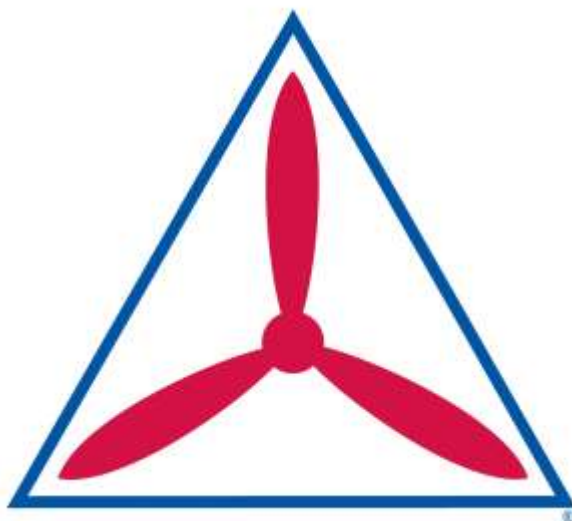


# Civil Air Patrol Heraldry Guide



CIVIL AIR PATROL NATIONAL HISTORY PROGRAM  
Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama

**1. Purpose of Civil Air Patrol Heraldry.** Organizations need visible, enduring symbols in the form of emblems to promote esprit de corps, morale, and a sense of heritage. CAP heraldry meets this need when emblems are designed to uniform standards and are not readily changed.

**2. Eligibility for Official Emblems and Mottos.** Chartered organizations as defined in CAPR 20-3, [Charters and Other Organization Actions](#), may have emblems and mottos. If a unit uses or displays an emblem in any format or manner, it must be a design approved by the local wing headquarters (group level and below) or National Headquarters (wing level and above). Unit mottos or slogans must also be approved by local wing headquarters. Wings are not authorized mottos on emblems.

**3. Standardized Heraldry for Units.** National, region, wing, and group emblems are displayed on shields ([see figure 1](#)). Regions and wings will generally have their name (“Southeast Region” or “Maine Wing”) displayed in the scroll beneath the shield. The chosen scroll wording must be depicted consistently in all reproductions of the emblem. Text on the scroll may not exceed 36 characters and spaces.

**4. Standardized Heraldry for Units.** Squadrons and flight emblems are displayed on discs ([see figure 2](#)).

4.1. A unit with a motto must have two scrolls. Display the unit's motto on a scroll above the disc and the unit's name in a scroll below the disc.

4.2. If a unit has no motto, display the unit's name in a single scroll below the disc.

4.3. Unit names and mottos may not exceed 30 characters and spaces. Scrolls are generally 90, 120, or 150 degree arcs to accommodate the characters.

## **5. Heraldic Standards.**

5.1. Emblem designs and mottos must reflect favorably on the Civil Air Patrol and the United States Air Force; be original, distinctive, dignified, and in good taste; and be non-controversial.

5.2. Organizations desiring an emblem or that wish to inquire about an approved emblem, should contact their wing history office. Seeking assistance early will help avoid delays.

5.3. Design Element Instructions. Keep in mind the purpose of Air Force heraldry as stated in the opening paragraph:

5.3.1. Use accepted heraldic symbols or stylized elements.

5.3.2. Keep emblem design uncluttered and as simple as possible. A simple, clean design is much easier to reproduce as a patch, letterhead, or other rendition.

5.3.3. All symbols and elements must be placed within the parameters of the disc or shield.

5.3.4. Do not exceed three elements (see definition of element in attachment 1).

5.3.5. Do not include symbols or caricatures associated with foreign nations, extremist groups, games of chance, or if a globe element depicts landmasses, the landmasses must be unrecognizable unless North America is prominently displayed at center; a globe element may not depict both gridlines and landmasses.

5.3.6. Do not include emblems that represent instruments of war (i.e., rockets, missiles, attack or fighter aircraft, battle-axes, maces, arrows, spears, knives, swords, suits or parts of armor, eagles in attack mode, etc.)

5.3.7. Do not depict numbers (exception: group emblems), letters, words, codes, symbols of a morbid nature, gambling devices, cartoon-like characters, un-assigned aircraft (CAP

Aircraft are permissible), or specific equipment. (Unless of historic significance to the unit.)

