

MILITARY SALUTE FOR THE FLAG DURING THE NATIONAL ANTHEM BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES NOT IN UNIFORM AND BY VETERANS.

Traditionally, members of the nation's veteran's service organizations have rendered the hand-salute during the national anthem and at events involving the national flag only while wearing their organization's official head-gear.

The National Defense Authorization Act of 2008 contained an amendment to allow un-uniformed service members, military retirees, and veterans to render a hand salute during the hoisting, lowering, or passing of the U.S. flag.

A later amendment further authorized hand-salutes during the national anthem by veterans and out-of-uniform military personnel. This was included in the Defense Authorization Act of 2009, which President Bush signed on Oct. 14, 2008.

Here is the actual text from the law:

SEC. 595. MILITARY SALUTE FOR THE FLAG DURING THE NATIONAL ANTHEM BY MEMBERS OF THE ARMED FORCES NOT IN UNIFORM AND BY VETERANS.

Section 301(b) (1) of title 36, United States Code, is amended by striking subparagraphs (A) through (C) and inserting the following new subparagraphs:

(A) Individuals in uniform should give the military salute at the first note of the anthem and maintain that position until the last note;

(B) Members of the Armed Forces and veterans who are present but not in uniform may render the military salute in the manner provided for individuals in uniform; and

(C) All other persons present should face the flag and stand at attention with their right hand over the heart, and men not in uniform, if applicable, should remove their headdress with their right hand and hold it at the left shoulder, the hand being over the heart;

Note: Part (C) applies to those not in the military and non-veterans. The phrase "men not in uniform" refers to civil service uniforms like police, fire fighters, and letter carriers - non-veteran civil servants who might normally render a salute while in uniform.