

# **PROTOCOL PROCEDURES MANUAL**

**Board of County Commissioners  
Division of Protocol & Employee Recognition**

Revised on January 2009

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Miami-Dade County  
**Elected Officials**



Carlos Alvarez  
**Mayor**

Dennis C. Moss  
**Chairman**

José "Pepe" Diaz  
**Vice Chairperson**

**Board of County Commissioners**

Barbara J. Jordan	<b>District 1</b>
Dorrin D. Rolle	<b>District 2</b>
Audrey Edmonson	<b>District 3</b>
Sally A. Heyman	<b>District 4</b>
Bruno A. Barreiro	<b>District 5</b>
Rebeca Sosa	<b>District 6</b>
Carlos A. Gimenez	<b>District 7</b>
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Javier D. Souto	<b>District 10</b>
Joe A. Martinez	<b>District 11</b>
José "Pepe" Diaz	<b>District 12</b>
Natacha Seijas	<b>District 13</b>

Harvey Ruvin  
**Clerk of Courts**

# Background

Miami-Dade County is one of the most unique counties/communities in the country. Because of its large immigrant population, geographic location, and ties to countries around the world, Miami-Dade County has a large number of foreign consulates, foreign offices, and trade offices. Because of its importance in the country, the region and the world at large, every year the County welcomes a large number of foreign and domestic dignitaries and officials.

This manual is intended to outline the steps involved in receiving, and presenting dignitaries and other officials. Also, it will list the order of seniority of County officials, and how they should be greeted, presented etc.

The rules and processes of official/diplomatic protocol are based in pragmatic thinking, common sense, and good manners.

Protocol makes the job of representing our County easier by facilitating our work as a team, making our relationships and interactions with others more predictable, and by providing a basic social framework and hierarchy to follow.

We've designed this booklet to guide County officials and staff, and to help them master the basics of official/diplomatic protocol.

# Protocol: Definition and History

By definition, protocol generally refers to customs and rules of politeness and courtesy between individuals and society. That is, the rules of official and social behavior. For government, nations and provinces, protocol is a system of conventions, procedures and symbols which express their identity and facilitate relationship between them. In short, protocol is a set of formal rules describing how to deal with officials.

It would be impossible to cite every rule governing every situation. The following suggestions are basic. Always apply common courtesy and you will never go wrong in those situations not covered in this booklet.

We should always display proper consideration for the office represented by the person. The term "protocol" comes from the Greek and means "first glue". It may be said that protocol is the "glue" that holds official life in our society together.

Protocol is rooted in a sound knowledge of human relationships. Relationships, particularly official ones between nations have come to be governed by a series of accepted practices. These practices reflect the observance of mutual respect and consideration among sovereign nations. It makes possible the conduct of international affairs in an atmosphere of courtesy and friendliness. It is a mode of behavior most favorable to the achievement of international understanding and cooperation.

An example that illustrates the importance of established principles is that over time countries have almost gone to war over matters of ambassadorial precedence. Gradually over the centuries, a series of common procedures and practices have developed. Finally in 1814, at the Congress of Vienna, the matter of diplomatic precedence was defined.

U.S. history includes the use of diplomatic protocols even before the Constitution was written. With no history of kings and titled aristocracy, some early leaders such as President Zachary Taylor, using a "rough and ready" approach, got the country and himself into problems in the United States relationship with France.

Today the United States observes the traditional practices that have long been accepted as showing a due measure of honor and respect to other sovereign powers and their representatives, as well as our own national governmental representatives.

## **What does government protocol involve?**

Government protocol covers such areas as official visits procedures, symbols (flags and other visual emblems, anthems, uniforms), forms of address (written and verbal), tables of precedence, state ceremonies, guidelines for hospitality, and seating-plans, gifts and dress codes. International protocol is a complex system of rules and conventions which govern the relationship between nation-states and in international organizations.

## **What does a protocol office do?**

Protocol offices plan and organize official visits within their jurisdiction, for example, those of diplomats, foreign delegations, a Royal Family and a Governor General. They are usually responsible for government hospitality and ceremonial events and provide a consulting or advisory service on protocol-related matters. Depending on the jurisdiction, protocol offices may have a number of other responsibilities.

## Definitions

While the list is not exhaustive, it lists some of the most commonly used words, terms and acronyms. For the purpose of this manual, we will use definitions from Merriam Webster's Dictionary (2007), and Merriam Webster on-line dictionary.

**Decorum:** Propriety of manner or conduct; grace arising from suitableness of speech and behavior to one's own character, or to the place and occasion; decency of conduct; seemliness; that which is seemly or suitable.

**Etiquette:** The forms required by good breeding, or prescribed by authority, to be observed in social or official life; observance of the proprieties of rank and occasion; conventional decorum; ceremonial code of polite society.

**Honorific:** A title or form of respect. Example: "The Honorable" is an honorific or courtesy title used to indicate respect for the stature of elected officials.

**Precedence:** The right to proceed in order, rank or importance, including the right to precede others in ceremonies or social formalities; the order to be observed in ceremonies by persons of different ranks, as in international diplomatic precedence.

**Dignitary:** Any elected or appointed official. For example, head of state, ministers, heads of local and municipal governments, cabinet members, diplomats.

**Protocol Order of Precedence:** An adopted order of precedence that applies to persons who are listed for the purposes and at the levels identified. Example: The Protocol Order of Precedence for the United States applies mostly at the national and international levels and is part of the recognized system of international courtesy.

**Protocol:** The customs and regulations dealing with diplomatic formality, precedence, and etiquette (in official life; comparable to etiquette used in social life). Example: Elected officials rank higher than local appointed officials and should be introduced before them.

**Rank:** An official or social position or standing. Example: The President determines the order in which U. S. Cabinet members will be ranked in the federal Protocol Order of Precedence that applies mostly at the national and international levels.

**Seniority:** Priority, precedence or status obtained as the result of a person's length of service. Example: council members may be ranked in order of seniority for introductions and for privileges such as the order of presentation or introduction; selection of office space, seating and parking; and presiding or spokesperson responsibilities in the absence of the Mayor and Mayor Pro Tempore.

**Title:** A descriptive or distinctive appellation typically designated by right of rank, office or attainment. Example: The Mayor of the City of Laredo.

**X:** A journalistic symbol typically used herein to indicate that a specific number is to be substituted. Example: "Council Member, District X," indicates that the council member's district number must be substituted, when known, for the "X."

## **The Miami-Dade County Protocol and Employee Recognition Division**

The Protocol and Employee Recognition Division, as it is known today, is housed under the Office of the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners.

The Division of Protocol serves the Office of the Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners in preparing appropriate official instruments of tribute for formal presentations encompassing an assortment of functions of local, national and international consequence. It works with the Mayor and the Board of County Commissioners to honor visiting dignitaries, extraordinary civic achievements, accomplishments in the arts and major fields of endeavor, as well as outstanding individual or group contributions to the economic, social and spiritual well-being of Miami-Dade County.

These instruments of tribute bear the official Seal of Miami-Dade County and the signature of the Mayor, Chairperson of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC) and one or more Board members, depending on the occasion. By virtue of their official nature and the prestige of the office of the elected representative signing the document, these instruments extend intrinsic validation upon an individual or event in an official capacity.

The County's Protocol Division has several types of awards and honors for formal presentations at its disposal. These documents are usually presented at BCC hearings and other functions by Commissioners or other County officials.

This Division also coordinates with the County's Jay Malina International Trade Consortium (ITC) and The Office of Protocol Liaison at Miami International Airport in

regards to dignitaries' visits. Additional responsibilities of the Division include: advising elected officials on all matters of protocol; honoring visiting dignitaries, extraordinary civic achievements and outstanding individual or group contributions to the economic, social and cultural well-being of Miami-Dade County; and preparing appropriate official instruments of tribute for formal presentation. For additional information please Contact the Director of Protocol and Employee Recognition at 305-375-3611

## **Type of Protocol Awards and Documents**

### **Key to the County:**

The Key to the County extends an official welcome and also recognizes proven leaders whose contributions have enriched our society.

### **Proclamation:**

A proclamation designates a specific day, week or year in honor of an individual, group, event or purpose. *Proclamations should be reserved for the most significant of occasions.* Each year, events of national importance are designated by federal, state and county or city proclamations. These include Women's History Month, Black History Month, United States Constitution Week, Flag Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Ruben Darío Day, and José Martí Day among others.

### **Distinguished Visitor Certificate:**

With Greater Miami's growing stature as an international center for trade, commerce, tourism and travel, visiting dignitaries are often given an official welcome to Miami-Dade County. Distinguished Visitor Certificates recognize visiting dignitaries of national and international stature to enhance bonds of cooperation between our respective nations.

### **Certificate of Appreciation:**

These Certificates are given to *express the appreciation of the community* for an extraordinary service rendered or a noteworthy contribution to the improvement of local life (whether social, cultural, economic, an act of selfless dedication or other).

### **Congratulatory Certificate:**

These Certificates are given to recognize a milestone birthday, anniversary, family reunion or any other occasion where celebrations of landmark significance unite local citizens and visitors alike in bonds of social harmony.

### **Commendation:**

An extraordinary act of valor, an uplifting act of humanitarianism or philanthropy or an inspirational artistic or intellectual accomplishment may be recognized by a special Commendation. Individuals or groups who demonstrate exceptional strength of mind and/or spirit toward humankind may also be recognized.

### **Salutes:**

Documents that extend an official greeting from Miami Dade County, to special individuals who are visiting us within the United States and abroad.

### **Sympathy Resolution:**

These documents are prepared for presentation to bereaved families on behalf of the community for fallen officers of the law, individuals who left an indelible mark on the fabric of this community, victims of tragedy, military and/ or others.

## **Souvenirs:**

These are *keepsakes and mementos representing Miami-Dade County*. Items such as, lapel pins, tie clips, pens, pencils, dictionaries, etc., are available for Commissioners to present to visitors and citizens. These items are all emblazoned with the County seal.

## **Procedures for Document Requests and Awards**

To obtain an official document or award for presentation, you must:

Call the Office of the Mayor, the Office the Commission Chair or your County Commissioner; explain what you want to have presented, to whom, and, more importantly the purpose. The staff of the elected official will determine what kind of document you may receive, depending on the occasion.

Provide the name, e-mail address and phone numbers of a contact person in the event further research is required.

The request must be made at least 7 days in advance to permit adequate preparation time. The person requesting the document will need to make arrangements with the elected official's office to pick up the document.

### **Helpful Tips**

Before requesting a document, read all of the descriptions of our protocol documents and awards to help you select the appropriate documents.

*For a Proclamation, Commendation or Sympathy Resolution submit a biography, not a résumé.* It should include enough information to enable the writer to prepare text for about five to six paragraphs in length.

*A misspelled or incorrect name can diminish the value of the recognition to the recipient.* Special care should be taken to ensure that names of individuals and organizations are accurately spelled.

Also, all collateral information regarding the event, invitation, media kit or articles, etc., must be typed and *should be forwarded with the request to ensure the writer has a full understanding of the occasion when preparing the text.*

*For a Certificate of Appreciation, Distinguished Visitor, Birth Day or Congratulatory Certificate,* the name of the person, date, purpose of the document, or other information related to the document requested must be submitted.

