

WREATH CEREMONY
AT THE TOMB OF THE UNKNOWN SOLDIER
IN ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

1. This ceremony is memorial in purpose and patriotic in nature and will be conducted for nonpartisan patriotic groups only when permission is granted by the Superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery.
2. The ceremonial party will consist of the following:
 - a. Host, usually the Relief Commander at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier
 - b. A wreath bearer to assist with the placing of the wreath and a bugler to sound “Taps”.
 - c. The representative (dignitary) of the group placing the wreath, and such persons, no more than a total of 4 due to space limitation, as may have been designated by their organization as the official wreath party.
3. It is requested that wreaths be delivered by a florist to the Office of the Sergeant of the Guard at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier 1 hour prior to ceremony time. Those who desire to bring their wreaths may do so. The wreath may be made of either live or artificial material and there is no prescribed cost or size. The group placing the wreath is responsible for obtaining it. Groups coming from outside the Washington, DC area may desire to have their local florist make arrangements with a Washington area florist. Army regulations preclude this office from recommending specific florists.
4. The ceremony will be conducted in the following manner:
 - a. On the day of your event, report to the Tomb Guard Quarters located at the Memorial Amphitheater, with a copy of this email at least 30 minutes prior to the time of the scheduled wreath ceremony. The Tomb Guard sentinels will address any questions you have concerning placing the wreath at this time.
 - b. Immediately following the guard change or five minutes prior to the scheduled ceremony time, the dignitary who will place the wreath and other members of the official party should meet the host at the top of the steps in front of the Memorial Display Room for an orientation on the procedure to be followed in the ceremony.
 - c. The remainder of the group will assemble on the steps between the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and the Memorial Display Room.
 - d. The dignitary and wreath party will be formed and escorted by the host. They will then descend the steps, without pause, and halt in a pre-designated position in front of the Tomb.

e. The party halts, and on signal from the host, the bugler will take his position and the wreath bearer will advance from the left and present the wreath to the dignitary. The dignitary will move forward with the wreath and the host will give the command of "Present Arms". All military personnel in uniform will render the hand salute and civilians should place their right hand over the heart. After the wreath is in position at the Tomb the dignitary will return to his position beside the host. The host and wreath bearer will come to "Present Arms"

f. When the dignitary has returned to his position beside the host the bugler will sound "Taps". On the hosts command of "Order Arms" the host will turn and guide the wreath party back up the steps to the entrance to the Memorial Display Room. This concludes the ceremony.

5. Organizations participating in public wreath ceremonies shall remain silent during the ceremony. Organizations are not authorized to make remarks, speeches, nor offer audible prayers.

6. Flags or colors require written approval in advance if they are to be displayed. You must have this written permission with you at the time of the ceremony or the flags and colors cannot be displayed.

7. Flags, colors, color guards, cordons, and other similar formations are not permitted on the plaza. The host will place these formations in an appropriate location when approved by the Superintendent, Arlington National Cemetery, or his authorized representative.

8. This ceremony is subject to postponement or cancellation due to official events at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier.