

## The Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance of the United States is an expression of loyalty to the federal flag and the republic of the United States of America, originally composed by Francis Bellamy in 1892 and formally adopted by Congress as the pledge in 1942.<sup>[1]</sup> The official name of *The Pledge of Allegiance* was adopted in 1945. The last change in language came on Flag Day 1954 when the words "under God" were added.<sup>[2]</sup>

Congressional sessions open with the recital of the Pledge, as do many government meetings at local levels, and meetings held by many private organizations. It is also commonly recited in school at the beginning of every school day, although the Supreme Court has ruled on several occasions that students cannot be compelled to recite the Pledge, nor can they be punished for not doing so.

According to the United States Flag Code, the Pledge of Allegiance reads:<sup>[3]</sup>

*I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one Nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.*

According to the Flag Code, the Pledge "should be rendered by standing at attention facing the flag with the right hand over the heart. When not in uniform men should remove any non-religious headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart. Persons in uniform should remain silent, face the flag, and render the military salute