## **Rules and Regulations**

### **EMERGENCIES:**

The unexpected is a fact of political life and emergencies arise. It is incumbent upon staff to keep emergencies, when requesting protocol documents, to a minimum. Protocol requests from constituents received by the Mayor, Chairman or members of the BBC office staff must be forwarded immediately for processing.

### **Frames:**

Frames are available for presentations. Each commission office has been allocated one per month. It is recommended that Distinguished Visitors Certificates not be framed as accidents have occurred in the past and harmed recipients by shattered glass while traveling.

### **Multiple requests:**

All requests exceeding 10 preprinted documents per event (Certificates of Appreciation – Distinguished Visitors Certificates) must be made at least 7 working days in advance of date needed. Each of these documents is prepared individually. Multiple requests warrant adequate time for preparation.

### **Multiple signatures on documents:**

With documents requiring the signature of numerous members of the Commission, please allow an extra three days for preparation.

### **Lost or damaged documents:**

Documents lost or damaged after they are received and signed for by the requesting office, and need to be duplicated, will be treated as a new request. The seven-day rule will be applied.

### **Note of no exceptions:**

Absolutely no declared candidate for political office will receive an official document of any type. This will avoid the impression of an official Miami-Dade County endorsement of this individual and the possibility of a member of the County Commission being accused of impropriety.

Under this same rule, no County employees shall be recognized with an official document for completing the duties bestowed upon them on their job description. County employees who are retiring after many years of devoted service to this community are eligible for Proclamations. Those who have gone above and beyond the call of duty to save a life or contribute to this community in an exemplary manner are eligible for Commendations, and also those County employees who have done exceedingly well as members of organizations and associations outside of their County responsibilities can also be eligible for Proclamations or Certificates of Appreciations.

## **Miami-Dade County Elected Officials Rankings**

Miami-Dade County's protocol order of precedence reflects the County's general order of seniority and responsibility in receiving dignitaries/officials.

In the Mayor's absence, the Chairperson of the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners becomes the official County host. The Vice-Chair becomes the official County host should the Mayor and Chairperson not be available. In the absence of the Mayor, Chair or Vice-Chair should these respective offices deem another Commissioner or County official/department more appropriate to handle such a request, such request will be designated to that Commissioner's office or County official. However, whichever district the dignitary/official will be visiting, the Commissioner and the Mayor of the corresponding city must be invited.

In addition to the Mayor and the Chairperson, Commissioners, County officials or departments with responsibilities related to the functions of the visiting dignitary/official should be invited to meet and greet that dignitary/official. As a guide following there is a list of the County's top officials.



## **Order of Precedence**

Carlos Alvarez  
**Mayor**

Dennis C. Moss  
**Chairman**

José "Pepe" Diaz  
**Vice Chairman**

## **Board of County Commissioners**

Barbara J. Jordan	<b>District 1</b>
Dorrian D. Rolle	<b>District 2</b>
Audrey M. Edmonson	<b>District 3</b>
Sally A. Heyman	<b>District 4</b>
Bruno A. Barreiro	<b>District 5</b>
Rebeca Sosa	<b>District 6</b>
Carlos A. Gimenez	<b>District 7</b>
Katy Sorenson	<b>District 8</b>
Dennis C. Moss	<b>District 9</b>
Senator Javier D. Souto	<b>District 10</b>
Joe A. Martinez	<b>District 11</b>
José "Pepe" Diaz	<b>District 12</b>
Natacha Seijas	<b>District 13</b>

Harvey Ruvín  
**Clerk of Courts**

George M. Burgess  
**County Manager**

R.A. Cuevas, Jr.  
**County Attorney**

# **Honorifics and Titles for Officials**

The proper use of honorifics such as “The Honorable” and of titles such as “Council Member,” facilitates observing the desired decorum in official life. Rules that are appropriate at the federal level may be deemed inappropriate as the local level. Miami-Dade County, for example, extends the courtesy title of “The Honorable” to all elected officials, although aware that at the federal level this honorific is not extended to county or to city officials other than the Mayor. What follows, then, is Miami-Dade’s guidelines for honorifics and titles used for elected, appointed and religious officials, with a special section on gender-free usage.

## **Use of “The Honorable” for Elected Officials**

Miami-Dade County shall extend the courtesy title, “The Honorable,” to all elected officials.

“The Honorable” will be used in addressing, orally and in writing, elected officials at the federal, state, county and city levels.

In extending the honorific to elected officials, Miami-Dade County includes those from other countries who are not addressed otherwise.

“The Honorable” is preferred throughout the United States, in stark contrast to honorifics such as “The Right Honorable” in the British Commonwealth and “Excellency” used in other countries.

This honorific may be used to address any ranking foreign officials who are not entitled to be addressed as “Excellency” in their respective countries.

When high-ranking officials are expected, the County’s designated representative shall study the country’s protocol and secure information developed by the U.S. Department of State to determine whether they should be addressed as “His Excellency,” “Her Excellency” or, simply, “Excellency.”

High-ranking presidential appointees in office or retired, such as Members of the U.S. Cabinet, also are addressed as “The Honorable.” (Mc Caffree and Innis, pages 33-34)

**“The Honorable”** may be used to address the Florida Secretary of State, but not other appointed officials at the state, county or city levels.

County staff members should not be addressed as “The Honorable,” unless they also hold elected offices.

Members of County/City Boards and Commissions should not be addressed as “The Honorable,” unless they also hold elected offices.

An elected official should never use “The Honorable” to refer to himself or herself, orally, in writing or on letterhead.

### **Use of “Honorable” with Names, Not Titles**

“The Honorable” should be used before an elected official's name, not title. “The Honorable” may be used to address former elected officials, though without their former titles.

### **Honorifics and Titles for the Mayor of Miami-Dade County**

The Mayor of Miami-Dade County may be addressed as follows:

#### **In Introductions:**

The Honorable (FULL NAME), Mayor of Miami-Dade County

Mayor (FULL NAME) of Miami-Dade County

#### **At Meetings, Forums and Hearings:**

Mr., Mayor or Madam Mayor (FORMAL USAGE)

Mayor (SURNAME), (INFORMAL USAGE)

Mayor (INFORMAL USAGE)

When addressing the Mayor in public, even friends who are on a first-name basis should use the appropriate title to demonstrate respect for the office and should use “Mayor” rather than gender-specific titles such as Mr., Mrs., Miss or Ms.

In self-introductions the Mayor should state simply, “I’m (FULL NAME), Mayor of Miami-Dade County,” rather than using language such as, “I’m Mayor (FULL NAME).”

## **Honorifics and Titles for Members of the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners (BCC)**

The Chairperson and Board Members may be addressed as follows:

### **In Introductions:**

The Honorable (FULL NAME), Miami-Dade County Commissioner, District X

Miami-Dade County Commissioner (FULL NAME)

### **At Meetings, Forums and Hearings:**

Mr. Commissioner or Madam Commissioner (FORMAL USAGE)

Commissioner (SURNAME), (INFORMAL USAGE)

Commissioner (INFORMAL USAGE)

When addressing BCC members in public, even friends on a first-name basis should use the appropriate titles to demonstrate respect for the office and should use “Commissioner” rather than Mr., Mrs., or Ms. In self-introductions BCC Members should state simply, “I’m (FULL NAME), Miami-Dade County Commissioner,” rather than using language such as, “I’m Commissioner (FULL NAME).”

### **Use of Honorifics and Titles in Public:**

When addressing each other and participants at public functions, elected officials should reflect the same level of formality and respect that they expect directed to them.

By using titles and surnames to refer to each other and to participants, they set the tone and level of formality not only for participants, but also for observers. They should not refer to each other by first names or by surnames preceded by “Mr.,” “Mrs.,” “Miss” or Ms.” instead of by their titles.

**Example of proper usage:**

Commissioner (SURNAME)

**Example of improper usage:**

Mr. (SURNAME)

When addressing elected officials orally at meetings, hearings, forums or similar activities, participants should use their titles and names, but not “The Honorable.”

**Examples of correct usage:**

“Good afternoon, Mr.\ Madam Mayor and Commissioner”

“Good morning, Mayor (SURNAME) and Commissioner” “Yes, Sir.” or “Yes, Ma’am.”

**Examples of incorrect usage:**

“Good afternoon, Honorable Mayor and Commissioner...”

“Good morning, Honorable Mayor (SURNAME) and Commissioner...”

“Good evening, Mrs. (SURNAME), Mr. (SURNAME), Miss (SURNAME) and Ms. (SURNAME). “Yes, Madam.” or “No, Mister.”

**Gender-Free Language**

When addressing elected officials, appointed officials, staff members or participants at County-sponsored events or referring to them in writing, gender-free language should be used.

“Lady” should not be used before a title, such as “Lady Mayor” or “Lady Commissioner.”

Gender-free titles should be used, such as Mayor, Commissioner, Firefighter, Police Officer.

Women should not be referred to by their first names while men of similar elected or professional status are referred to by their titles and surnames.

Generally, men and women should be treated with equal respect and professionalism, including using gender-free language and avoiding sexist nonverbal behaviors such as winking at women.

### **Honorifics and Titles for Religious Leaders**

Religious leaders do not use “The Honorable” with their names and titles. Preferred honorifics for numerous religions are listed in many protocol, etiquette and business communication books, as well as in books about the rich variety of organized religions.

Some Roman Catholic officials use “His Excellency.”

The City’s designated representative should ensure correct usage of titles such as “Brother,” “Father,” “Monsignor,” “Pastor,” “Rabbi,” “Reverend,” “Sister,” etc.

### **Correct Usage in Correspondence**

When addressing business and social correspondence for elected officials, “The Honorable” should be spelled-out and placed on the line before the official’s name.

The title should be on the second line and the spouse’s name on the next line, indented.

### **Examples of correct usage:**

The Honorable (FULL NAME)

Mayor

Miami-Dade County

(ADDRESS)

The Honorable (FULL NAME)

Miami-Dade County Commissioner, District X

(ADDRESS)

### **Examples of incorrect usage:**

The Hon. (FULL NAME) (TITLE) (ADDRESS)

The Honorable (TITLE) (FULL NAME)  
(ADDRESS)

## **Order of Precedence for County-Sponsored Events**

Miami-Dade County sponsors countless meetings, ceremonies and activities throughout the year. Questions ranging from the order of introductions to the content of the program typically are raised and too often are answered with conflicting information. To enhance efficiency in planning and to promote decorum, the guidelines below define the order of precedence for typical programs at County-sponsored events; while the next section focuses on the program content, with a special sub-section for program participants, including the master of ceremonies. The narrative is presented in a script format that is adaptable for the occasion, persons and purposes at hand.

### **County Hosts**

At County-sponsored ceremonies such as ribbon-cuttings and groundbreakings, the Mayor and Members of the Board of County Commissioners may be introduced as hosts before observing the traditional Protocol Order of Precedence.

