



CITY OF MENIFEE

SUBJECT: Military Banner Program

MEETING DATE: March 17, 2025

TO: Veterans and Military Families Advisory Committee

PREPARED BY: Mandy Stephens, Management Analyst

REVIEWED BY: Gabbi Cao, Community Services Supervisor

APPROVED BY: Mariana Mitchell, Community Services Manager

RECOMMENDED ACTION

1. Review and discuss the existing Military Banner Program and provide feedback for further Council consideration.

DISCUSSION

In 2012, the Military Banner Program ("Program") was established to recognize and celebrate Menifee residents or their immediate family members who served or are currently serving in the United States Armed Forces. Military banners are displayed on light poles located in high-visibility travel corridors in the City, with an average of 50 banners installed annually. Menifee is home to over 8,000 veterans, as well as many active-duty service members, which results in a high volume of applications for the Military Banner Program. Unlike similar programs in neighboring cities such as Murrieta, Temecula, and Lake Elsinore, Menifee's program honors both active-duty and veteran service members. With the ability to display over 300 banners across all four districts, the program serves as a meaningful tribute to the city's strong military community.

Surrounding City Programs

The City of Murrieta has approximately 30 poles available for banner installations honoring both active duty and veteran service members, with installations occurring once a year. The banners are displayed for one year but are temporarily removed for holiday decorations from mid-November to January. Banners are displayed on Washington Avenue, between Kalmia Street and Ivy Street. A suggested application fee of \$25 is requested as a donation.

The City of Temecula has 33 poles for banner installations that honor active-duty service members. Banners are installed twice a year, with recipients being honored on Veterans Day. If banners are installed in May, they are displayed for six months; if installed in November, they are displayed for one year. Approximately four banners are taken down to make room for holiday

banners and are reinstalled in January. These banners can be found throughout Main Street in Old Town Temecula. There is no application fee for this program.

The City of Lake Elsinore can display around 50 banners for active-duty service members. These banners are displayed for two years, with one installation each year. Banners are displayed along Historic Downtown Main Street. There is a \$150 application fee.

City of Menifee Program

The approximate cost of a banner is \$270.00 (printing, installation, hardware, and removal), plus the cost of Program administration. With the application fee set at \$135, the cost of each banner is shared between the City and the applicant.

Currently, there are approximately 250 banners installed throughout the city, with 50 available locations for new installations. The estimated cost to fill these remaining 50 locations is around \$13,500. On average, 50 new banners are installed each year. The maximum number of banners that can be installed at one time is 150, allowing for a rotation that replaces half of the banners every two years. The cost to install 150 banners at once is approximately \$40,500.

During the Council meeting on November 15, 2023, the Council reviewed and approved an update to the Program policy. This update included program enhancements such as introducing a commemorative banner, defined location parameters, and banner design modifications.

Program Details:

- Banner location parameters were defined to ensure they are placed in high-visibility areas in all four City Council districts, including Newport Road, Menifee Road, and the Sun City area on McCall Blvd., Sun City Blvd., and Cherry Hills Blvd.
- Applicants receive a smaller commemorative banner (approximately 11 x 17 inches) on either Memorial Day or Veterans Day.
- Banners are installed in May for Memorial Day and November for Veterans Day.
- Banners are installed for two years. Applicants may reapply as long as there is no waitlist. Every application is subject to the \$135 fee.
- The Veteran Banner Donation account has a balance of \$1,687.27. These funds can be used to offset costs for applicants under the following criteria:
 - Fallen Hero
 - Service member served in combat
 - Financial hardship (at the discretion of the City Manager or designee)
- The City has a contract with Dekra-Lite Industries, which prints, installs, and removes all banners.

Applicants have the option to request that the cost of the banner be covered by donation funds when they fill out their application. The City Manager or a designated representative will review this request to determine if it meets the necessary criteria and confirm the availability of funding to support the request. Residents can contribute to the donation fund by mailing a check or visiting City Hall in person. Additionally, applicants can sponsor a service member by completing an application and paying the associated fee.

The Military Banner Program remains a popular way to honor the veterans in our community. With multiple locations available, we can efficiently manage the number of applications we receive. Additionally, the introduction of the commemorative banner has been a positive enhancement that has not resulted in an increase in applicants' fees, which have remained at \$135 since 2016.