5.3.8. Do not violate trademark or copyright laws.

5.3.9. Do not include very small detail features and accent lines which would be difficult to reproduce or embroider on small emblem reproductions.

5.3.10. Face horizontal elements to the bearer's right side (dexter), which in heraldry is the position of honor (see figures 1 and 2).

5.3.11. Do not duplicate existing insignia of past or present military units or organizations.

5.4. A motto should be a simple phrase of meaningful words reflecting the vision or heritage of the organization. A unit may adopt a nickname as a motto, if in good taste.

5.4.1. Do not use functional words that repeat the organization's designation, e.g., "Cadet" in motto of a cadet squadron.

5.4.2. Do not use punctuation such as dashes, dots, commas, explanation marks or quotation marks in the motto. Apostrophes for possessive words are permitted.

5.4.3. Do not use acronyms, abbreviations, or numerals.

5.4.4. Mottos in English are preferred, but if in a foreign language, provide an English translation in the request for approval. The originating organization is solely and completely responsible for the accuracy of the translation.

5.5. Colors:

5.5.1. Do not use metallic colors, glitz, highlights, dilution, shading, or other special effects.

5.5.2. Do not use more than six colors; black and white included.

5.5.3. Use the official Civil Air Patrol colors (whenever possible): Ultramarine blue, pimento red, Air Force yellow and silver gray (see CAPR 900-2).

5.5.4. Use Air Force yellow on the border of a shield.

5.5.5. Scrolls will incorporate a white field (background), edged in Air Force yellow, with reflex blue lettering.

5.5.6. Unit scrolls may be any color, as long as the overall design has six or fewer colors and the border of the disc and scroll are the same color as the lettering.

5.6. For additional guidance on emblem submission, designs, and colors, see [AFI 84-105](#), Chapter 3, or contact your wing historian, region historian, National Historian or Director, Office of CAP Heraldry. Submissions regarding wing, region, or National Cadet Activity insignia, those will be sent to the National Uniform Committee for review and approval.

## **6. Processing Heraldry Requests. (See figure 4.)**

6.1 When an emblem is considered for use as a patch on the uniform, commanders will ensure that approval authority and change procedures for organizational patches at all echelons are submitted and reviewed in accordance with instructions found in CAPM 39-1 CAP Uniform Manual. Proposed higher-level organizational emblems and patches, as defined by CAPM 39-1, will normally be evaluated for consistency with these guidelines by the CAP Heraldry Advisor as a component of the National Uniform Committee review.

6.2 Unit commanders submit requests by e-mail through CAP history channels (wing/region/National Historian) for wing commander final approval of heraldry actions involving emblems, or mottoes. A request for an emblem or to modify an approved emblem must include the following:

6.2.1 A letter signed by the unit commander explaining (or justifying) the requested action(s), including what is to appear in the scroll(s). Also include an attachment to the letter explaining the symbolism of the new emblem. (See sample at attachment 1 or at <http://www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil/Heraldry/AirForce/AirForceHeraldry.aspx>).

6.2.2 For a new unit, or a unit activating again, a copy of the charter documentation is required. Contact your wing historian, or a wing historian within your region, for assistance.

6.2.3 A color representation of the design proposal in .jpg or other suitable electronic format rendered. The scroll(s) need not be filled in. In lieu of submitting a design proposal, the unit may instead request design assistance from the Director, Office of CAP Heraldry in the development of sketch options for the commander's review and acceptance based on mission and functional statements (to be included with the request letter).

6.2.4 A statement of significance of the elements and colors in the design proposal.

6.2.5 The unit correspondence forwarding the proposal must name a point of contact (name, phone number, e-mail address and/or fax number) authorized to approve minor changes during emblem processing.

6.3 Wing Historian, National Historian or Director, Office of CAP Heraldry, as appropriate, should review emblem requests for compliance with this regulation, endorse subordinate units' submissions, and indicate as such in a formal cover letter or e-mail for official submission to the appropriate wing commander.

6.4 Emblem proposal packages should be devoid of extraneous materials (i.e., duplicate copies of the design proposal, internal command staff summary sheets, unit's lineage and honors history, etc.).