In such cases introductory statements such as the following should be made:

- “Ladies and Gentlemen, please welcome our hosts for Miami-Dade County,  
“The Honorable (FULL NAME), Mayor of Miami-Dade County.”
- “An honorary co-host, the Honorable (NAME) Mayor of our Sister City of  
(Name).”

- The Honorable (FULL NAME), Chair, Board of the Miami-Dade County Commissioners.”
- “The Miami-Dade County Commissioner who represents District X in which we celebrate this (EVENT) today, the Honorable (FULL NAME).”

In order of their Districts, among the colleagues on the Board of County Commissioners.

- “The Honorable (NAME), Miami-Dade County Commissioner, representing District X.”
- “The Honorable (NAME), Miami-Dade County Commissioner, representing District X.” (CONTINUE INTRODUCING COUNTY COMMISSION MEMBERS.)

The traditional Protocol Order of Precedence then will be observed, beginning with the highest-ranking elected official present.

County staff members may be introduced in the following order with language such as,

“The County staff of Miami-Dade is largely responsible for our success, especially, “The County Manager, (FULL NAME). “The Assistant County Manager(s), (FULL NAME). “The County Attorney, (FULL NAME). “The Director of (DEPARTMENT NAME), (FULL NAME). (CONTINUE INTRODUCING APPOINTEES AND STAFF DESIGNATED BY THE MAYOR AND THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS, THOUGH PLACING THEM IN APPROPRIATE ORDER.)

Members, County Boards and Commission Members of County Boards and Commissions may be introduced, especially if their duties are related directly to the ceremony at hand.

The Library Advisory Board, for example, could be introduced at the opening of a County Public Library, but not necessarily a groundbreaking for a park. When Board or Commission members are introduced because their duties are related to the ceremony at hand, they should be introduced after County Commissioners. The Chairs of Boards or

Commissions should be introduced first, and then their respective members in either seniority or district order.

## **Community Leaders**

When appropriate, introduce community leaders such as the following:

- The Chair of the Board of Directors of the Miami Dade Chamber of Commerce, (FULL NAME).
- The President of the Miami Dade Chamber of Commerce, (FULL NAME).
- The President of Florida International University, (FULL NAME).
- The President of Miami Dade College, (FULL NAME).
- The Superintendent of Dade County Public Schools, (FULL NAME).

**(THE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS MAY ADD OTHERS TO THE LIST OF COMMUNITY LEADERS TO BE INTRODUCED, MAKING DECISIONS BASED ON THE OCCASION AT HAND, NUMBER OF COMMUNITY LEADERS PRESENT, TIME AVAILABLE AND CONDITIONS SUCH AS WEATHER AND SEATING ARRANGEMENTS.)**

## **Project Participants**

It is appropriate to introduce architects, artists, contractors, designers, engineers and others who played major roles in developing the project related to the ceremony at hand.

Attendance and correct names and titles should be confirmed in advance to avoid offending participants.

# **Programs for County-Sponsored Events**

Programs sponsored by Miami-Dade County reflect different purposes and participants, but typically require similar elements and participatory roles. Related to the preceding section, “Order of Precedence at County-Sponsored Events,” this section offers an overview of typical program content and participants.

Presented in a format that can be adapted easily for varied events, it includes standard pre-program announcements; describes the responsibilities of speakers and presenters; identifies courtesies that should be extended to principles such as the keynote speaker; offers specific precautions that preclude common minor but embarrassing problems; and reviews the importance of decorum, including for Miami-Dade personnel who are present but are not program participants. It also highlights the role and responsibilities of the master of ceremonies, for his or her performance are critical to any program’s success and enjoyment.

Organizers and planners who adapt this format should consider variables such as the weather and seating arrangements in determining the ideal program length and time limits for speakers and presenters. If the audience is standing outdoors in inclement weather, for example, the program should be brief and time limits implemented.

## **Pre-Program Announcements**

At least five, then two, minutes before the program begins, an unseen announcer should announce from afar the starting time with language such as,

- “Ladies and gentlemen, the program will begin in five minutes. Please be seated.”  
(DO NOT SAY, “TAKE YOUR SEATS.”)

Three minutes later, the unseen announcer should state from afar,

- “Ladies and gentlemen, the program will begin in two minutes. Please be seated.”

When the master of ceremonies is ready to begin, the unseen announcer should state from afar,

- “Ladies and gentlemen, please welcome your master of ceremonies, (FULL NAME AND TITLE).”

If this is handled properly, the master of ceremonies will not have to waste time trying to get the audience’s attention and/or start on a negative note. When introduced in this style, the master of ceremonies will not have to begin with a self-introduction.

“Master of Ceremonies” should be used for men and for women, rather than using “Mistress of Ceremonies” for women.

## **Program Format**

Call to Order (MASTER OF CEREMONIES)

Invocation (RELIGIOUS REPRESENTATIVE)

Presentation of Colors, (COUNTY HONOR GUARD)

National Anthem and/or Pledge of Allegiance

Welcome and Opening Remarks Mayor, Chairperson, Commissioner or Miami-Dade County (OR DESIGNEE)

Introduction of Honored Guests (MASTER OF CEREMONIES)

Speeches and Presentations (GUEST SPEAKERS)

Special Activities (COUNTY’S DESIGNEES)

(RIBBON-CUTTING, GROUNDBREAKING, UNVEILING, ETC.)

Concluding Remarks (MASTER OF CEREMONIES)

## **Program Participants**

Master of Ceremonies

Likely candidates to be master of ceremonies or to make presentations at County-sponsored events include the following elected officials in the designated order: Mayor, Miami-Dade County Chairperson, Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners, Miami-Dade County Commissioner in whose district the event is held, Miami-Dade County

Commissioner most involved in the project, type of activity, issue and/or celebration at hand, Miami-Dade County Commissioner (SELECTED IN EITHER SENIORITY OR DISTRICT ORDER)

If a County staff member is to serve as Master of Ceremonies, candidates should be considered in the following order: County Manager County staff member most involved in the project, type of activity, issue and/or celebration at hand. Selecting a good master of ceremonies is critical to success, especially because he or she must: Begin, develop and end the program efficiently, effectively and appropriately while reflecting a professional demeanor as Miami-Dade County's representative.

Understand and accept the responsibility to begin the program timely, ensure smooth transitions between speeches and activities, direct the audience to any secondary locations for special activities such as ribbon-cuttings and conclude the program.

Avoid improper actions such as delivering a series of speeches throughout the program, providing information that should be articulated by other program participants and/or offering an egocentric perspective of the program and its participants. (Zaffirini, page18)

Work within a time frame for the program and ensure that all program participants understand their purposes and time limits, especially for outdoor ceremonies in inclement weather. The Government Information Center (GIC) shall ensure that the script and materials for County-sponsored events are consistent with the County's Protocol Division Handbook and with the Priority Procedures for the County Mayor and County Commissioners.

Elected and appointed officials shall be introduced in protocol order, with the Mayor, Chairperson and County Commissioners introduced first.

The Government Information Center (GIC) shall ensure that a current protocol list is developed and provided for the master of ceremonies at County-sponsored events.

## **Program Participants**

Program participants must understand their designated purposes and time limits. Those invited “to say a few words” should not upstage principal participants. They should secure approval for presentation of gifts, plaques, etc., so as to avoid violating ethics codes and/or upstaging principal participants.

They should not risk offending hosts or honorees with unexpected, perhaps unwelcome, presentations. Participants must be prepared to shorten their presentations in case of bad weather, unexpectedly long program, etc.

## **Introduction of Speakers**

The individual making the introductions should not dwell on self, read a boring profile or oversell the speaker’s ability. They should develop an interesting introduction that is appropriate for the occasion and audience at hand.

## **Keynote Speakers**

Keynote speakers should be given the opportunity to speak first or last.

By speaking first, the keynote speaker is not forced to reorganize their speech in the event another speaker uses their content. Additionally, by speaking first the keynote speaker avoids an audience that is bored and tire from listening to too many speakers for too long.

By speaking last, the keynote speaker can build on the success and themes of other speakers.

No one should be allowed to upstage the keynote speaker or honoree.

## **Precautions**

The program format and length should be developed in cooperation with visiting dignitaries and key program participants to preclude offending them with unexpected delays and to honor their preferences.

To avoid offending or disappointing the audience by announcing that visiting dignitaries have to “speak and leave,” secure time commitments from them in advance with estimated arrival and departure times.

When program participants are from out-of-town, consider their travel schedules when planning the time and length of the program.

Always have “Plan B” ready in case principles are late or fail to honor their commitments.

Guests designated to perform special activities such as ribbon cuttings or ground breakings must be informed in advance to ensure their presence and preparedness.

Too many speeches and too long a program often doom celebrations, so every effort must be made to ensure that all participants cooperate, fulfill their duties and do not upstage the keynote speaker, honoree or other luminaries.

## **Decorum**

The Mayor, master of ceremonies and keynote speaker establish the proper decorum by setting the tone and level of formality. Program participants should use honorifics and titles rather than first names:

- Example: The Honorable “(FULL NAME), (TITLE)” on first reference.
- Example: “(TITLE+SURNAME)” in future references.

County personnel should consider themselves “on duty,” even if they have no designated responsibilities.

They should motivate others to listen to speakers and participate in activities.

They should volunteer to fill any leadership or performance vacuums. They should be alert to potential problems and assume troubleshooting responsibilities as necessary in the name of good customer service for constituents.

Once the respective department/agency director under the guidance of the Mayor's Office has designated personnel, the personnel must be responsible not only for the program and all of its related activities, but also for ensuring that facilities ranging from the restrooms to vending machines are operational and handicap accessible.

## **Decorum for County-Sponsored Meetings**

Miami-Dade County is proud of its reputation for cultural diversity and hospitality and strives to ensure a professional and courteous environment in which to conduct the public's business.

### **Principles of Decorum**

The basic principles of protocol, decorum and parliamentary procedure (Robert's Rules of Order) shall be reflected by County elected and appointed officials and by County staff at all times, especially during County-sponsored meetings, hearings, events and other activities. Principles to follow include:

- Be courteous to all.
- Consider one subject or issue at a time.
- Respect and consider the rights of the majority; of the minority, especially of a strong minority greater than one-third; of individual members; of absentees; and of all of these cumulatively.
- Ensure that the minority is heard.
- Ensure that the majority prevails.

- The Presiding Officer shall be responsible for strict adherence to protocol and proper decorum at all times by all participants.
- All participants must conduct themselves in compliance with all relevant statutory requirements, parliamentary rules and relevant County policies and procedures.
- Debate, discussion and presentations shall reflect respect for all participants and the appropriate level of formality.

### **When the Event or Ceremony Site or Venue is Outside**

- Establish a point of contact for the event site.
- Plan a walk through of the event site with security (if needed), host, vendors and entertainment personnel, if applicable.
- Make sure you have a timeline or schedule so that everyone is briefed and on the same page.
- Transportation – how will the dignitary or guest arrive? Should the motorcade arrive at the event site outside or inside? Will valet parking be required?
- Greeters – Be sure to include who will greet the guest or dignitary upon arrival and departure.
- Determine whether there will be an official ceremony upon arrival or departure.
- Check weather conditions before the event. Consider an alternative rain site plan.
- If event is outside, do you need a tent, chairs, etc...?
- Before printing announcements, programs, etc., consult with the office of the dignitary or guest and check on the proper spelling, title, abbreviations and honorifics of the VIPs.
- Have a volunteer plan, if they are being used, make sure that each knows their role and is wearing credentials.