At the February 5, 2025, Special City Council Meeting, the Council directed City staff to present the Military Banner Program to the Veterans and Military Families Advisory Committee for further review and discussion. The Committee will evaluate the program's structure and recent enhancements, with a particular focus on how it compares to similar programs in neighboring cities. This review will help ensure that Menifee's program remains aligned with best practices while continuing to effectively honor both active-duty service members and veterans. The Committee's insights will be shared with the City Council for consideration at a future meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no fiscal impact associated with the recommended action. However, any potential Program modifications will require a cost assessment for City Council consideration.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Military Banner Program Policy

CITY OF MENIFEE City Council Policy	Policy Number: CC-30 Approving Authority: City Council
Subject MILITARY BANNER PROGRAM POLICY	Effective Date: February 19, 2020 Last Modified: August 18, 2021 Last Modified: November 15, 2023

1. **SUMMARY**

The Military Banner Program was created to recognize and celebrate Meniffee residents or their immediate family members (legal guardian, spouse, mother, father, daughter, son, brother, sister, grandson, granddaughter) who have served or are currently serving in the United States Armed Forces. The display of the military banners will contribute to the community's quality of life which lends a special character to the City of Meniffee.

The Meniffee City Council has established the Military Banner Program to be administered by the City in accordance with the terms and provisions set forth in this program.

2. **DEFINITIONS**

For the purpose of this policy, the following phrases shall have the following definitions:

- A. "Active duty" means full-time duty in the United States Armed Forces (as stated in United States Code Title 38 – Veterans' Benefits, Section 101 (21) (A))
- B. "Reserve" means a member of a reserve component of one of the Armed Forces (as stated in United States Code Title 38 – Veterans' Benefits, Section 101 (26))
- C. "United States Armed Forces" means the United States Army, Marine Corps, Air Force, Navy, Coast Guard, Merchant Marines, Space Force, National Guard-Active Reserve, including the reserve components thereof (as stated in United States Code Title 38 – Veterans' Benefits, Section 101 (10))
- D. "Veteran" means a person who has served in the active military, naval, or air service, and who was discharged or released therefrom under conditions other than dishonorable (as stated in United States Code Title 38 – Veterans' Benefits, Section 101 (2))
- E. "Line of Duty" is An injury or disease incurred during active military, naval, or air service will be deemed to have been incurred in line of duty and not the result of the veteran's own misconduct when the person on whose account benefits are claimed was, at the time the injury was suffered or disease contracted, in active military, naval, or air service, whether on active duty or on authorized leave, unless such injury or disease was a result of the person's own willful misconduct or abuse of alcohol or drugs. Venereal disease shall not be presumed to be due to willful misconduct if the person in service complies with the regulations of the appropriate service department requiring the person to report and receive treatment for such disease. (As stated in United States Code Title 38 – Veterans' Benefits, Section 105 (a))

MILITARY BANNER PROGRAM POLICY

3. PURPOSE AND INTENT

In establishing this program, the City does not intend in any manner to create a public forum or other means by which noncommercial social, religious, or political messages may be conveyed, or by which public discourse, exchange of opinions, or discussion on issues of any nature may occur. The sole and limited purpose of the Military Banner Program is to recognize and honor the contribution of currently serving or active duty and veterans of the United States Armed Forces by permitting the display of banners containing the serviceperson's name, professional grade photo (if available), and service division. Consistent with the intent of the City, as expressed above, the City permits the sponsorship and display of the Armed Forces banners solely in accordance with the following policy:

4. BANNER CONTENT AND SPECIFICATIONS

- A. The text of a banner must list the name of the person and United States Armed Forces division. Refer to Exhibit 1 for banner designs. Design 2 is for servicemembers that died in the line of duty (as defined in paragraph 2. E.) This will be verified by DA form 2173 (Statement of Medical Examination and Duty Status).
- B. No advertisement or other commercial speech shall be permitted on Military Banner Program banners with the sole exception of non-profit agency sponsorship titles or non-profit agency sponsorship logos with City staff approval.

5. ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- A. Any person or organization can apply for a banner for a currently serving reserve or active duty serviceperson in the United States Armed Forces, or a veteran (an "honoree"). To be considered, the application must include a verification of the honoree's military status. This can be verified through the recognized Military Documents or Military Discharge Documents, such as orders, DD form 214, or military identification for currently serving reserve or active duty servicepersons (collectively, "verification documents").
- B. The honoree must be a resident of the City of Menifee or an immediate family member (legal guardian, spouse, mother, father, daughter, son, brother, sister, grandson, granddaughter) of a current City of Menifee resident. Residency must be verified with a recent utility bill, driver's license, or other form of identification listing a current Menifee address as deemed appropriate by City of Menifee staff.

6. DISPLAY TERM

- A. The banner will be displayed for a minimum of twelve (12) months and a maximum of twenty-four (24) months. City of Menifee staff will exercise discretion as to when it is appropriate to display the banners and for what duration depending on demand and number of participants.
- B. The banner shall be removed if:
 - i. the banner becomes damaged due to wind, age, vandalism, or other reasons assolely determined by the City;
 - ii. the honoree no longer meets the eligibility criteria;
 - iii. the Military Banner Program is discontinued for any reason at the discretion of the

MILITARY BANNER PROGRAM POLICY

City Council;

- iv. all banner locations are filled, in which case the City shall have the right to replace banners annually, thereby allowing those interested in the program to participate.

7. PROCESS AND REQUIREMENTS

- A. Applications will be submitted to the City of Menifee by using the form provided by the City, and shall include the name of the proposed honoree, branch of service, professional grade photo (if available), contact information of applicant, and a copy of a form of identification in order to verify City of Menifee residency of either the honoree or the honoree's immediate family member(s).

The photograph submitted must be of professional grade and have a minimum of 5"x7" dimensions, be either in color or black and white, be of the proposed honoree in uniform, and have a resolution of 300 dpi or higher if submitted electronically. If a photograph is not available, banners can be prepared without the honoree's picture (see Exhibit 1).

- B. Verification documents for the proposed honoree must also be submitted or verified in person. Not providing the accepted forms of verification documents will result in the rejection of the application.
- C. Applications must include payment for the cost of the banner, including installation and removal, paid in full at the time of submittal. If an application is wait-listed, the payment will be requested once a location becomes available and the application is ready to be processed. If an application is deemed ineligible, then the cost will be refunded to the applicant following the City of Menifee's Finance Department's normal reimbursement process and timeframe.

The cost per application is currently \$135, which covers a portion of the costs of application processing, banner design and fabrication, and the installation and removal of the banner. This cost includes a commemorative banner presented to Program participants at City Hall or the City's Veterans Day events. If the honoree died in the line of duty the banner may be presented to a family member at the City's Memorial Day event. The City reserves the right to change the application fee without prior notice, and the City Council delegates authority to the City Manager to make such adjustments without further City Council action so long as the adjustment is less than the current full cost of each banner application. Acceptable forms of payment are limited to the methods of payment allowed by the City of Menifee's Finance Department.

- D. Applications may be submitted and will be processed on an on-going basis; however, banners will be installed twice each fiscal year (July 1 - June 30), depending on pole availability. Applications must be completed and submitted by February 15 to have a banner placed in time for Memorial Day. Applicants who would like their banner installed by Veteran's Day must submit prior to August 15.

The City has limited space for the placement of banners and space is assigned to approved applications on a first-come, first-served basis. Due to space limitations, it is possible that not all approved applications will be assigned a space. Approved applications that are not assigned a space at the time of application approval shall be placed on a waiting list to be processed for an assigned space as it becomes available.

