

Pledge of Allegiance

1892

I pledge allegiance to my Flag
and the Republic
for which it stands,
one nation, indivisible,
with liberty and justice for all.

(*based on a draft written in 1885 by a
veteran Union soldier)

1892 – 1923

I pledge allegiance to my Flag
and to the Republic
for which it stands,
one nation, indivisible,
with liberty and justice for all.

1923 – 1924

I pledge allegiance to the Flag
of the United States
and to the Republic
for which it stands,
one nation, indivisible,
with liberty and justice for all.

1924 – 1954

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

(*the title Pledge of Allegiance was
adopted in 1945)

1954 – present

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.

West Virginia v Barnette (1943)

↳ determined that no school or government can compel someone to recite the Pledge or salute the flag, nor punish people for not doing so. But states can require it while offering exemptions.

Most states require the Pledge of Allegiance to be recited in public schools, with varying exceptions for students and staff who opt out.

States with no policy for the Pledge

- Nebraska, Wyoming, Vermont, Hawaii

States that require the pledge, with clear exemptions

- South Dakota, North Carolina, Mississippi, Connecticut, Michigan, New York, Ohio, Minnesota, New Hampshire, West Virginia, South Carolina, Colorado, Idaho, Wisconsin, Maryland, Maine, Missouri, Indiana, Louisiana, Rhode Island

States that require the Pledge to be recited, with no clear exemptions

- Georgia, Kansas, Illinois, New Mexico, Massachusetts, California, Delaware
- Massachusetts: “failure by a teacher to provide an opportunity to say the Pledge for two or more consecutive weeks will be punished by a fine of \$5”
- Also required in: Montana, North Dakota, Arkansas, Alabama, Iowa

States requiring the Pledge with stricter exemptions

- Florida, Utah, Pennsylvania, Texas – a student must produce written notice by a parent to gain exemption
- Oregon, Washington, Tennessee – “students not reciting the Pledge shall maintain a respectful silence.”
- New Jersey – “Students shall be required to show full respect to the flag while the Pledge is being given merely by standing and removing headwear.”
- Virginia – exempt students must be quiet during the Pledge, and must learn about it and demonstrate knowledge of the Pledge

States with exemptions, but varying interpretations

- Kentucky, Alaska, Oklahoma
 - ↳ Kentucky state law says: “Pupils shall be reminded that this Lord’s prayer is the prayer our pilgrim fathers recited when they came to this country in their search for freedom. Pupils shall be informed that these exercises are not meant to influence an individual’s personal religious beliefs in any manner.”