

REGULATIONS
ON THE USE OF THE EMBLEM OF THE RED CROSS,
OF THE RED CRESCENT, AND OF THE RED LION
AND SUN BY THE NATIONAL SOCIETIES

*Adopted by the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross
in Vienna, 1965*¹

Preamble

In its 1949 version, the First Geneva Convention for the amelioration of the condition of the wounded in armies in the field, distinguishes for the first time in its article 44 between the two different uses of the red cross emblem. On the one hand is the *protective* sign, which is the visible manifestation of the protection conferred by the Convention on certain persons and objects, essentially those which belong to the Army Medical Service, and, on the other hand, there is the purely *indicatory* sign, which indicates that a person or an object is connected with the National Society, but without the protection of the Convention. Article 44 also defines in a general manner the legitimate uses of the emblem in its two meanings.

The present regulations define the various methods of employment of the sign by the National Societies and their members, in the light of the provisions of international law and also of the essential rules of the institution. They start with several general principles which should enable cases which have not been expressly foreseen to be resolved.

¹ In its Resolution No. XXXII, the XXth International Conference of the Red Cross requested the ICRC to publish the text of this regulation, which thus became official. We now do so in discharge of that mandate.

PRINCIPLES

1. The signs of the red cross, of the red crescent and of the red lion and sun ¹ on a white ground are essentially meant to protect, in times of conflict, persons, buildings, establishments, vehicles and material dependent on the Army Medical Service. In this case, they will always be of the largest possible size in relation to the object to be covered, so that they may be plainly visible, especially to aircraft, and can be displayed on the roofs of buildings, as well as worn on armlets.

The National Societies do not have an ex-officio right to the protective emblem ². In principle, only persons, buildings, vehicles and equipment placed by them at the disposal of the Army Medical Service in time of war can cover themselves with this emblem according to directives laid down by the military authorities.

2. National Societies can freely use the red cross emblem in time of peace in accordance with national legislation. In time of war, they can continue to use the sign, but in conditions such that persons and objects upon which it figures do not appear as persons or objects protected by the Convention. The sign, in particular, should be of relatively small dimensions and cannot be affixed on an armlet or on a roof of a building.

In order to avoid having to alter signs already thus in use, so as to prevent any misunderstanding and to accustom their members to the correct use of the emblem, National Societies are invited only to employ for their activities in time of peace signs already complying with the requisite conditions, as above, in time of war. The emblem will therefore always be of small dimensions in relation to the object to be designated. It will not appear on a roof. The wearing of the red cross armlet, which is exclusively a "protective" sign, is inadvisable.

3. National Societies cannot carry out their activities under the cover of the emblem unless these are "in conformity with the

¹ For simplification, mention will henceforth only be made of the red cross, but it goes without saying that all that will be said about it applies equally to the red crescent and the red lion and sun.

² The International Red Cross organizations and their duly authorized personnel have the right to make use of the emblem "at all times", by virtue of article 44, paragraph 3.

principles laid down by the International Red Cross Conferences ". These principles give to the institution its aims and its *raison d'être* and are the basis for its specific action; voluntary assistance to the suffering, to the direct and indirect victims of conflicts, and of national and social disasters.

National Societies will therefore refrain, as a general rule, from displaying the red cross emblem whilst carrying out activities which do not fully comply with these principles and which only have a most tenuous connection with their proper duties and essential mission: e.g. work of a patriotic nature, the organization of welfare services for certain categories of civilians or military personnel, the teaching of sport or domestic economy, activities for gainful ends, etc...

4. The "protective" sign when displayed shall be in its original form without alteration or addition. The cross known as the Greek cross with four equal limbs, formed of one vertical and one horizontal arm intersecting in the centre, and not touching the edges of the flag or shield should preferably be used; there is no limit to the length and the width of these limbs. Whilst the shade of red is not prescribed, the background, on the other hand, will always be white. There is no limit either on the dimensions, the form or the direction of the crescent.

5. The "indicatory" sign will as far as possible be framed by or under-inscribed with the Society's name or initials; no drawing, emblem or inscription being displayed on the cross or the crescent itself. The National Society can, if it so desires, decide the dimensions and the proportions of the emblem used in each case.

6. The National Society decides under what conditions its emblem may be used.

No person shall wear the Society's emblem under any form whatsoever without being the holder of a relevant document: membership card, duty order, etc.