6.5 When submitted by e-mail to wing historian/National Historian, enter a clear title in the subject of the message, e.g., Emblem Request Package for XXXXXX Squadron.

6.6 Units must receive the official wing commander approved emblem package before use of emblem. Request of a patch prototype for a quality review prior to reproduction is encouraged.

6.7 Do not revise or replace an approved emblem that meets current standards (reorganizations, redesignations, changes in station and other such changes, do not justify changing an approved emblem). The wing commander and National Headquarters, Civil Air Patrol may approve changes to an approved emblem when the emblem violates the standards defined in this document. A unit with an approved emblem that falls into this category may have the emblem modified to meet the current heraldic standards. To maintain the lineage and tradition of the organization, design elements and colors should be preserved as closely as possible to the previous emblem; no new design elements or colors should be introduced.

6.8 A unit that has had more than one emblem in the course of its history may return to its first emblem (i.e., its historical emblem).

6.8.1 Return to the historical emblem must be endorsed by the wing historian and the wing commander.

6.8.2 Do not change elements of the historical emblem except to comply with this regulation.

6.8.3 Place the historical emblem within the parameters of a shield or disc as appropriate.

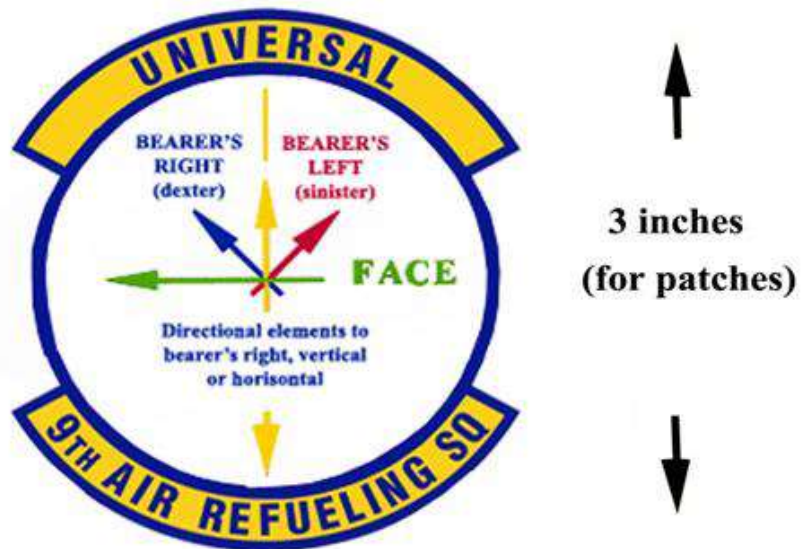
6.9 Once an emblem is approved, a final product should be sent to the Wing Historian and the CAP National Curator to be placed in historical files for future use.

Figure 1. Shield Design Format and Example of Emblem for Groups and Above (All Flag Bearing Organizations).



**Note: element faces bearer's right**

Figure 2. Disc Design Format and Sample Emblem for Squadrons and Equivalents.



For a unit's scroll (s), use any color as long as the overall design has six or fewer colors and the border of the disc and scroll (s) are the same color as the letters on the scroll.



Sample - actual size



**Figure 3. Description/Symbolism Emblem Example.**

**Emblem**



**Symbolism**

In homage to the former Montana Wing emblem, the new emblem has maintained the exact same shades of blue and yellow as the background and border colors respectively. The triangle and propeller is taken from the pilot wings prominently displayed on the former emblem. The mountains on the left of the seal and flat ground on the right side of the seal representing the mountains in the West of the state and the plains in the East. The Missouri river, which runs throughout the state, is depicted in the center, coming towards the viewer. Finally, as Montana is known as “Big Sky Country,” there are stars in the sky: the golden star representing Montana Wing, and the four white stars representing the four other wings in Rocky Mountain Region.

**Designer(s)**

Col Nolan Teel, Lt Col Al Nash, Ch (Lt Col) John Reutemann

For more examples of symbolism, please go to:

<http://www.tioh.hqda.pentagon.mil/Heraldry/AirForce/AirForceHeraldry.aspx>



**Figure 4. Flow Chart for Emblems for Units Below Wing Level.**