- Establish a green room for organizers where water, snacks and any other necessary items should be available.
- Check that handicap requirements have been met.
- Determine the amount of time needed to build your event. Consult with host and/or vendors on how long you have the space, what additional charges may be incurred.
- Have an advance staff person on site who knows the event and can lead the VIP's and delegation to their seats. A staff person should also be available to assist with the delegation questions or movements.
- Confirm VIPs and number of attendees. Have a checklist of who is in the audience to account for necessary acknowledgements.
- Have a seating chart.
- Determine length of the program and when it will start.
- Be aware of the restroom locations.
- Check the audiovisual arrangements. Also, verify that the height and type of podium are acceptable to the dignitary/guest, and if there are any special needs.
- If the dignitary or guest is from a foreign country, provide the host with background notes on the country (government, customs), as well as the protocol to follow in order to meet their counterparts, or a translator, if required.
- Will there be any gifts presented on arrival or departure? What is it and who is presenting?
- If any meals are being served, it is essential that you find out what the food preferences are, and if there are any allergic reactions to flowers, smoking, etc... for the dignitary or guest.
- Make sure your caterer is on site to help service the meeting rooms and green rooms.

# Sample Invitations

## • Example 1:



You are cordially invited to attend the

State of the County Address  
presented by

The Honorable (Name)  
Miami-Dade County Mayor  
on

Wednesday, the twelfth of March  
Two thousand nine  
At ten in the morning

Miami-Dade College Wolfson Campus  
300 N.E. 2nd Avenue  
Betty and Alvah Chapman Conference Center  
Miami, Florida

RSVP by  
(Date)  
(Telephone Number)

Refreshments provided following ceremony  
Free Metro mover service is available  
Exit at the College /Bayside Station

• **Example 2:**



Mayor (NAME) & Miami-Dade County Commissioner (NAME)  
request the pleasure of your company at a reception for  
(EVENT NAME)

Tuesday, July 25, 2009

6:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Port of Miami 1015 N. America Way

Regrets Only: 305-555-5555  
Invitation is Non-Transferable

The Chairman's Club, Terminal 5  
Dress: Business Attire

• **Example 3:**



Chairperson (NAME)  
and members of the  
Board of County Commissioners

Request the pleasure of your company  
at a reception for

(EVENT NAME)

Tuesday, May 25, 2009  
6:00 – 8:00 P.M.  
Port of Miami  
1015 N. America Way

Regrets Only: 305-555-5555  
Invitation is Non-Transferable

The Chairman's Club, Terminal 5  
Dress: Business Attire

## Example: 4



County Manager (NAME)  
requests the pleasure of your company  
at a reception for

(EVENT NAME)

Tuesday, November 18, 2009  
6:00 – 8:00 P.M.

Port of Miami  
1015 N. America Way

Regrets Only: 305-555-5555  
Invitation is Non-Transferable

The Chairman's Club, Terminal 5  
Dress: Business Attire

**NOTE: MIAMI-DADE COUNTY'S TOMBSTONE ALWAYS NEEDS TO BE PLACED ON THE BACK OF THE INVITATION. (SEE BELOW)**

**(NAME)  
Mayor**

**Board of County Commissioners**

**(NAME)  
Chairperson  
(NAME)**

**Vice Chairperson**

<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 1</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 2</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 3</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 4</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 5</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 6</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 7</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 8</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 9</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 10</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 11</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 12</b>
<b>(NAME)</b>	<b>District 13</b>

**(NAME) Clerk of Courts  
(NAME) County Manager  
(NAME) County Attorney**



**NOTE: The Government Information Center (GIC) handles the layout for all official County events**

# **Logistics**

## **International, National, State, Local Visits**

International trade related protocol requests are handled by The Jay Malina International Trade Consortium (ITC). Visits from elected officials, dignitaries and other official representatives are in handled in conjunction with the County's Protocol Division. As is customary, we will notify and involve the necessary County Officials, Agencies and Departments to ensure the proper representation of the County and the proper execution of the official program.

Upon receipt of the official requests, the respective department/agencies will work with the Office of the highest ranking County official who will be receiving the visiting dignitary/official, where necessary, the police, and other relevant County organizations to ensure the success of the visit.

### **Immediately following request/confirmation of visit:**

The respective department/agencies will work with the County's Protocol Division to coordinate with the local authorities, and the office of the visiting dignitary/official to formulate the program which will be communicated to all the concerned parties as soon as it becomes available (in a timely manner).

- Receiving line
- Identify lead local person – lead local person is the main point of contact with/for the visiting dignitary and event site
- Visit site and identify needs (podium, background, seating, audio/visual, green room, refreshments (water), location of receiving line, parking, transportation, security, alternative rain site (if event is outside) or other
- Press Pool Contact support departments
- Notifications (local/other elected officials; confirm availability)

- Develop preliminary program based on anticipated participation

### **Prior to dignitary/official's arrival**

Prior to the arrival

- Logistics
- Advance Team Personnel
- Invitations
- Site survey to confirm arrangements
- Make calls to confirm RSVPs; modifications to program to reflect any changes

\* **Note:** Miami-Dade police department and Miami International Airport Protocol will not be required to provide immediate notification for non Miami-Dade County sponsored/official visits or events.

(See Appendix 'A' for the Special Events Protocol Checklist)

# **Miami International Airport: Office of Protocol & International Affairs**

The Office of Protocol Liaison at Miami International Airport (MIA) offers a host of special services and privileges to the members of the Consular Corps of Miami and the foreign diplomatic community accredited in the United States. These special services and privileges include:

- VIP Parking Privileges at Miami International Airport
- Free Parking Cards at Miami International Airport Parking Garage
- Use of Consular Lounge facilities (VIP Facilities)
- Escorted Access to Secure areas of Miami International Airport
- Protocol VIP Gate Passes and VIP Badges
- Assistance with Special Services Operations of all Airlines at Miami International Airport
- Advance Notices of all Changes on Arrivals of Dignitaries
- Preferred check-In at MIA

The parking cards privileges are strictly reserved to the members of the Consular Corps of Miami. All other services are also extended to the diplomatic community at large headed by heads of mission who represent their respective countries in an official capacity in the United States.

The Office of Protocol at MIA extends the highest level of courtesy of port to the following personalities arriving, transiting, and/or departing from the airport:

- Heads of State (including Reigning Kings, Emperors, Queens, Empress, and heads of Dukedom and Principalities)

- Presidents
- Chief of Staff of Heads of State (under special circumstances)
- Chief of Staff of Presidents (under special circumstances)
- Vice Presidents
- Prime Ministers
- Members of Cabinet at Ministerial level
- U.S. Cabinet Members
- Foreign Ambassadors accredited to the United States (under special circumstances)
- American Ambassadors assigned to foreign countries (under special circumstances)
- Members of reigning royal families (restricted to immediate family members, such as children and heirs of monarchs)

Under special circumstances and specific requests, this privilege may be extended to high level foreign dignitaries.

In order to expedite the entry and departure procedures of the foreign dignitaries arriving at MIA on international flights, all service requestors must provide complete information regarding the travel itinerary of their official guests and all pertinent additional information that are necessary for expedited clearance. They are the following:

- Full name of passenger
- Date of Birth
- Passport Number
- Visa Type and Classification
- Visa Folio Number

All requests are reviewed and approved by the Office of Protocol at MIA. This Office has established procedures for arrival and departure of dignitaries which may involve

working with U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP). In addition, the Office of Protocol is also notified of these details by several federal protection agencies, depending on the rank of the arriving or departing official guests.

These agencies are:

U.S. Department of State –

- Dignitary at ministerial level when accompanied by an armed officer.
- A Foreign Minister or Chancellor upon proper request made by their Embassy in Washington to the U.S. State Department.

Foreign embassies should be reminded that if they need security escort for their foreign officials at ministerial level and above, they must request this service from the U.S. Department of State within a 72-hour time frame in order to receive appropriate assistance. The 72-Hour notification is mandatory.

U. S. Secret Service –

- A Prime Minister, Head of State, President upon request for protection made by their Embassy in Washington, D.C.
- The spouse of a Head of State when accompanied by the principal party (Head of State); when he/she travels separately within the U.S., assuming that the protected principle is also on U.S. territory. Once the Head of State or principal party leaves U.S. territory, protection for the spouse is no longer extended.

## **Arrival Procedures**

The Office of Protocol is usually advised by the local consulates or the embassies in Washington, D.C., of the arrivals of their official guests. Occasionally requests for assistance may also originate directly from Foreign Ministries, or other official entities in foreign countries. The entity that makes the request has to specify in their communications the level of assistance they would like their guest to receive. Arrival procedures for Planeside Clearance (via the Terminal) are usually reserved for high level dignitaries, such as Heads of State, Presidents, and Prime Ministers. Federal inspection

and entry procedures are completed at the gate of arrival (if principal has an A1 or A2 visa; this service will not be honored if principal's visa classification is different unless he or she occupies one of the public functions listed above) and official guests and their immediate party disembark the aircraft and are given direct access to the free side of the terminal, where they are escorted by a protocol officer and federal agents. In this case, it is usually necessary to have the presence of the U.S. Secret Service agent or a U.S. Department of State representative. All other members of the arriving party including the entourage of the principal guest must be processed through the regular system if they carry regular visitor's visa type (such as B1 or B2 visas).

If the official guest is a Head of State, a President or a Prime Minister, Protocol will arrange a meeting to coordinate the logistics of the arrival (or departure) with all the parties involved, including whenever necessary, the Consul General of that country or the Head of Mission accredited in Florida, or the official representative of that Country's Embassy in Washington, D.C.

The arrival procedures for Planeside Clearance (via Airfield) are strictly reserved for Heads of State, Prime Ministers and Presidents. This type of clearance is usually requested by the federal protection agency assigned to the detail in coordination with the Consulate or Embassy of the Country whose leader is the official arriving guest and the Office of Protocol.

Leaders or Heads of Churches, regardless of denominations are also extended this courtesy whenever possible and if requested with ample notification. In such cases arrangements will be made with the entity that requested the service, Miami-Dade Police Department (MDPD) and Miami-Dade Aviation Department, U.S. Customs and Border Protection and the Office of Protocol.

## **Departure Procedures**

The Office of Protocol is advised by the local consulate or the embassy in Washington, D.C., of the departure of their official guests no less than 24-hour prior to the scheduled departure time. As of October 31, 2008, departure information can no longer be

communicated to the Office of Protocol under the same cover as the arrival information. A separate request for the departure will be enforced.

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) is notified by the Office of Protocol as well as all other agencies involved in the detail. These agencies may vary according to the rank of the official guest. A meeting time and place will be agreed upon by the Consulate and the Office of Protocol prior to the arrival at MIA of the departing party (2 hours Minimum for International flights and 90 minutes for domestic flights), a protocol officer will escort the official party (including the accompanying party) to the airline ticket counter for departure formalities, baggage check-in and screening with TSA. The TSA guarantees the private handling of security screening of all dignitaries escorted by a protocol officer or one of their agents, if and when requested by the accompanying party.