MILITARY BANNER PROGRAM POLICY

- E. Only one banner per honoree is allowed. The lettering of the name and branch of the serviceperson will be sized to fit the personalization area on the banner. Spelling of the name will be taken directly from the application.
- F. Once the application has been processed, the City will create the banner with a manufacturing company selected on the City's staff sole discretion. Once approved, applicants will be notified of approval and banner location.
- G. The number of, and specific banner locations shall be determined solely by the City and may be revised without prior notice. An applicant may not pre-select a specific location for the banner. Banner placement is determined by City staff and is currently based on the availability of the poles. If the City in its discretion elects to relocate a banner at the request of an applicant, all costs of relocation will be the sole responsibility of the applicant and shall be paid in full before the relocation occurs.
- H. Banners will be placed on poles in accordance with the Military Banner Location Map (Exhibit 2) which will include the Sun City area (McCall Blvd, Sun City Blvd, Cherry Hills Blvd.), Newport Road and Menifee Road. Banners can be placed in any of these locations based upon preference and availability regardless of active duty or veteran status.
- I. The City is responsible for the removal of banners that are due for removal, or are damaged or destroyed due to age, vandalism, accidents, or any acts of nature, including high winds, and excluding normal warranty repairs. The City is not responsible for maintaining or repairing banners, or for replacing banners that are lost, stolen, damaged, or destroyed due to age, vandalism, accidents, or any acts of nature, including high winds, aside from current normal warranty repairs. Applicants shall either pay for the cost of maintenance or replacement and repair for the banner, or the banner (if in disrepair) shall be removed.
- J. Applicants shall have no right of access to installed banners but may request removal of the installed banner for their specified honoree. Once a banner is removed following such a request, the applicant shall have no further rights pursuant to this policy.
- K. Photographs submitted with the Military Banner Program application shall become property of the City of Menifee. Photographs with names and military branches may be posted on the City's website and may be used for other military-related events, unless otherwise requested in writing by the applicant or honoree.
- L. The right to have a banner displayed pursuant to this policy may not be transferred or assigned.
- M. Once a banner is removed, applicants may re-apply for a new banner after a waiting period of 12 months to allow for other participants; however, City staff may use discretion on the waiting period should no other banner(s) be waitlisted. If, after the waiting period, an additional banner for an honoree is approved, the banner will be placed in accordance with paragraph VII (7), above; there is no guarantee that the additional banner will be placed at the same location as the original banner.
- N. The City of Menifee reserves the right to revise this policy, discontinue the Military Banner Program and/or revise applicable fees without prior notice. While damaged

MILITARY BANNER PROGRAM POLICY

and/or removed banners will not be retained or returned, participants will receive a commemorative banner.

8. SPONSORSHIP & CRITERIA FOR DONATION USE

- A. The City can accept donations, per the City's donation policy, on an on-going basis to support the Military Banner Program. Any person or organization can be a sponsor of a banner or the program. To make donations in support of the program, checks can be made payable to **City of Menifee**; all donations can be mailed to or dropped off at:

City of Menifee
Attn: Military Banner Donations29844
Haun Road
Menifee, CA 92586

- B. Donation funds, if available and on a first come-first use basis, may be utilized upon request to fund a Military Banner if the service member is a current City of Menifee resident, or immediate family member of a current City of Menifee resident, and one or more of the following criteria is met:

- i. Fallen Hero (priority given to Gold Star Families)
- ii. Service member served in combat; or
- iii. Financial hardship (at the discretion of the City Manager or designee)

If at the time of the donation, a clear name is not submitted for the banner(s) with the donation(s) made, then the City of Menifee holds the authority and reserves the right to direct how, who, where, and when the banner(s) are created, displayed or donated to, based on criteria within the banner donation policy. Other special circumstances will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis and will be at the discretion of the City Manager or designee.

9. INDEMNIFICATION AND HOLD HARMLESS

The application form for the placement of banners shall require that each banner applicant indemnify and hold the City of Menifee, and each of its elected officials, officers, employees, agents, and volunteers free and harmless with respect to any and all liabilities, claims, lawsuits and/or damages of any nature whatsoever that allegedly arise from or are connected to the approval of the applicant's banner application, including the display of, and/or damage to or loss of any banner or banners.

MILITARY BANNER PROGRAM POLICY

Revision History

Revision No.	Date Approved	Approved By:	Comments
0	February 19, 2020	City Council	Original Policy
1	August 18, 2021	City Council	Amended Donations, Section 8

Approved:

Bill Zimmerman, MayorAPRIL 17, 2024

Date

Exhibit 1 - Banner Designs

Sample design with photo provided



Sample design with no photo provided





City of Meniffee Military Banner Program Proposed Program Map

