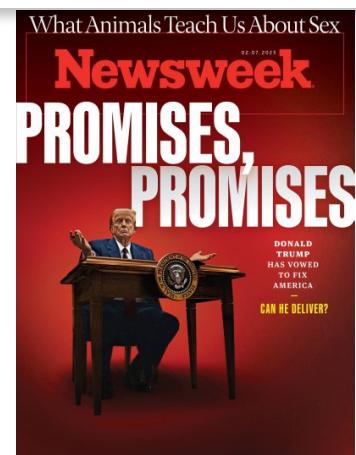
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