

The Canadian Honours System and the EMS Exemplary Service Medal

Congratulations on receipt of the Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal! You may have questions about when and how to wear the Medal, or about mounting and accessories, such as undress ribbons. The following information is provided for your interest and reference.



The Canadian Honours System

Since the early days of civilization, people have honoured those whose talents, values, or actions benefit the community. In Greek and Roman times, laurel leaves were conferred on outstanding citizens. In the medieval ages, special decorations marked the shields of knights as a display of the honours they had received.

In Canada today, granting honours is a gracious, tangible, and lasting way to pay tribute to people whose achievements are exceptional, have performed outstanding acts of bravery, or who have benefited Canada or humanity in general.

Canada has developed an honours system

comprised of orders, decorations, medals, armorial bearings and other heraldic devices. Your Medal has been presented to honour your service to Canadians. It is one of the first medals in the world to recognize Emergency Medical Services.

Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II is the source of all official honours in Canada. As the Sovereign, only she may create an order, decoration, or medal on behalf of Canada. She does so with the recommendations of the Canadian Government by Letters Patent under her signature and seal. Once an honour is created, the Governor General of Canada exercises all powers of the Sovereign in respect to it, under advisement from the Privy Council. Established Canadian honours are managed by the Chancellery of Government House, which is part of the Office of the Governor General.

Post-Nominals

Post-nominals are letters following the name of individuals in recognition of specific titles, certain awards and educational accomplishments (e.g. PhD, EMT-P, RN, BSc, CD, etc.).

Please note there are no post-nominals granted to identify recipients of Exemplary Service Medals.

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Occasions for Wear

Medals are normally worn on a dress uniform or civilian formal wear for these occasions:

- Funerals and memorial services
- Remembrance Day ceremonies
- Parades
- Investitures (awards ceremonies)
- Formal Gala/Ball
- Other commemorative or special occasions when requested

Order of Dress

Invitations to formal gatherings or service functions may address the wearing of honours in some fashion. This is often referred to as the “Order of Dress”. For example, the request may be listed on an invitation as: “Dress Uniform with Decorations”. This means wearing of medals is encouraged at the event. There are many types of Orders of Dress and it is advisable to check with the host prior to the event if you are unsure of what to wear or if medals are to be worn.

Wearing of Medals

All medals in the Canadian Honours System are worn over the left breast. The Medal is centred on the pocket and the pins are attached so the top of the ribbon is 1 cm above the pocket (pictured below). Multiple medals shall be worn in the Order of Precedence established by the Chancellery.

You may choose to leave your Medal mounted as it is. This is known as Swing Mounted, where the ribbon is loose and the medal also hangs loose (swings). If you have multiple medals or prefer a more formal look, you may choose to have it Court Mounted (pictured right). This means the ribbons and medals are mounted by a vendor onto a firm panel, with the lower edge of the panel in line with the centre of the medal. The medals are then stitched to the panel to prevent swinging. Court Mounting provides a professional, formal look and prevents multiple medals from clinking against each other and becoming damaged.

A list of vendors has been provided for your use if desired (see Appendix A). For more information about wearing of insignia, please download the *The Canadian Honours System: Guide for the Wearing of Orders, Decorations & Medals*, (2013) available from www.qg.ca > ‘Honours’ > ‘Wearing of insignia’.



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Undress Ribbons



Undress Ribbons are small ribbon bars identifying the wearer as a recipient of that Medal. They are worn on the duty uniform as part of daily wear and on the dress uniform or civilian formal wear on occasions not requiring wearing of full medals. Undress Ribbons are worn on stiffeners and pinned centred immediately above the left breast pocket.

Additional Service Bars

A person who has previously received the Medal is eligible to be awarded a Bar in respect of each additional ten year period of service with Emergency Medical Services. This is providing that service is of such a high standard as to merit official recognition. Nominations to receive 30 and 40-year service bars may be submitted to the Alberta Awards Committee.



More Information

More information about the Canadian Honours System can be found at the website for the Governor General of Canada www.gg.ca. Under the 'Honours' tab you will find links related to the Order of Precedence and wearing of insignia.

You may also contact the Alberta EMS Awards Committee in writing:

Alberta EMS Awards Committee
c/o Alberta College of Paramedics
#220, 2755 Broadmoor Boulevard
Sherwood Park, AB
T8H 2W7

References

1. Website of the Governor General of Canada www.gg.ca > Honours
2. *The Canadian Honours System: Guide for the Wearing of Orders, Decorations & Medals*, (2013) retrieved from www.gg.ca > 'Honours' > 'Wearing of insignia'

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APPENDIX A

LIST OF VENDORS

The list of vendors specializing in care and mounting of insignia is provided for your convenience. This list is not exhaustive and shall not be considered an endorsement or guarantee of services. Additional vendors may be located with an internet search for “medal mounting, Alberta”.

1. Defence Medals (Sherwood Park, AB)
<http://www.defencemedals.ca/>
2. Neathway Medal Mounting (Redwater, AB)
Jim Neathway
www.neathwaymedalmounting.ca/
neathway@telusplanet.net
3. Maple Leaf Medals (Calgary, AB)
<http://www.mapleleafcourtmounting.com/>
mapleleafmedals@gmail.com
4. William Scully Ltd. (Montreal, QC)
www.williamscully.ca
5. Joe Drouin Enterprises Ltd. (Gatineau, QC)
www.joedrouin.com



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