Similarly, when the Society has the emblem affixed on buildings, offices or vehicles which belong to it or which it uses, it will also deliver the justifying documents to the persons in charge of such buildings, offices or vehicles.

RULES**A. USE OF THE INDICATORY SIGN****I. Persons****1. Active members**

If they wear a uniform, active members can display the emblem of the Society, surrounded by or under-inscribed with its name or initials, on the collar, chest, arm or shoulder or on the head-dress.

In civilian clothes, active members can wear the badge of the Society in the form of a button, brooch, pocket-badge or tie. This badge will comprise the name of the Society surrounding or under-inscribing the emblem.

2. Non-active or auxiliary members

Non-active or auxiliary¹ members can wear the emblem of the Society in the button-hole or in the form of a button, brooch, pocketbadge or tie and bearing its name or initials. As a general rule this badge will differ from that of active members and be smaller.

3. Members of the Junior Red Cross

If these members wear a uniform, the red cross sign surrounded by the words "Junior Red Cross" or the initials JRC may figure on the collar, the chest, arm or shoulder, or also on the head-dress. In civilian clothes these members may display the Junior Red Cross button or brooch.

4. First-Aid workers trained by National Societies

Persons who are non-members but qualified, such as first-aid workers or rescuers who have been trained by the National Society or who have undergone examinations directed by it, may, with the agreement of the Society wear a badge, in the form of a brooch or insignia, which will draw the attention of the public to them. The Society will however maintain control over the wearing of this badge, which will be withdrawn should the person concerned cease from serving in such a capacity or if he does not regularly attend refresher courses or classes of instruction.

¹ Certain National Societies do not recognize this category of members.

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5. Members of affiliated Societies

With the agreement of the Authorities, the National Society may authorize another Society, pursuing the same or similar ends as itself and affiliated to it, to grant to its members, while carrying out their humanitarian duties and whilst they are in uniform, the right to display the red cross emblem under the same conditions as members of the National Society, as defined in article 1 above. The name or the initials of the Society thus authorized should be shown on the uniform, but separate from the red cross emblem which, as a general rule, should be different from that of the National Society. Such authorization cannot be granted unless the affiliated Society remains entirely under the control and the authority of the National Society.

II. Buildings

6. Buildings fully occupied by the National Society

The name and emblem of the Society may be displayed on buildings fully occupied by the Society, whether they belong to it or not. The emblem, which will be removable, will be of relatively small dimensions. It can be shown on a board or a flag, but not on a roof.

7. Buildings partly occupied

When a building is only partially occupied by the National Society, its emblem can only be displayed on the offices which it occupies and under the conditions as laid down in the preceding article.

8. Buildings belonging to but not occupied by the Society

A National Society may display its name but not its emblem on buildings or offices which are its own property and which it rents or lends to third parties.

III. Vehicles

9. Vehicles belonging to the Society

Vehicles, especially ambulances, belonging to or operated by the National Society and utilized by its members or employees may

display the name and emblem of the Society. The emblem shall be small in size and cannot be shown on a flag. Such authorization is also valid in time of war.

10. Ambulances not belonging to the Society

In conformity with national legislation and by virtue of article 44, paragraph 4, of the First Geneva Convention of 1949, National Societies may authorize the use of the emblem, in time of peace, to indicate ambulances belonging to third parties, individuals, societies or authorities.

They shall not give such authorization except in exchange for the right regularly to control the uses which may thus be made of the emblem.

IV. First-Aid Stations

11. Stations belonging to and operated by the Society

The name and emblem of the Society may be displayed in time of war as in time of peace on first-aid stations belonging to and operated by the Society.

In time of war, the emblem shall be small in size and cannot be shown on a flag.

12. Stations not belonging to a Society

In conformity with national legislation and by virtue of article 44, paragraph 4 of the First Geneva Convention of 1949, National Societies may authorize the use of the emblem in time of peace to indicate first-aid stations reserved exclusively for free treatment to be given to the injured and sick.

They shall not grant this authorization except in exchange for the right regularly to control the uses which may thus be made of the emblem and that free treatment is in fact given.

V. Collection of Funds

13. Publicity material

National Societies are at liberty to utilize the emblem to give support to their fund-raising campaigns, notably on leaflets, posters,

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boards, etc., preferably displayed together with the name of the Society or a publicity text or drawing.

