

#### TIMLINE:

A Post 305 meeting at which a flag retirement ceremony and installation of incoming officers is performed should attempt to adhere to the following timeline.

1. 6:30 PM – 7:00 PM Retirement of Unserviceable Flags Ceremony
2. 7:00 PM – 7:45 PM Abbreviated Post Meeting
3. 7:45 PM – 8:15 PM Installation Ceremony
4. 8:15 PM – 9:00 PM Social Hour, Congrats, etc.

District 7 Commander, or some higher authority, will normally do the installation of officer's ceremony.

Personnel involved in a Flag Retirement ceremony include the following:

1. Commander
2. 1st Vice-Commander
3. 2nd Vice Commander
4. Sergeant-at-Arms
5. Chaplain
6. Two man color guard
7. Two man burn barrel detail.

Equipment and Safety

Rope Line, for control and order

Placards to identify positions

Burn no flags without a fire extinguisher on hand.

The following “Dignified Disposal of Unserviceable Flags” ceremony procedures is a suggested format to follow.

#### **Dignified Disposal of Unserviceable Flags**

1. (Diagram of arrangements appears on a following page)
2. This is a very desirable ceremony to present as part of a Flag Day observance.
3. The post assembles in meeting, out-of-doors, at night.
4. **Members are aligned in two parallel rows about twenty feet apart, facing each other.**
5. A rope line for the members is suggested for control and orderliness.
6. Officers should be at their stations in advance as shown on the diagram.
7. A small fire should be burning opposite the commander and beyond the rows of members.
8. Placards of some sort should be used. Laminated paper is a weatherproof good choice.
  - a. used to identify where each officer is to stand.
  - b. placed where each flag should be at both ends.
  - c. Placed where the burn detail should be standing at the beginning of the ceremony and where at the burn barrel.
  - d. Need a placard where the flags to be burned can be stored on a table or rack or shield unit near the burn barrel.

## **BEGIN THE CEREMONY**

### **PHASE 1 -**

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** "Comrade COMMANDER, we wish to present a number of unserviceable flags of our country for inspection and disposal."

**Commander:** "

1. Comrade sergeant-at-arms have the flags inspected by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander and 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Commander, and
2. if they concur with your recommendation to retire these flags,
3. then return with your detail and present the flags to be disposed of for my final inspection.

**Sergeant-at-arms:** **YES SIR**

### **PHASE 2**

**Sergeant-at-arms: DETAIL – Form up on me and come to ATTENTION**

Flag carrying detail forms with the sergeant-at-arms on point.

Sgt AT Arms takes the flags which are to be inspected, marches to where the 2nd Vice Commander is stationed, steps forward and salutes.

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** "Comrade 2<sup>nd</sup> vice-commander, we present these unserviceable flags for your inspection."

**Second Vice-Commander:** "Is the present condition of these flags the result of their usual service as the emblem of our country?"

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** "These flags have become faded and worn over the graves of our departed comrades and the dead soldiers, sailors, and airmen of all our nation's wars."

**Second Vice-Commander:** "Present these flags to the first vice commander for his inspection."

The sergeant-at-arms salutes, about faces, commands the detail, "About face," crosses behind the detail and takes post at its left, commands "Forward march." The detail marches to within two paces of the first vice-commander, halts and proceeds as before.

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** Sgt AT Arms takes the flags which are to be inspected, steps forward and salutes. "Comrade 1<sup>st</sup> vice-commander, we present these flags which have been inspected by the second vice-commander, for your further inspection."

**First Vice-Commander:** "Have any of these flags served any other purpose?"

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** "Some of these flags have been displayed in various public places."

**First Vice-Commander:** "Present them to the commander for final inspection and approval for a dignified disposal."

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** The sergeant-at-arms salutes, about faces, then commands the detail **About face**, Then crosses behind the detail and takes a position on its left, and **commands**

### **Forward march**

- the detail marches to center
- turns left toward the Commander
- halts within two paces of the commander
- sergeant-at-arms steps one pace forward and salutes.

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** "Comrade commander, we have the honor to present for final inspection and proper disposal these flags of our country."