All consulates, through their embassies, upon departure, may request a Department of State escort for their eligible senior officials, accompanying spouses and their children under twelve, who are not already being escorted by a United States Secret Service or Diplomatic Security Service Protective Detail. Members of a senior official's entourage, who are not of cabinet ministerial rank, will be expedited by a protocol officer whenever possible through the customary screening process. During airport screening, the Protocol Office will give priority to the head of a party whether or not they are escorted by a U.S. Federal Government agency.

The Planeside departure (ramp access) procedures are exactly like planeside arrivals with the exception that U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) presence is usually not required due to the fact that the officials are either leaving the country for a foreign destination or leaving for a domestic destination, thus not requiring the need for entry formalities.

Previous arrangements would have been made with all agencies and entities who were involved with the arrival of the party. This type of service is strictly reserved only for Presidents, Heads of State and Prime Ministers and should be agreed upon by the federal protection agencies conducting the detail.

U.S. Secret Service and the Office of Protocol usually request planeside departure. Official representatives of Consulates have to make the necessary arrangements with the Office of Protocol in order to be escorted to the gate of departure to bid farewell to their departing officials.

### **Procedures for Protocol Assistance Requests**

Requests for international and domestic arrivals and departures should be made at least 24 hours prior to the scheduled arrival/departure of the guest. Guests will be met based on the validity of the request.

Requests should be sent to the Office of Protocol via fax or by phone. The information required is the following:

Name of the passenger

Official title

Nationality

Airline & Flight information

Time of Arrival

Name of greeter (Cell phone number)

If the service requestor (or a greeter) wishes to meet the arriving guest, the Protocol Officer will give the greeter clear instructions concerning a meeting place and the appropriate time to be at the agreed location.

International departing passengers as well as non-government officials requesting protocol assistance service are evaluated on a case-by-case basis and performed based on availability of staff. Non-government officials are usually extended protocol service according to their rank and/or importance.

All requests for international guests arriving on international flights must also include all pertinent personnel information previously listed.

## **Special Requests**

Special requests are assignments that are called in by organizations and institutions other than embassies, consulates, federal agencies, the White House, and foreign ministries. The requestors are usually, international goodwill agencies, conference organizers, religious organizations, international chamber of commerce and many other organizations.

These requests are considered on a case-by-case basis and given priority based on the importance of the organization and/or the guests who are arriving. On special requests that require the same level of importance as a presidential arrival, the Office of Protocol will coordinate the arrivals and/or departures with the appropriate agencies.

Groups that are usually handled by the Office of Protocol are:

- U.S. Air Force/CONJEFEMAR
- Office of Repatriated American (Repatriated American Program)
- Chambers of Commerce
- Trade Offices (local and international)
- Conference Organizers (local and international)
- Special Olympics
- Council of International Visitors
- USIA

## **Diplomatic Bags**

Diplomatic bags or pouches must bear visible external marks of their character and their contents are restricted to official correspondence, documents or articles and other content intended only for official use. The diplomatic bag or pouch is not subject to duty and ordinarily shall not be opened or detained unless officers from Custom and Border

Protection and the U.S. Department of Agriculture have serious reasons to believe that a consular bag contains non-permissible items. They may request that the diplomatic bag be opened in their presence by an authorized representative of the foreign government concerned as well as it can also be x-rayed with prior notification to the U.S. Department of State.

## **Arrival of Diplomatic Bag**

Consulates notify the arrival of a diplomatic bag/pouch to the Office of Protocol and the security office of the airline carrier. The Consular officer responsible for receiving the pouch will be escorted by a protocol officer to the gate of arrival to meet the party (diplomatic courier) carrying the pouch who will then be escorted through Customs.

The Protocol officer clears U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) with the arriving passenger and the diplomatic pouch. For unaccompanied diplomatic pouches, the consular agent designated to receive the pouch will be accompanied by a protocol officer for U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) clearance procedure.

At the ramp side level the security escort (from the consulate or other designated party) will ride with the airline security or personnel working the flight to accompany the pouch at all time until it reaches the U.S. Customs & Border Protection (CBP) clearance area. The Office of Security and Safety, MDPD, CBP and Airside Operations will be notified by the Office of Protocol.

## **Departure**

Consulates advise the Office of Protocol of the departure of the diplomatic courier and the diplomatic bag or pouch. All information pertaining to a regular assignment is to be provided by the requestor of the service.

Protocol notifies the responsible of the Transportation and Security Agency (T SA) in charge of security check points at airports, who in turn assign an agent to wait for the arrival of the party and the diplomatic bag at the concourse of departure. The diplomatic

bag should bear all visible marks of its content and should have a seal. Accompanying person will go through the security check screening but not the diplomatic bag/pouch.

### **MDAD Courtesies of Port Handbook**

A Manual containing detailed information pertaining to the courtesies of port services offered to the members of the Consular Corps of Miami and the diplomatic community at large, is published semi-annually and is available for members of the diplomatic officially representing their respective countries as Heads of Mission and or those occupying similar functions and are accredited at the State level.

## Consular Corps

The State of Florida, according to the Office of Tourism, Trade, and Economic Development (OTTED) in the Executive Office of the Governor, hosts the fourth largest Consular Corps in the United States after California, New York and Texas. Florida's Consular Corps currently consists of 125 consular missions and official trade/tourism offices representing 79 countries. The majority of these consulates and trade/tourism offices are located in South Florida. For more information please visit, <http://internationalaffairs.flgov.com/>

Upon arrival to Miami-Dade County, it is customary that new members of the Consular Corps visit the Mayor to introduce themselves and establish official contacts with his/her office. During the visit, pre-arranged through the Mayor's Office, a County Key is presented to the new Consul as an official welcome to their new post.

In writing a Consul General it is proper to address them as "The Honorable." Quite often, officials with a diplomatic rank are assigned to consular posts (ambassadors, ministers, etc.), in that case, it is advisable to address them according to their rank. Please note that the Consular career and the Diplomatic career are two different levels of a country's Foreign Service. One way to distinguish between consuls and diplomats is in their respective functions, which are separate and distinct. The only way a person can enjoy diplomatic privileges and immunities in the United States is to be recognized as a diplomat by the U.S. Department of State.

Foreign countries also designate consular representatives "ad honorem or honorary." Quite often they are not citizens of the country they represent, they are frequently U.S. citizens. They have their own career outside the consular corps. They are not employed

by the country represented, nor do they have a contract or receive a salary from it. Nevertheless, they do represent a country and are accepted by the United States.

A Consulate could be under a Consul General, assisted by a Consul, Vice Consul and even Honorary Consul (Consuls Ad Honorem) at large or assigned to areas or municipalities within the Consulate's jurisdiction.

Members of the Consular Corps in Greater Miami are addressed as "The Honorable..." The term consul is always proper although it should be changed to Consul General, Vice Consul, etc., (if the proper rank is known).

Formal introductions of consuls are based on the longevity of their appointments. However, if the term of appointment is unknown, precedence is set alphabetically by the country's name. Career consuls have precedence over honorary consuls. The same criterion is used to display foreign flags in official ceremonies.

# **Miami-Dade Police Department Dignitary Protection**

## **Dignitary Protection/Assistance Requests:**

1. All requests for dignitary protection/assistance must be received through official channels; i.e., USSS, USDS, United States Military, Governor's Office, etc., and require the approval of the Special Patrol Bureau Major.
2. Upon receipt, the request will be reviewed for appropriate classification of both the dignitary and threat level.

Dignitaries are classified as follows:

- Class 1 - Low-level United States and foreign government officials, as well as state, county, and municipal officials. This category will also be used for individuals deemed to have celebrity status.
- Class 2 - Foreign heads of state, cabinet-level government officials, and any other person whose status lends cause for considerable security concerns.
- Class 3 - President and Vice President of the United States.

Threat Level Classifications:

- Remote - No known information that a threat exists.
  - Possible - Based upon information, or knowledge, of a previous threat, and/or the individual is considered to be highly controversial.
  - Probable - Based upon information that an actual threat, with ability to carry out, exists, or has previously occurred.
3. Dignitary Protection/Assistance details will be handled in accordance with procedures outlined in Departmental Manual Chapter 24, Part 4, Assisting Other Agencies, Section 4, and Dignitary Protection.

- The SRT/DPU Lieutenant will provide guidance to departmental personnel involved in the detail.
- The SRT/DPU Lieutenant will consolidate data received from the Resource Allocation (Annex E) memorandum submitted by concerned entities at the completion of the detail.

NOTE: During a dignitary protection detail, the concerned SRT/DPU Lieutenant is empowered to exercise line authority over departmental personnel involved in the detail.

## Table Seating Arrangements

Table seating for formal official luncheons and dinners is a necessary procedure when entertaining government officials, foreign dignitaries, and other distinguished persons in international social life.

The basic rules of precedence discussed in Page 16 should be studied carefully in order to acquire an understanding of the specific seating arrangements shown on the following pages. Precedence, based on one's official position or military rank, should be the determining factor of seating arrangements for all official functions.

At mixed official luncheons and dinners, according to American custom, the place of honor for male guests is to the right of the hostess. If the guest of honor is to be given the place of honor at the table, the host should avoid inviting persons of higher rank.

However, when a ranking guest is invited, the host may choose: (1) to make the senior guest (higher-ranking guest) the co-host, if it is a stag function; (2) to ask the higher-ranking guest to waive his right in favor of the guest of honor; (3) to seat the guests according to precedence even though it places the guest for whom the dinner is given far down the table; (4) to divide the seating between two or more tables if there is a delicate situation regarding ranking and if the number of guests warrant it.

The man next in rank sits on the left of the hostess; the next lady, on the left of the host. The host and hostess may sit either at opposite ends of the table (head and foot—the traditional seating) or across from each other at the middle of the table (this is a seating frequently used where the host and hostess are closer to a greater number of their guests).

Women are seated at dinner according to what their official position dictates or according to the rank of their husbands.

At an official dinner where there are guests without protocol ranking, the seating may be based on personal or scholastic achievement, mutual interest, social prominence, age, and closeness of friendship. When foreigners are present, linguistic ability may be a deciding factor in the seating. When the guests of honor and second ranking official have been placed, non-ranking guests may be seated between those of official rank.

It is desirable that the total number of persons at the table not be a number divisible by four in order to alternate men and women between the host and hostess. To seat a table in the four series (eight, twelve, sixteen, twenty persons, for example) and to avoid seating two men and two women together, the hostess may sit to the left of the seat that is properly hers, with the ranking male guest on her right. If the table is wide enough, she may put two persons at each end.

The contemporary host and hostess frequently find that round tables of six or more persons allow more flexibility than rectangular ones. Often it is more convenient to entertain at two or more tables of six or more persons. The advantage of this arrangement is that it affords more places of honor as the host and hostess can each have a co-hostess and co-host at their respective tables.

