

# WPFG - ABRIDGED RULES - Honor Guard Competition

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## **Description of Events and General Rules**

The Honor Guard Competition is a 2 day team event consisting of 3 segments including the Color Guard Posting of the Colors, the Team Inspection Drill and the Exhibition/Demonstration Detail. During every phase of the competition, each team and its team members will be judged on uniformity, neatness, cleanliness, and military bearing. The variations of marching styles will not be penalized but, rather judged for bearing, precision, straight lines, etc.

1. Each team will be comprised of a minimum of 5 members and a maximum of 9 members; which also includes any musicians or vocalist needed for the Exhibition/Demonstration Detail and the Team Leader/Commander.
2. All participating team members must be a minimum of 18 years of age; there is no maximum age limit.
3. All team members must be current, former or retired Law Enforcement Officers, Correction Officers or Fire Rescue Officers; this includes musicians or vocalists used for the Exhibition/Demonstration Detail.
4. All members of any combined Team must be from within the same service (all Fire or all Law Enforcement). Teams may be all male, all female or a combination thereof.
5. Participating teams shall submit a roster identifying the Team Leader/Commander and the names of all members participating in each element of the competition. Even if some members only participate in a portion of the competition tasks, ALL team members must be present for Team Inspection; this includes musicians or vocalists needed for the Exhibition/Demonstration Detail. Any changes to the team roster must be declared at registration, prior to the team starting the competition.
6. At the time of registration check-in, teams will be notified which day they are scheduled to perform as well as in which order the teams will perform. They will also be given approximate times they are to be at each event. Prior to the beginning of the competition for each day, the times will be narrowed down and teams will be given the exact time they are to report for each event. Unforeseen circumstances from the judges, WPFG staff, or the hotel may alter the time schedules. Teams should be prepared to accommodate minor changes in the times of their performances.
7. Teams shall move efficiently and in a timely manner between tasks on the competition course. Teams will be issued a time to report to each event. Should a team be more than 2 minutes late for their event arrival time, the score for that event may be impacted. Modifications to this requirement will be evaluated on a case by case basis and the decision of the judges is final.
8. Teams using rifles for the competition must notify the Officials in advance and render them safe to the satisfaction of the Lead Judge. Absolutely no blank or live ammunition shall be brought into the competition for any reason.

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9. Teams are not allowed to utilize in any fashion or release any animal or fowl during any phase of the competition.
10. Teams must bring with them the necessary equipment needed to perform in their events.
  - Posting of the Colors: Flag Poles, Harnesses, Flag Stands, Rifles or Swords or Axes

The Fairfax County Police Ceremonial Honor Guard Team will have additional flags, harnesses, flag stands and rifles that teams may utilize for the competition if they are unable to bring their own.

- Exhibition/Demonstration: all necessary equipment for your particular event, to include items you may require for any music montage which may be part of your performance (i.e. bagpipes or pre-recorded music on a data storage device such as a USB flash drive, thumb drive, or memory stick).

All pre-recorded music must be on a data storage device such as a USB flash drive, thumb drive, or memory stick. If you are unable to provide the music on a data storage device such as a USB flash drive, thumb drive, or memory stick, we must be notified ahead of time so we may assist by either transferring the music to a another storage device or obtaining the necessary media needed to play the music. In the event we are not provided enough time to transfer the music, are unable to transfer the music or unable to obtain the necessary media to play the music, teams must be prepared to perform without the music.

11. During active judging and competition, the only teams allowed in the competition area are those who have been officially permitted to prepare and present their team for competition. Once a team has completed their competition, they will be allowed in the area to collect their gear. Once a team has collected their gear, they are to vacate the competition area to allow more room for teams preparing to compete. Once a team has reported for judging, all members must remain on the competition course until their performance is completed. Failure to do so, without prior approval from the Lead Judge, could lead to disqualification from the competition.
12. All team members shall display professionalism and good sportsmanship throughout the competition and all participants are encouraged to maintain a high level of esprit de corps.

### Events

The Honor Guard competition is comprised of three separate events:

**1) Color Guard - Posting of the Colors:** The first event will be the Posting of the Colors. The team shall consist of a minimum of 5 team members. At the designated scheduled time, the Team Leader/Commander

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shall lead his/her team, along with the necessary equipment, to the designated starting position for the Color Guard – Posting of the Colors. The flag stands will be placed in designated positions in front of the judges and the team will prepare to start the competition. Once the judges give the signal to begin, the Color Guard will perform the task in the following sequence:

- 1) The Team Leader/Commander shall, with the use of either audible or silent commands, march the Color Guard team to a predetermined and clearly marked location to post the Colors.
- 2) Posting of the Colors may be done as elaborately or as simply as the team wishes, but shall accomplish placing the national, and if applicable, state, province, agency, or unit flags in fixed holders and the bearer(s) returning to the rank. Proper flag etiquette will be observed throughout this task.
- 3) After posting the Colors, the team will march to the clearly marked exit point, thereby completing the team's performance of the Posting of the Colors.

Once the Team Leader/Commander dismisses his/her team, the team will then prepare for the Team Inspection Drill Event. The team shall arrive at the Team Inspection Drill Event, at their assigned time.

