

US Coast Guard Quietly Allows Fascist Symbols



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Fascist symbols were quietly planned to be removed as hate symbols in the US Coast Guard.

Details. In late November, the US Coast Guard drafted a new policy to lower the classification of fascist symbols, such as swastikas and nooses, from “hate symbols” to “potentially divisive” in its workplace guidelines. The policy was set to go into effect on December 15, 2025.

- ▶ Democratic Senators Tammy Duckworth (Illinois) and Jacky Rosen (Nevada) put Trump’s nomination of Admiral Lunday to lead the Coast Guard on hold in reaction to the policy change. The admiral is expected to explain himself, as he had previously stated that the noose and swastika would remain classified as hate symbols.
- ▶ News of the policy was quickly met with outrage from other state representatives. In response, both Coast Guard social media accounts and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) spokespeople have attempted to reaffirm a zero-tolerance policy on all hate symbols by denying any intent to allow their free use.
- ▶ Currently, it is still not known to what extent the DHS was involved in the decision to change Coast Guard guidelines, but this action falls in line with the Trump administration and Pete Hegseth’s reordering of the military around mitigating harassment cases in the name of rooting out “woke” policies and management behaviours.

Context. Trump’s second term has been marked by a campaign against “wokeness” and political correctness within the armed forces and federal agencies. Because of this, the already existing leniency toward fascist ideology in the US military has been further embraced.

- ▶ Former Coast Guard Admiral Linda Fagan (Admiral Lunday’s predecessor) was removed from her post by Trump as part of his campaign against so-called “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) hires,” a far-right rhetorical attack targeting women and people of colour within the federal workforce. Reportedly, this was due to her handling of “diversity initiatives” and sexual harassment cases.
- ▶ Bans on hate symbols are largely formal within the military. Democratic Senate candidate Graham Platner acquired a tattoo depicting a Nazi SS “Totenkopf” skull and crossbones during his service in the Marines. Secretary of War Pete Hegseth has twelve tattoos associated with Christian nationalist and white supremacist movements. Among them is a tattoo reading “Deus Vult,” a phrase widely associated with white supremacist movements.
- ▶ In the wake of the assassination of Charlie Kirk, Trump declared “Antifa” - a label commonly used by the far right to refer to a broad section of the US left - as “terrorists.” He then instituted an “Anti-Communism Week” following the anniversary of the October Revolution. Notably, there has been no comparable condemnation of the horrors of fascism, nor any declaration of an “Anti-Fascism Week.”