For more than two tables, the host and hostess each take a table, and ranking County guests, separately or as couples, are used as host and hostess at other tables; e.g., the Mayor at one table, the first lady at the second table, the Chair of the Board of County Commissioners at a third, etc. For a function requiring a large number of round tables, the host and hostess must avoid being seated in the center of the room where their backs would be facing their guests.

At seated meals given by official County government personnel abroad, foreign guests should have precedence over Americans of comparable rank with the exemptions of an American Ambassador. County officials present on such occasions should understand that it is customary to cede one's rank to a representative of another country. They should forget precedence among themselves and be prepared to be seated in any way that will make conversation easier and will take language abilities into account.

To avoid any misunderstandings, it would be well for the host or hostess to inform in advance any guests, whether American or foreign, who are not seated according to protocol, of the reason for this departure from the norm. When a high ranking official is a guest, they should obtain his prior permission.

Americans should be prepared for wide variations when entertaining or being entertained by nationals of other countries. In some countries, for example, the place of honor is on the left of the host and hostess, instead of on the right.

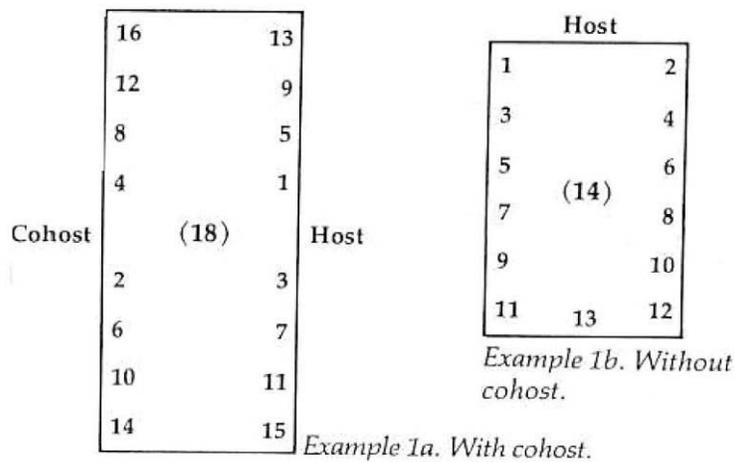
It is desirable, if at all possible, to avoid placing two men or two women next to each other. However, in order to avoid seating a woman at the end or outer edge of a table, it is sometimes necessary to place two women together as shown in example 3b.

While engaged couples are always seated together, one should avoid seating a man and his wife together.

**TABLE SEATING PLANS**

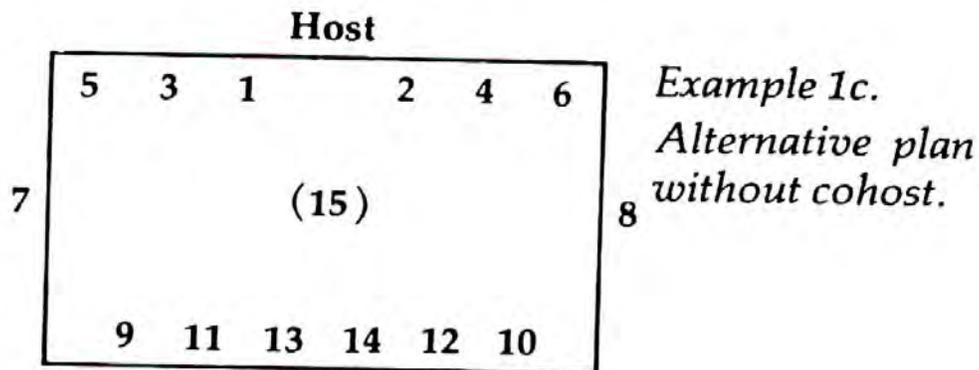
**(All-Male or All-Female Luncheons and Dinners)**

At large unmixed functions, as in the case of bachelor-hosted unmixed parties, it is desirable to designate a co-host or co-hostess to balance the table. If the event has both foreign and County official guests, it is appropriate to ask the senior County official to co-host. If several important foreigners are to be honored, the senior County official should be seated opposite the host.



If there is a co-host, he or she should be seated opposite the host or hostess at the center of a narrow rectangular table. See example 1a.

When the party is small or a co-host is not desired, the host sits at the head of the table with the younger or junior guests at the foot. See example 1b. An alternative seating plan for the host or hostess presiding alone is shown in example 1c.



## Mixed Luncheons and Dinners with Bachelor Host or Hostess

A bachelor, or a man entertaining in the absence of his wife, usually chooses one of the several seating arrangements suggested below:

Man	6	6	Man
Woman	8	5	Woman
Man	5	2	Man
Woman	4	1	Woman
Cohost	(18)	Host	
Woman	2	3	Woman
Man	3	4	Man
Woman	6	7	Woman
Man	7	8	Man

*Example 2a. Bachelor host with cohost.*

	Man	
	2	
Woman	4	3
Man	3	1
Woman	2	1
	Host	

	Man	
	2	
Woman	3	4
Man	1	3
Woman	2	1
	Host	

*Example 2b. No cohost; married couples with extra woman; number divisible by four.*

*Example 2c. No cohost; not all married couples; number divisible by four.*

If the number of guests is not divisible by four, a woman guest might be asked to act as hostess in order to balance the table. Examples 3a or 3b, below, may then be used.

For large parties, in order to balance the table and give prominence to the ranking man, it is usual to ask the latter to co-host. In this event both the host and co-host would sit facing each other across the middle of the table. See example 2a.

Alternatively, for a small dinner of eight or twelve when neither hostess nor co-host is desired and where the woman and man guests of honor are married, example 2b is appropriate. Example 2c can be used for a dinner of eight or twelve when the ranking man and woman are not married to each other.

For the bachelor hostess the seating plans detailed above should be used. A member of the woman's family may be asked to act as co-hostess or the ranking man asked to co-host.

## Traditional Mixed Dinners

In this arrangement, the host and hostess may sit at the head and foot of the table. See example 3a.

	Hostess		
Man	1	2	Man
Woman	3	4	Woman
Man	5	6	Man
	(14)		
Woman	6	5	Woman
Man	4	3	Man
Woman	2	1	Woman
	Host		

*Example 3a. Host and hostess at ends of table.*

Man	8	7	Woman (5 Man)
Woman	6	5	Man (7 Woman)
Man	4	3	Woman
Woman	2	1	Man
	Host (18)		Hostess
Woman	1	2	Man
Man	3	4	Woman
Woman	5	6	Man (8 Woman)
Man	7	8	Woman (6 Man)

*Example 3b. Host and hostess at center of table.*

Nowadays at large official dinners, the host and hostess often choose to sit opposite each other in the center of the table. See example 3b. However, when an equal number of men and women are invited, this arrangement means that women are seated at the outside places on one of the sides. This can be avoided by seating two women together (women 7 and man 5 are changed to place the man at the end and leave women 3 and 7 side by side; similar changes are made for woman 8 and man 6), or by two places being set at each end of the tables as shown in example 3c. If there are more men than women, this results in fewer places on one side. The last places can be occupied by men. With this arrangement, in order to balance the table, the place settings are spread farther apart on that one side.

An alternative plan would be to have two tables with the host at one and the hostess at the second. See example 3d.

		Man Hostess			
Woman	3	1	2	Man	
Man	5		4	Woman	
Woman	7		6	Man	
Man	8	(18)	8	Woman	
Woman	6		7	Man	
Man	4		5	Woman	
Woman	2		3	Man	
		Host Woman			

*Example 3c. Two places at each end of table.*

		Hostess						Man		
Man	1		2	Man		Woman	5		7	Woman
Woman	3		4	Woman						
		(10)				Man	8	(8)	6	Man
Man	7		5	Man						
Woman	8		6	Woman		Woman	2		1	Woman
		Man						Host		

*Example 3d. Host and hostess at separate tables.*

## Mixed Dinners

As long as the number of guests is divisible by four and there is an equal number of men and women, the host and hostess cannot sit opposite each other without putting two men and two women together. If the hostess simply moves one seat to the left of the seat that is properly hers, with the ranking male guest on her right, the table will be balanced. See example 4a. An unmarried couple in such a group may be seated side by side. See example 4b.

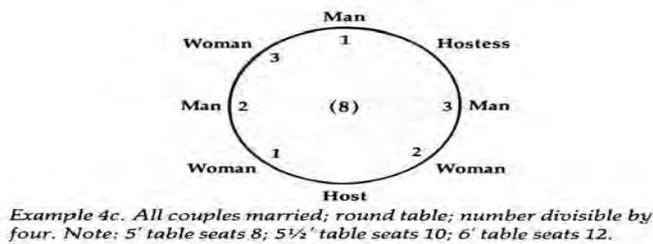
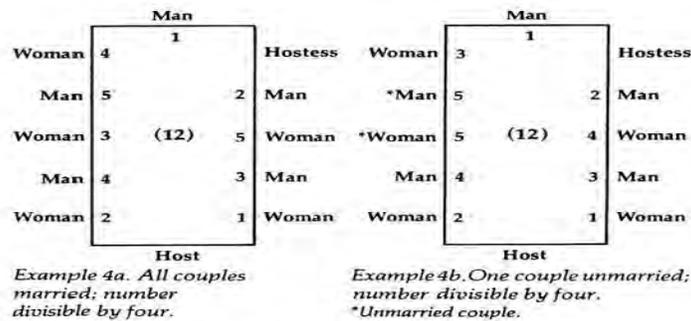
Contemporary hostesses often solve this problem by using a round table. See example 4c.

Sometimes it is more convenient to entertain at two or more tables of six or more persons. See example 4d.

This arrangement affords more places of honor:

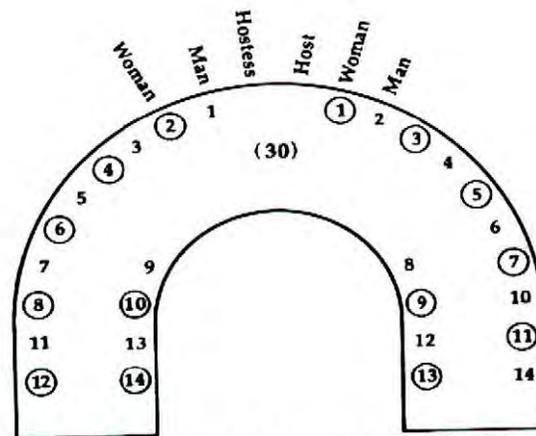
- (1) The host and hostess would not then be seated at the same table.
- (2) They can each have a co-hostess and co-host at their respective tables (either ranking guests or guests of honor, but it is usual for such co-hosts to be Americans).

For more than two tables, the host and hostess each take a table and ranking American guests, separately or as couples, are chosen as host and hostess at other tables.



