

Kentucky Colonel

Kentucky Colonel is the highest title of honor bestowed by the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Commissions for Kentucky Colonels are given by the Governor of Kentucky to individuals in recognition of noteworthy accomplishments and outstanding service to a community, state or the nation. The Governor of Kentucky bestows the honor of a colonel commission, by issuance of letters of patent.

The title “Kentucky Colonel” was formalized in 1813. It was often associated with landowners respected in their communities.

Early colonels served military roles in the state. In the later part of the 19th century, the position took on a more ceremonial function. By the late 19th century, the title had become more of an honorary one. But, since commissioned Kentucky Colonels are considered honorary aides-de-camp to the Governor and members of his staff, all are entitled to the style of “Honorable” as indicated on the commission certificates.

