

**SAN DIEGO POLICE DEPARTMENT
PROCEDURE**

DATE: NOVEMBER 8, 2019
NUMBER: 5.17 – HUMAN RESOURCES
SUBJECT: AWARDS
RELATED POLICY: [5.17](#)
ORIGINATING DIVISION: HUMAN RESOURCES
NEW PROCEDURE:
PROCEDURAL CHANGE: **MINOR CHANGE**
SUPERSEDES: DP 5.17 12/20/2017

I. PURPOSE

This Department procedure establishes guidelines for nominating and selecting personnel for awards.

II. SCOPE

This procedure applies to all members of the Department.

III. DEFINITIONS

A. Law Enforcement Personnel

1. **Police Cross** – awarded posthumously to an officer who in the performance of their duty and under honorable circumstances lost their life by a hostile person or during an act of bravery. The Police Cross may be awarded in conjunction with a Medal for Valor, Meritorious Service Award and Lifesaving Medal.
2. **Medal for Valor** - awarded to an employee in recognition of acts involving great personal risk, merited when the following elements exist:

The employee manifests outstanding bravery in the performance of duty.

The employee risks his or her life with the full and unquestionable knowledge of the danger involved, or when a reasonable person would assume his or her life was in great danger.

The objective is of sufficient importance to justify the risk.

The employee accomplished the objective, or was prevented from accomplishing the objective by circumstances beyond his or her control.

The necessity for the act of bravery was not created by the employee's use of poor judgment or procedure.

3. **Meritorious Service Award** - awarded to an employee who displays exceptional dedication to duty in pursuit of a worthwhile objective, which required courage and is knowingly done with risk of injury. Acts warranting this award must meet all of the standards of the Medal for Valor, but to a lesser degree.
4. **Lifesaving Medal** - awarded to an employee who saves a life. This action must be performed under conditions requiring bravery or exposure to danger, or in a manner that was above and beyond the normal call of duty. Recommendations for this award should be accompanied by medical or eyewitness testimony.
5. **Purple Heart** - awarded when an employee, while in the line of duty, sustains a serious wound or great bodily injury inflicted by a hostile person. The Purple Heart may be awarded in conjunction with the Medal for Valor, Meritorious Service Award and Lifesaving Medal.
6. **Lifesaving Citation** - awarded to an employee who saves a life. There is no need for the act to be performed under conditions requiring bravery or exposure to danger. Recommendations for this award should be accompanied by medical or eyewitness testimony.
7. **Exceptional Performance Citation** - awarded to an employee for courageous, outstanding, or unusual performance of duty that is significantly beyond what is normally expected. This performance award may be based on a single act or on exemplary work over an extended period of time. Examples of exceptional performance may include, but are not limited to:

Developing a method or program that significantly affects the operation of one or more divisions in the Department.

Exceptional performance in conducting a major investigation.

8. **Unit Exceptional Performance Citation** – awarded to a departmental unit for courageous, outstanding, or unusual performance of duty that is significantly beyond what is normally expected. This performance award may be based on a single act or on exemplary work over an extended period of time. The accomplishment must be the result of a combined effort of the unit. The unit must contain at least two or more employees working together. Examples of exceptional performance may include, but are not limited to:

Developing a method or program that significantly affects the operation of one or more divisions in the Department.

Exceptional performance in conducting a major investigation.

9. **Commanding Officer's Citation** - awarded to an employee for performance that is well above average and demonstrates either courage, devotion to duty, alertness or other aptitude for police work or continuing desire to perform public service.

B. Civilian Personnel

1. **Department Employee of the Quarter** – awarded to a classified employee in recognition of sustained high quality work performance during the entire quarter (Quarter 1 – July to September, Quarter 2 – October to December, Quarter 3 – January to March, Quarter 4 – April to June).
2. **Department Employee of the Year** – awarded to a classified employee who received an Employee of the Quarter award; and who has gone above and beyond the requirements of the job and has excelled in all areas of job performance for the previous twelve (12) months.
3. Eligibility Criteria
 - a. Employee must have demonstrated ongoing exceptional work performance in all aspects of the job requirement and must have gone above and beyond the requirements of the job;
 - b. Employee must have met standards on all performance evaluations in the previous year; and
 - c. Have no written disciplinary actions during the previous twelve (12) months.