**2) Team Inspection Drill:** All team members, including musicians (i.e. bagpipers, vocalists) utilized in the Exhibition / Demonstration Event shall be present for and participate in the Team Inspection Drill. Prior to their designated time for Team Inspection, teams will have an opportunity to remove flag harnesses and to ground their rifles, swords or axe's. The team will assemble on a "ready line" before moving to the Inspection Line. While on the ready line, members of the team may silently make one last inspection of their uniforms and equipment, to remove any lint or dust and to straighten creases and gig lines, etc. At the appointed time, the Team Leader/Commander shall move the team up to the Inspection Line and present the team for judging. The team shall fall-in at the position of attention and will be properly aligned and spaced at either normal or close interval for inspection. The team shall remain at attention until dismissed. The Team Leader/Commander will then take a position in front of the team and inform the judge that the team is ready for inspection. Teams will be under evaluation from the time the Team Leader/Commander initially takes a post in front of his/her team until the time the Lead Judge directs the Team Leader/Commander to dismiss his/her team. The Leader /Commander will then be inspected for neatness, cleanliness, and military bearing. The remaining team members will then be ready for inspection. The judges may decide to inspect all or part of the team and will be looking for conformity to the leader's uniform. Prior to the beginning of the competition, teams must notify the judges of any uniform variations within their team. Variations in uniform that will not warrant demerits are those that designate rank, different company patches, or any variations that the team has disclosed prior to competing. It should be noted that if a joint color guard team is assembled, members will be judged individually, thereby potentially necessitating more scrutiny and increasing the chance for penalties.

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Once the Team Leader/Commander has been inspected, the judges will notify him/her the Team Leader/Commander inspection has been completed. The Team Leader/Commander may then accompany the judges during the inspection of the remainder of the team. The Team Leader/Commander is not to make any comments to the judges, but is allowed to answer any questions the judges may have regarding their team.

When the inspection portion for each team is completed, the judge will instruct the Team Leader/Commander to take command of his/her team. Once the Team Leader/Commander takes command of his/her team, the Team Leader/Commander will move the team from the Team Inspection area and will prepare to complete the Exhibition/Demonstration Event. Team members will be provided direction to the pavilion, and should arrive at their designated time to the Exhibition/Demonstration Event prepared to compete. Teams that are utilizing music should arrive at the Exhibition/Demonstration Event prior to their designated time to ensure there is not an issue with the media portion of their performance.

**3) Exhibition / Demonstration Event:** The next portion of the competition is the Exhibition/Demonstration Event. This event will consist of a performance in which all team members must participate.

Time: The performance can be up to 8 minutes in length. Teams using less than 8 minutes will not be penalized; however, if a team goes over the time limit, they will receive demerits for going over the allowed time.

Exhibition Area: Teams will be provided an exhibition area and must stay within the exhibition area to perform all of their movements.

Firearms: There will be no discharge of any firearm. Spinning and tossing of the rifles is allowed.

Music: Musicians (i.e. bagpipes, vocalists) utilized for this event will be considered part of the team and must have participated in the Team Inspection Event and adhere to the rules that they must be current, former or retired Law Enforcement Officers, Correction Officers or Fire Rescue Officers. Operational support for sound controlling equipment (i.e. pre-recorded music) will be allowed and will not be considered part of the team; however, the music must be placed on a data storage device such as a USB flash drive, thumb drive, or memory stick

Other equipment: Teams need to provide any special equipment that will be used in this event.

The team will be prepared to start at their designated time. The event will begin once the Team Leader/Commander has his/her team assembled and gives an audible command to the judges that the team is ready within reasonable time, or when the judge gives a time warning to begin due to time restraints.

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Teams should take into consideration the positive impact their performance would have on the law enforcement or public safety image, patriotism, honor and the memorializing of these professions. This event is an opportunity for pomp and circumstance, snap and flare as it is viewed by the public. It is a perfect time to show honor in remembrance of fallen law enforcement or fire personnel.

Teams will be graded based solely on the judge's discretion taking into account the following:

- Team Uniformity
- Choreography
- Difficulty
- General Protocol
- Patriotism
- Exceeding 8 minutes will cause the team to receive demerits.

**Team leaders must be prepared to give a quick overview of their routine to the judges before the performance to notify them of special movements, formations and directions of most movements.**

## **Scoring and Awards**

Demerit Accounting System: The competition will be judged using the Demerit Accounting System. Each team will start with a perfect score and points will be deducted for deficiencies and errors. Depending on the severity of the deficiency and/or error, a demerit or a fraction of a demerit will be issued during all three phases of the competition.

The Honor Guard teams will be judged in the following areas:

- Team uniformity and precision
- Team and individual neatness
- Cleanliness
- Military bearing
- Complexity and/or difficulty of the maneuvers needed to accomplish the events.

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On the second day of the competition, after all teams have completed their events, and the scores have been tabulated, medals will then be presented. 1<sup>st</sup> Place Medals will be awarded to the teams for the following events:

- Honor Guard team with the highest score in the Posting of the Colors
- Honor Guard team with the highest score in the Team Inspection
- Honor Guard team with the highest score in the Exhibition/Demonstration

In addition, medals will also be awarded to the top three highest overall scoring Honor Guard teams. The Overall Team Winner is the team scoring the highest aggregate score of the 3 events.

- Honor Guard team with the highest overall score - 1<sup>st</sup> Place Medals
- Honor Guard team with the second highest overall score – 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Medals
- Honor Guard team with the third highest overall score – 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Medals
- In the event of a tie, the team judged to have the most complex and or difficult performance shall be declared the winner. All teams will be given a copy of their team's score sheets following the awards presentation. Once tabulated, the judges' decisions are final.