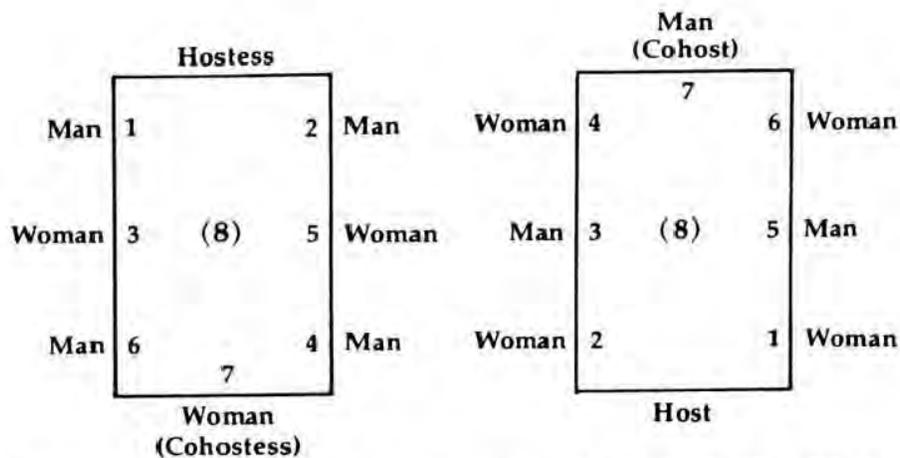
## Mixed Luncheons and Dinners at the Squared U and Horseshoe Tables

The squared U and horseshoe tables are frequently used at large official ceremonial functions where the host and hostess are seated side by side. See example 5a. An alternative plan places the male honored guest on the host's right and the wife of the guest of honor on his left. The hostess is then seated on the right of the guest of honor. See example 5b.



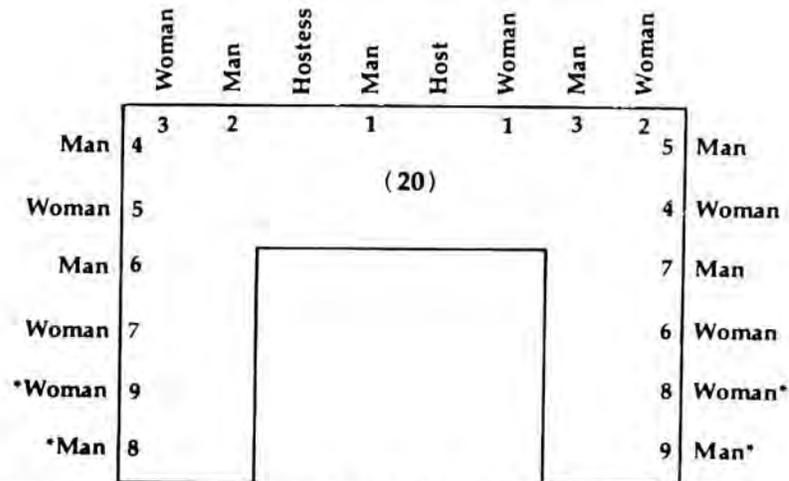
le 5a. Horseshoe; host and hostess seated together

At other than formal ceremonial luncheons and dinners, an arrangement at one of these tables may place the host and hostess opposite each other. See example 5c. However, this places the hostess at a disadvantage as her back faces her guests.



Example 4d. Host and hostess at separate tables; number divisible by four.

The E-shaped table (when a center leg is added to the squared U or horseshoe) is ideal when the host and hostess wish to seat a large number of guests “all at one table.” This particular arrangement lends itself to greater flexibility in seating.



*Example 5b. Squared U; number divisible by four; host seated between guests of honor.*

*\*Arrangement avoids placing a woman at the end.*

## Head Table –Dais

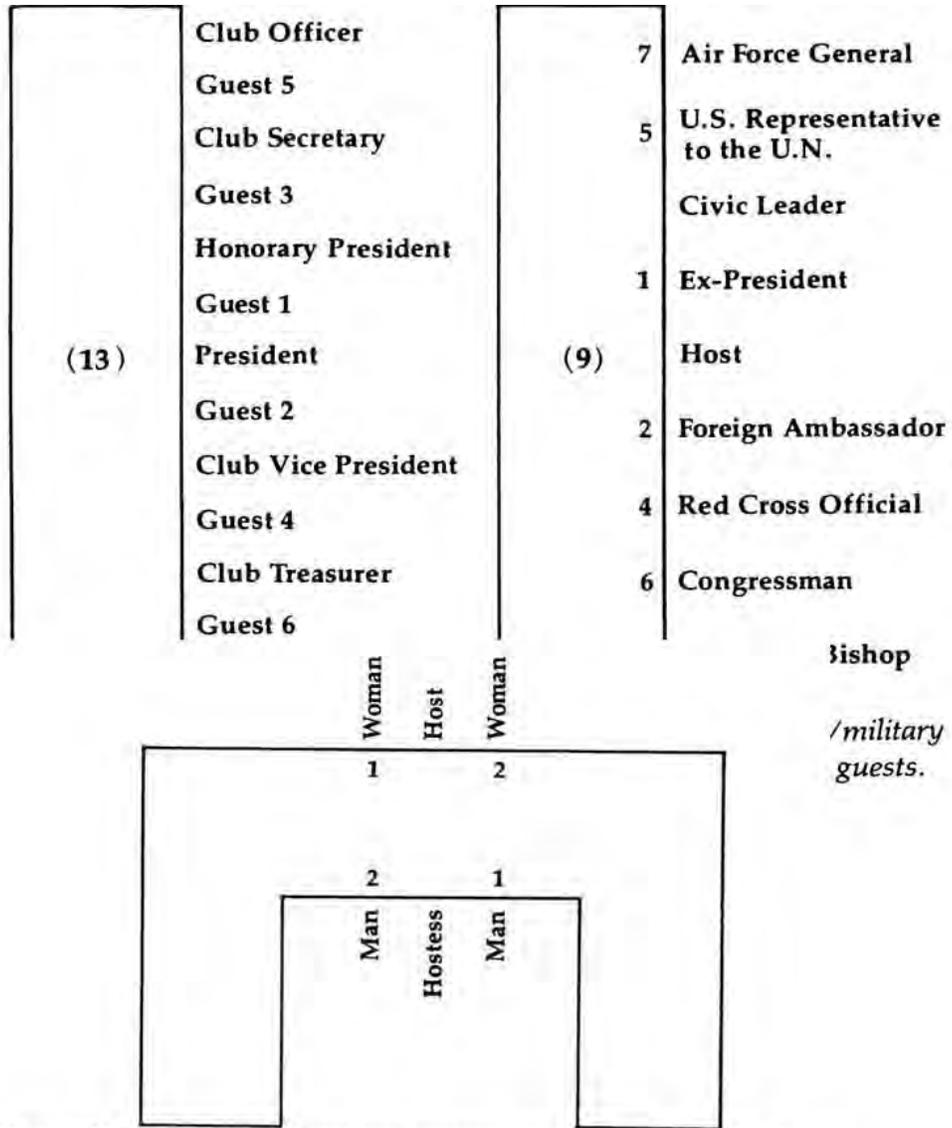
Seating arrangements at head tables are required for most public functions such as a charity luncheon, a convention dinner, a banquet to honor a distinguished foreign visitor or other prominent person, an event to promote a political cause, etc. Some functions are stag affairs, some mixed groups, and some are with and without speakers.

For a ladies’ luncheon where club officers and important guests compromise the head table, see example 6a.

A head table at which official and no ranking guests are present is shown in example 6b. The important citizens who represent their civic or philanthropic organizations may be placed between the official ranking guest after the guest of honor and second top official guest are seated.

When arranging seating for a low-ranking toastmaster and guest speaker at a banquet, the chairman (or host) must tactfully place them as close to the center of the table as possible.

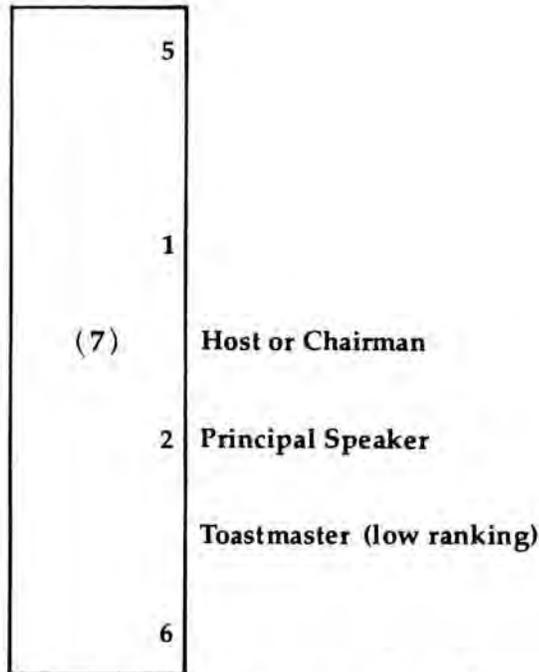
If the principal speaker is a man and he is outranked by others present, he may be placed in seat 2 to the left of the chairman (or host) or in seat 3. The toastmaster is frequently placed at the left of the second-ranking guest. See example 6c.



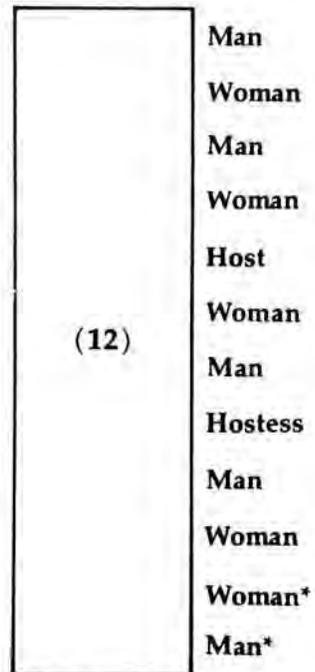
Example 5c. Squared U; host and hostess seated opposite each other.

When it is a mixed function and couples are to be seated at the head table, the top-ranking lady would be placed at the right of the chairman (or host) and the number two lady at his left. See example 6d.

When it is necessary to seat guests of honor on a dais of two or more tiers, it is customary to seat the top-ranking guests on the first tier.



*Example 6c. Toastmaster and guest speakers.*



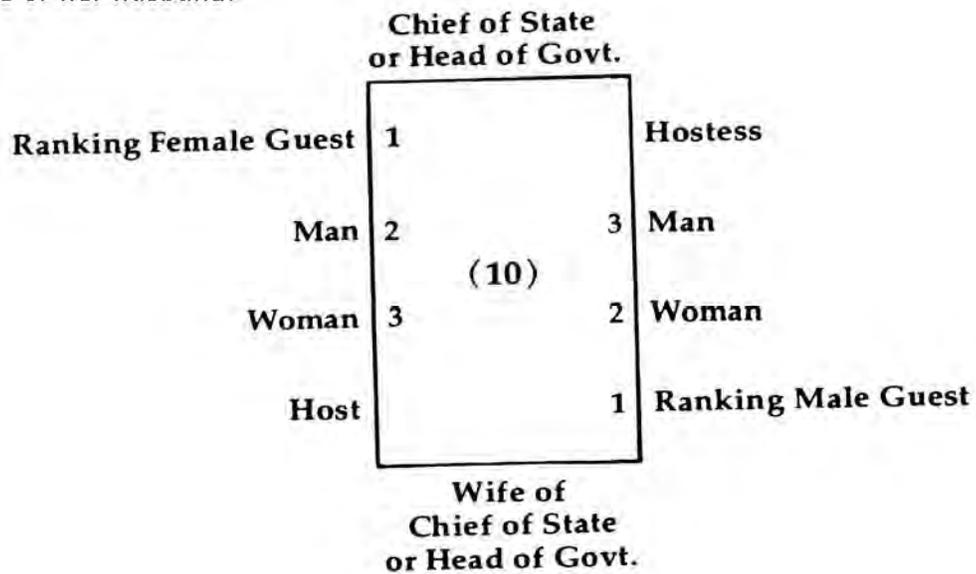
*Example 6d. Host and hostess (or chairman and wife) with couples.*

*\*Arrangement avoids seating a woman at the end of the table.*

## Unofficial Luncheons and Dinners for Chief of State/Head of Government

Occasionally private citizens who are known to a visiting Chief of State/Head of Government offer to extend hospitality to them. The host and hostess relinquish their places at the dining table in order for the visitors to sit at the head and foot of the table. The host places himself at the left of the wife or husband of the Chief of State and the hostess to the left of the guest of honor. The number two man and woman sit at the right of the Chief of State and his wife or her husband.

wife or her husband.

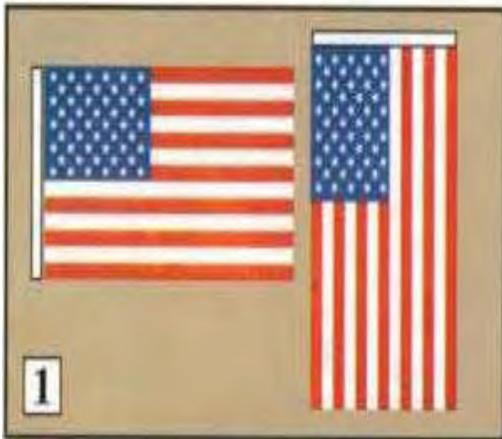


*Example 7.*

# Everyday Flag Etiquette

## General Display

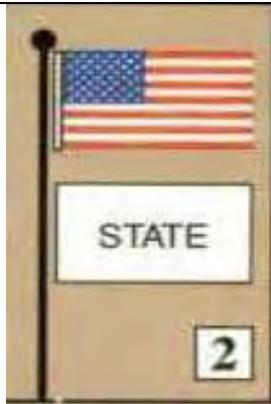
It is universal custom to display the flag only from sunrise to sunset on buildings and on stationary flagstuffs in the open. However, when a patriotic effect is desired, the flag may be displayed twenty-four hours a day if properly illuminated during the hours of darkness.



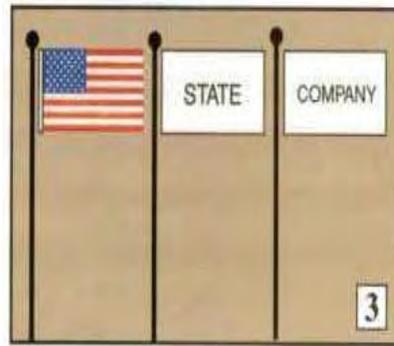
1. When displayed either horizontally or vertically, against a wall, the union should be uppermost and to the flag's own right, that is, to the observer's left. When displayed in a window, the flag should be displayed in the same way, with the union or blue field to the left of the observer.

No other flag or pennant should be placed above, or, if on the same level, to the right of the flag of the United States of America, except during church services conducted by naval chaplains at sea... for personnel of the Navy...when the church pennant may be flown above the flag.

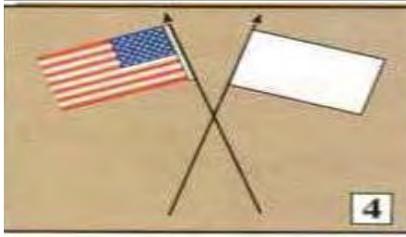
No person shall display the flag of the United Nations or any other national or international flag equal, above, or in a position of superior prominence or honor to, or in place of, the flag of the United States at any place within the United States or any Territory or possession thereof; Provided, that nothing in this section shall make unlawful the continuance of the practice heretofore followed of displaying the flag of the United Nations in a position of superior prominence or honor, an other national flag of the United States at the headquarters of the United Nations.



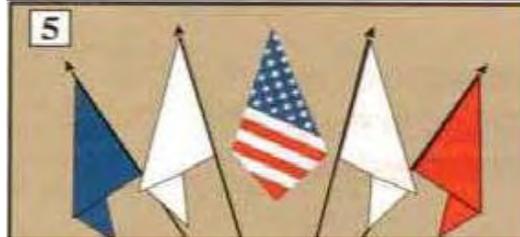
2. When flags of States, Cities, or localities, or pennants of societies are flown on the same halyard with the flag of the United States, the latter should always be at the peak.



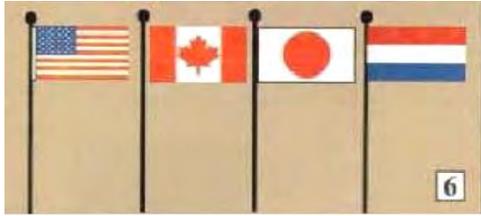
3. When the flags are flown from adjacent staffs, the flag of the United States should be hoisted first and lowered last. No such flag or pennant may be placed above the flag of the United States or to the United States flag's right.



4. The flag of the United States of America when it is displayed with another flag against a wall from crossed staffs should be on the right the flag's own right, and its staffs. Should be in front of the staff of the other Staff.



5. The flag of the United States of America Should be at the center and at the highest point of the group when a number of flags of States or localities or pennants of societies, are grouped and displayed from Staff



### Churches, Auditoriums

When flags of two or more nations are displayed, they are to be flown from separate staff of the same height. The flags should be of approximately equal size. International usage forbids the display of the flag one nation in time of peace.

When used on a speaker's platform, the flag, if displayed flag above and behind the speaker. When displayed form staff in a church or public auditorium , the flag of the United states of America should hold the position of superior prominence, in advance of the audience, and in the position of honor at the clergyman's or speaker's right as he faces the audience. Any other flag so displayed should be placed on the left of the clergyman or speaker at the right of the audience.

# Appendix A



## SPECIAL EVENTS PROTOCOL CHECKLIST

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ RECEIPT OF OFFICIAL REQUEST</li>   <li>○ RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENT/AGENCY DIRECTOR NOTIFIES HIS/HER ACM</li>   <li>○ ACM DETERMINES PROCESS AND IDENTIFY PARTIES FOR HANDLING SUCH REQUEST AND SEQUENCE VISIT</li>   <li>○ RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENT /AGENCY WILL WORK WITH THE HIGHEST RANKING COUNTY OFFICIAL WHO WILL BE RECEIVING THE VISITING DIGNITARY/OFFICIAL</li>   <li>○ RESPECTIVE DEPARTMENTAL/AGENCY WILL WORK WITH THE COUNTY'S PROTOCOL DIVISION AND ITC TO COORDINATE WITH LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND THE OFFICE OF THE VISITING DIGNITARY /OFFICIAL TO FORMULATE A PROGRAM WHICH WILL BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES INVOLVED</li> </ul> <p>CONTACT: (305) 375-3611</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ LOGISTICS</li>   <li>○ RECEIVING LINE</li> <li>○ IDENTIFIED LEAD LOCAL PERSON</li> <li>○ VISIT SITE AND IDENTIFIED NEEDS</li> <li>○ PODIUM</li> <li>○ BACKGROUND</li> <li>○ SEATING ARRANGEMENT OF RECEIVING LINE</li> <li>○ GENERAL PARKING &amp; VIP PARKING</li> <li>○ TRANSPORTATION</li> <li>○ INVITATIONS</li> <li>○ PROGRAMS</li> <li>○ SPEECHES</li> <li>○ TRANSLATIONS</li> <li>○ PROTOCOL GIFTS , AND /OR BIOS</li> <li>○ PHOTOGRAPHER</li> <li>○ PRESS ROOM</li> <li>○ RED CARPET</li> <li>○ IDENTIFY VOLUNTEERS</li> <li>○ PRESS RELEASES</li> <li>○ SITE SURVEY TO CONFIRM ARRANGEMENTS</li> <li>○ NOTIFICATIONS ( LOCAL /OTHER OFFICIALS )</li> <li>○ SET UP OF LOGISTICS AT MEETING WITH ALL PARTIES INVOLVED TO ENSURE THE SUCCESS OF VISIT /EVENT</li> </ul>
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EVENT NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 DEPT/DIV/LOC \_\_\_\_\_  
 RECEIPT OF OFFICIAL REQUEST \_\_\_\_\_

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 PREPARED BY DEPARTMENT DIRECTOR: \_\_\_\_\_  
 FOR PROTOCOL RELATED INQUIRIES CALL: 305-375-3611

# Appendix B



## DIVISION OF PROTOCOL SERVICE DOCUMENT REQUEST FORM

Rush Orders Check Here

RUSH ORDERS (LESS THAN 48 HOURS CANNOT BE GUARANTEED)  
PHONE: 305-375-3611 FAX: 305-372-6029

PLEASE COMPLETE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Requested by: \_\_\_\_\_ Staff: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Office/Dept./Agency/Person: \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date of Event: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Required: \_\_\_\_\_  
English  Spanish

To be presented at the BCC Meeting?  
Yes  No   
Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT NAME/TITLE AND DATE AS YOU WANT IT TO APPEAR ON THE DOCUMENT(S)

**IMPORTANT: Please include background information**  
**Special Recommendations:**

Co-Signed By: \_\_\_\_\_

### DOCUMENT REQUESTED

- Proclamation
- Commendation
- District Commendation
- Certificate of Appreciation
- Congratulatory Certificate (Birthday, etc.,)
- Sympathy Resolution
- Distinguished Visitor
- Salute

### PROMOTIONAL ITEMS

**Amount:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Key to the County
- \_\_\_\_\_ Dictionaries
- \_\_\_\_\_ Lapel Pins
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pens
- \_\_\_\_\_ Pencils
- \_\_\_\_\_ Tie Clip
- \_\_\_\_\_ Cuff Links

Frame Yes  No


## **Acknowledgements**

The preparation of this manual was a collaborative effort among several County officials and departments. Without input from those who are at the forefront and who have had first hand experience in the area of protocol, this manual would not have been made possible. While it is not possible to list all those who in one way or another contributed to this collaborative effort, special thanks go to the following departments and individuals who made invaluable contributions in the writing of this manual.

Annette Molina, Director  
Employee Recognition and Protocol Division  
Office of the Chairman  
Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners

### **Contributors**

**The Jay Malina International Trade Consortium of Miami-Dade County  
Communications Department** (currently the Government Information Center)  
**Miami-Dade Aviation Department**  
**Office of the Mayor**  
**Office of the Chair**  
**Office of Intergovernmental Affairs**  
**Miami-Dade Police Department**  
**Miami-Dade Fire and Rescue Department**

### **Sources**

*Excerpts from The Flag Code of the United States – Public Law 94-344, July 7, 1976.  
Copyright 2004 Annin & Co.*

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<http://www.state.gov>

*Office of Tourism, Trade and Economic Development (OTTED). State of Florida.*

<http://internationalaffairs.flgov.com>