**Commander:** "Have these flags been inspected by the first and second vice-commanders?"

**Sergeant-at-Arms:** "They have."

**Commander:** "Comrade second vice-commander, what does your inspection show and what do you recommend?"

**Second Vice -Commander:** "Comrade commander, since these flags have become unserviceable in a worthy cause, I recommend they be honorably retired from further service."

**Commander:** "Comrade first vice-commander, what does your inspection show and what do you recommend?"

**First Vice-Commander:** "Comrade commander, since these flags have become faded and worn in a tribute of service and love, I also recommend they be fittingly destroyed."

**Commander:** addresses the crowd

1. Comrades, we have presented here these flags of our country which have been inspected and judged as unserviceable.
2. They have reached their present state in a proper service of tribute, memory and love.
3. A flag may be a flimsy bit of printed gauze, or a beautiful banner of finest silk.
4. Its intrinsic value may be trifling or great; but its real value is beyond price,
5. for it is a precious symbol of all that we and our comrades have worked for and lived for and died for—a free nation of free men and women, true to the faith of the past, devoted to the ideals and practice of Justice, Freedom and Democracy.
6. "Let these faded flags of our country be retired and destroyed with respectful and honorable rites and
7. their places be taken by bright new flags of the same size and kind, and
8. let no grave of our soldier, sailor, Marine or airman dead be un-honored and unmarked.

### **PHASE 3**

**Commander:** Sergeant-at-arms, assemble the color guard, escort the detail bearing the flags and destroy these flags by burning. Members shall stand at attention.

**Sergeant-at-arms:** **Color guard reform**

**Sergeant-at-arms:** **Color guard – about face.**

**Sergeant-at-arms:** **Flag carriers – about face.**

**Sergeant-at-arms:** **Color Guard and Flag carriers – forward march**

The detail about faces.

Preceded by the color guard, the detail marches down to the fire barrel.

**Sergeant-at-arms:** Color guard and Flag Carry detail, on my command, prepare to march and stop 4 steps before reaching the fire barrel. **FORWARD – MARCH DETAIL - STOP**

**Sergeant-at-arms:** The National colors will now cross over and take position on the right of the fire, facing the commander. Post 305 Colors take the position left of fire.

Wait for the colors to cross, then

**Sergeant-at-arms:** Flag carrying detail . . . **ON MY COMMAND, LINE UP BEHIND THE FIRE BARREL BUT DO NOT PLACE ANY FLAGS INTO THE FLAMES . . LINE UP - NOW. Remember - Wait for my command before entering any flags into the flames.**

**Commander:** "The chaplain will offer prayer."

**Chaplain:**

1. Almighty God, Captain of all hosts and Commander over all, bless and consecrate this present hour.
2. We thank you for our country and its flag, and for the liberty for which it stands.
3. To a clean and purging flames, we commit these flags, worn out in worthy service.
4. As they yield their substance to the fire, may your Holy Light spread over us and bring our hearts renewed devotion to God and country.
5. Amen."

**Commander:**

All officers and members, except the color guard and flag carriers . . . **PRESENT - ARMS.**

Sergeant At Arms: Do your duty!

**Sergeant-at-arms:** Color Guard – Present - ARMS.

**Sergeant-at-arms:** Color Guard - Prepare to Dip the Post 305 flag - NOW

**Sergeant-at-arms:** Color Guard and Flag carriers – Prepare to march to the flame.  
**FORWARD – MARCH**

**Sergeant-at-arms:** DETAIL - HALT

**Sergeant-at-arms:** Flag carrier detail – Take your position behind the fire barrel and on my command begin to dip the unserviceable flags into the flames. **BEGIN**

**Commander:** Bugler sound "To the Colors."

**Commander,** at conclusion of "To the Colors: "Two."

**Commander:** Color guard **ABOUT FACE – NOW**

**Commander:** Prepare to return the colors to their original station **RETURN the colors - NOW.**

**Commander:** Color Guard , you are dismissed.

**Commander:** Members of the Officers, Color Guard and Flag carrying detail, you are dismissed.

**COMMANDER:** acknowledge both sides of the civilian ranks as you say

**This concludes the Flag Retirement Ceremony. Thank you for attending.**