C. Private Citizens

1. **Citizen Meritorious Service Award** - awarded to a private citizen for meritorious service involving possible risk of injury, an act of meritorious service, or for a noteworthy contribution, which exemplifies and fulfills the Department's objectives.
2. **Citizen Certificate of Appreciation** - awarded to a private citizen who performs commendable acts, services, or contributions, which exemplify and fulfill the Department's objectives.

IV. PROCEDURES FOR CHOOSING RECIPIENTS

A. An Awards Committee will be appointed by the Chief and will consist of the Assistant Chief of Training/Employee Development; six sergeants, with three from patrol, one from traffic and two from investigations; three civilians; one POA Director; and a representative from Police Human Resources.

NEW

1. The six sergeants and the three civilians will be appointed for a term of two years.

B. All supervisors should report any incidents they believe merit consideration and should recommend a class of award. Recommendations must be submitted via the Award Nomination Form located in the Department's LAN system at F: Templates\Commendations\Award Nomination Form. The nomination shall be accompanied by the Award Recommendation Attachment (also under Commendations) and all supporting documents. Recommendations must be endorsed through the chain of command and forwarded to the Police Human Resources Unit at MS 710.

C. Any employee may nominate civilian personnel for Employee of the Quarter. Nominations should be submitted via the Employee of the Quarter Nomination Form located in the Department's LAN System at F: Templates/Commendations/Employee of the Quarter Nomination Form. Nominations must be turned in to Police Human Resources by the last day of the quarter for review and selection by the Awards Committee.

D. At no time should employees being considered for an award be notified of the pending recommendation.

E. The Awards Committee will convene the Awards Board as needed to review all recommendations and, in turn, to recommend to the Chief which awards they find to be appropriate.

- F. Awards will be presented at appropriate ceremonies and are presented by the Chief of Police. Commanding Officer's Citations are to be presented at daily lineups or commanding officers' conferences.
- G. Officers receiving an award at an awards ceremony are to appear in business attire or dress uniform. Civilian employees receiving an award are to appear in appropriate civilian attire.

V. PROCEDURES FOR MEDALS AND CERTIFICATES

- A. Police Cross, Medal for Valor, Meritorious Service Award, Lifesaving Medal, and Purple Heart
 - 1. These awards consist of a medal, shirt bar and certificate.
 - 2. The same medal will be used for Valor, Meritorious Service, Lifesaving and Purple Heart with an engraved bar denoting the particular class. The recipient's name will be engraved on the fastening clasp.
 - 3. Shirt bars will be identical to the engraved bars on the medals and will fasten to the shirt by spring-loaded, flat, black clasps.
 - 4. Dyes for striking the medals will be retained by the manufacturer and orders for medals will be made through Bocks Awards Company, 9340 Hazard Way, A3, San Diego, California, 92123, who will retain a supply of Department medals until needed.
 - 5. These medals may be worn only on formal occasions with the dress uniform and must be worn on the right breast pocket, centered just below the flap.
 - 6. Shirt bars should be worn with the uniform at all times and will be worn centered just above the nameplate.
 - a. A total of three shirt bars in any class may be worn.
 - b. Additional medals and shirt bars will be presented for subsequent awards.
 - c. Civilian employees shall wear the shirt bars centered just above the nameplate.
 - 7. The certificate will be on parchment paper and framed for presentation.

- B. The Lifesaving Citation Certificate will be on parchment paper and framed for presentation.
- C. The Exceptional Performance Citation Award consists of a certificate only on parchment paper and will be framed for presentation.
- D. The Commanding Officer's Citation Award consists of the citation certificate only and will be made by commanding officers without review by the Service Awards Committee or by the Chief of Police. The certificate will be on bond paper and will be framed for presentation.
- E. The Employee of the Quarter award consists of:
 - a. One (1) day of Discretionary Leave; and
 - b. A \$300.00 cash award.
 - c. Cash award and Discretionary Leave will be pro-rated for part-time employees.
- F. The Employee of the Year award consists of:
 - a. Twenty-four (24) hours of Discretionary Leave; and
 - b. A \$500.00 cash award.
 - c. Cash award and Discretionary Leave will be pro-rated for part-time employees.