



DESCHUTES COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Policy Title: Awards and Commendations	Effective Date: September 8, 2015	Policy Number: 3.04
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Attachments:	L. Shane Nelson, Sheriff	

I. PURPOSE

Awards and commendations are recognition for exemplary employee conduct based on demonstrated performance and knowledge. Methods used to recognize exceptional individual and/or collective performance include issuance of awards and commendations.

II. POLICY

The Sheriff's Office expects a high level of professional conduct from all employees: however, members of the agency frequently perform their duties in a manner exceeding the highest standards of the agency. The official commendation of such performance and the arrangement of appropriate publicity are to be provided by the agency to give public recognition to those who have brought honor to themselves and the agency.

III. AWARDS

A. Medal of Honor

The Sheriff's Office Medal of Honor may be awarded to employees of the agency who, while serving in an official capacity, distinguish themselves conspicuously by the performance of a heroic act exceeding the normal demands of law enforcement service where the member was fully aware of the imminent threat to his personal safety.

Factors to be considered:

1. The situation was extremely hazardous;
2. A strong possibility existed at the time the employee acted that he could have suffered serious injury or death;
3. The act was not foolhardy; and
4. The employee did not use poor judgment, thus creating the necessity for his acts.

Situations where this award may be appropriate would be hazardous actions taken against a crime suspect or any action to serve or protect another person which risks the life of the nominee. An employee does not have to be injured in the incident to be considered for this medal.

B. Medal of Merit

The Medal of Merit may be awarded to employees who distinguish themselves and bring credit to the Sheriff's Office by highly creditable or unusual acts in the performance of duty. Such acts shall significantly rise above the expected norm of Sheriff's Office or community service.

C. Lifesaving Award

The Lifesaving Award may be awarded to the employee who, while on or off duty, performs an active, distinctive, and successful lifesaving act on another human being and:

1. The employee was aware of the seriousness of the situation;
2. The act was purposely done;
3. Events leading to the act were not recklessly caused by the employee, therefore necessitating the act; and
4. There must have been a strong possibility the person would have died if the action was not taken.

D. Individual Letter of Commendation or Appreciation

The Letter of Recognition may be awarded to employees who perform assigned duties in a manner which reflects credit to the employee or the Sheriff's Office.

E. Shift or Section Letter of Commendation or Appreciation

The Letter of Recognition may be awarded to all employees of any Shift or Section who have collectively performed their assigned duties in a manner which reflects exceptional credit to the unit or the Sheriff's Office.

F. Retirement and Service Award

1. *Retirement.* Employees in good standing who retire from the Sheriff's Office shall be awarded a badge and identification card indicating retirement.
2. *Service Awards.* Employees in good standing who leave the employ of the Sheriff's Office shall be eligible for the following awards:
 - a. Employees with the rank of sergeant or above shall have their badges appropriately mounted.
 - b. Employees below the rank of sergeant who have attained five (5) or more years of service with the Sheriff's Office shall have their badges appropriately mounted.

IV. NOMINATION PROCEDURES

Any employee may submit a nomination for award via the chain of command to the Sheriff. The nominating employee shall notify the employee's immediate supervisor of intent as a matter of courtesy and to coordinate the nomination should further action or information be available.

The nomination form shall contain a statement of the action, statement of witnesses and any other information which would document and assist in the evaluation of the action.

V. PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

The Medal of Honor, Medal of Merit, or Lifesaving Award will be presented to the recipient by the Sheriff at an awards ceremony. The Sheriff may request the award be presented during a County Commissioners session. Other awards, such as written commendations, may be issued by the Sheriff at any time.

VI. DESCRIPTION OF AWARDS

A. Medal of Honor, Medal of Merit, Lifesaving Awards.

Each will be a decorative medal inscribed with the title of the appropriate award accompanied by a certificate suitable for mounting.

B. Letters of Recognition

A letter on Sheriff's Office letterhead signed by the Sheriff.

C. Retirement and Service Awards

Mounted Badge - a wall plaque with the badge and appropriate inscription.

VII. REQUESTS FOR SOUVENIR ITEMS

The only mementos or souvenir items presented will be those initiated from the Office of the Sheriff. No other request for souvenir items will be granted.

VIII. SHERIFF MEDAL

A. Awarded to Citizens

The Sheriff Medal is awarded to citizens who perform an act in support of the Sheriff's Office mission or operation which is far beyond the duties reasonably expected of non-law enforcement personnel.

B. Nominations

Any employee may nominate a citizen for this award by submitting a memorandum to the Sheriff detailing the actions the citizen took warranting the award. The Sheriff Medal will be awarded by the Sheriff in a formal ceremony.

IX. RESERVE DEPUTY AND VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

This award is given to the Reserve Deputy and Volunteer that has shown an excellence in service to the citizens of the county during the year. The award is in recognition for exemplary employee conduct based on demonstrated knowledge and performance.

A. Eligibility

All Reserve Deputies and Volunteers that have been employed with the Sheriff's Office for at least six months and are in good standing, are eligible for the award.

B. Nomination Process

The supervisor of each section will send a memo asking for nominations for the awards.

The memo will be sent out agency-wide and all employees will be encouraged to participate in the nomination phase. The employees will be asked to write a brief summary of why they have nominated the particular employee.

C. Selection Process

Division Commanders, working as a committee, will compile and tabulate the nominations received. The committee will review the top three candidates for each award. The committee will then take into consideration the hours the candidates donated over the year, any special tasks the candidate completed, their overall performance, and any citizen commendations or complaints the candidate received during the year.

Once all the above items are evaluated and reviewed, a nominee from each section will be selected by the committee.

D. Notification to the Sheriff

The supervisor of each section will then write a letter of nomination and selection to the Sheriff notifying him of the selection. The letter will include why the individual was selected and a brief overview of that person's achievements during the year.