14. Objects placed on sale or offered free

Objects placed on sale or offered free by the Society may bear the emblem, which shall then be of a decorative character, preferably shown together with the name of the Society and of the smallest possible size, or else made of perishable material. Badges especially shall be such that they do not imply the wearer to belong to the Red Cross,

As a general rule the emblem will be utilized in such a way as not to lay itself open to possible later misuse.

The sale or distribution of flags or banners displaying the emblem alone is prohibited.

VI. Various Uses

15. Co-operation with other organizations

National Societies co-operating with other national organizations in humanitarian action cannot share either their name or their emblem with these organizations.

16. Medals

The emblem of the Society may figure on medals or other testimonies of recognition, on condition that it is shown together with the name of the Society and, if possible, by a few words describing the purpose of the medal or defining the services rendered.

17. Decorative emblem

There is no restriction on the utilization of the emblem for decorative or ornamental purposes, especially during celebrations or public manifestations, or on printed matter or on publications of all descriptions.

National Societies will however ensure that in no circumstances will the dignity of the emblem be degraded, nor the respect which is due to it be in any way lessened.

18. Relief supplies

The name and emblem of the Society may be used by National Societies to mark supplies consigned by rail, road, sea or air for

the relief of distress caused by armed conflicts or natural disasters. National Societies will ensure that the right to use the emblem for such purposes is not abused.

B. USE OF THE PROTECTIVE SIGN

I. Persons

19. Members of the Society

Members of the Society trained to be placed at the disposal of the Army Medical Service will not have the right to wear the protective emblem, notably the red cross armlet, unless they are in fact placed under the authority of that service. In agreement with the latter they can also wear the badge of the Society.

20. Non-Members

Other persons trained by the National Society for medical duties and placed at the disposal of the Army Medical Service shall have the right to wear the protective emblem, notably the armlet, but not the badge of the Society.

21. Personnel of civilian hospitals

In time of conflict, in occupied territory or in the theatre of military operations, members of the personnel of civilian hospitals have the right to wear the protective emblem, notably the armlet: whilst in service for regular personnel, and during the performance of their duties for temporary personnel.

If they are members of the National Society, or its employees, they can also wear its badge with the agreement of the competent authority.

II. Buildings and Equipment

22. Buildings

Buildings belonging to the National Society or administered by it may, in time of war, be marked with the protective emblem, in particular on roofs, if they are placed at the disposal of the Army Medical Service. Such marking may be authorized in time

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of peace if their military assignment has already been made or is of a definite character.

With the agreement of the military authority, the name and the emblem of the Society may also be displayed on these buildings. The emblem will however remain of small dimensions.

23. Civilian hospitals

Hospitals which are of a permanent character which are recognized as such by the military authority may, with the agreement of the latter, be marked, already in time of peace, with the protective sign, notably on their roofs.

If they belong to the National Society or are administered by it, its emblem and name may also be displayed there under the same conditions as in the preceding article.

24. Equipment

Medical equipment prepared by the National Societies to be placed at the disposal of the Army Medical Service and accepted by it can also be at once marked with the protective sign.

The name and the emblem of the Society may also appear on such equipment, if the Society is its owner or donor.

III. Hospital Ships and Lifeboats

25. Hospital ships and lifeboats

Hospital ships and lifeboats belonging to National Societies may, already in time of peace, be marked as laid down by article 43 of the Second Geneva Convention of 1949, with the agreement of the competent authority and if they have received from the latter a document declaring that they have been submitted to its control during their commissioning and sailing.

Again with the agreement of the authority, the name and emblem of the Society may appear on these vessels and craft. The emblem will however remain small in size.

26. Fixed coastal installations

Fixed coastal installations for lifeboats belonging to the National Society may be marked with its name and emblem.

In time of war and with the agreement of the competent authority, they may in addition display the protective sign.

27. Personnel of hospital ships, lifeboats and fixed coastal installations

In time of conflict, the members of this personnel have the right to wear the protective emblem, notably the armlet. The personnel of lifeboats and fixed coastal installations possess this right, however, only when they are on duty.

Members of this personnel may at all times also wear the badge of the National Society if they are members, or if the Society decides to confer it upon them.

**IV. Personnel and Property made available by a Society
of a neutral Country**

28. In conformity with article 27 of the First Geneva Convention of 1949 the personnel, equipment, vehicles or lifeboats made available to a belligerent by the National Society of a neutral country shall display the protective emblem from the time of their departure, with the agreement of the authorities of the neutral country and of those of the belligerent country. Under the same conditions, the name and emblem of the Society may also be shown on the uniform of persons or on property.