



## **Blue Star Service Banner**

### **About The Flag**

- The Blue Star Service Banner was designed and patented in 1917 by World War I Army Capt. Robert L. Queissner of the 5<sup>th</sup> Ohio Infantry who had two sons serving on the front line. It quickly became the unofficial symbol of a child in the service.
- On Sept. 24, 1917, an Ohio congressman read the following into the Congressional Record: "...The mayor of Cleveland, the Chamber of Commerce and the governor of Ohio have adopted this service flag. The world should know of those who give so much for liberty. The dearest thing in all the world to a father and mother - their children."
- The Blue Star Service Banner typically displayed in windows is an 8.5 by 14-inch white field with a blue star(s) sewn onto a red banner. The size may vary but should be in proportion to the size of the U.S. Flag.
- The banner displayed in the front window of a home shows a family's pride in their loved one serving in the military and reminds others that preserving America's freedom demands much.
- During World War II, the Department of War issued specifications on the manufacture of the flag as well as guidelines indicating when and by whom the Service flag could be flown, or the Service Lapel button could be worn. The Department of Defense updated the guidelines on December 1, 1967 with DoD Directive 1348.1, which implemented an Act of Congress authorizing a service flag and a service lapel button (U.S.C. 179-182). The directive was cancelled by DoD in 1970 and folded into DoD Instruction 1348.33-M, Manual of Military Decorations and Awards Program, transferring cognizance to the Dept. of the Army. It provides current guidance for the manufacture and display of both the service flag and service lapel button under the authority of federal law. (36 U.S.C. 179 – 182).
- The Department of Defense specifies that family members authorized to display the flag include the wife, husband, mother, father, stepmother or father, parent through adoption, foster parents, children, stepchildren, children through adoption, brothers, sisters and half brothers or sisters of a member of the Armed Forces of the United States.
- The blue star represents one family member serving in the armed forces. A banner can have up to five stars, signifying that five members of that family are currently in military uniform on active duty.
- Blue Star Mothers organization was established during World War I and remains active today.
- Blue Star Service Banners, while widely used across America during World Wars I and II, were not embraced during the Korean or Vietnam wars with nearly the same enthusiasm.
- The American Legion rekindled the spirit of pride in our military men and women following the horrific terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001. The American Legion continues to provide banners to families in communities across the nation. Free color downloads are available at [www.legion.org](http://www.legion.org) of the banners and static cling versions for home and automobile, as well as lapel pins, are available from The American Legion National Emblem Sales.
- The American Legion also has a special Blue Star Corporate Flag for government and corporate America to show their support for employees called to active duty in the war against terrorism.