



# POLICY & PROCEDURES

## HOLMEN POLICE DEPARTMENT

SUBJECT: **PERFORMANCE RECOGNITION AWARDS**

NUMBER: 6.15

SCOPE: ALL DEPARTMENT PERSONEL

ISSUED: 03/01/2012

DISTRUBUTION: POLICY & PROCEDURE MANUAL

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### **INTRODUCTION**

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It is the purpose of this policy to establish guidelines for recognizing exemplary service by departmental personnel and to provide protocols for the presentation of awards and related recognition for such service.

### **POLICY**

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The recognition of personal excellence is an important aspect of this department's activities. Presenting departmental awards for meritorious service provides that recognition, thereby enhancing departmental morale, reinforcing the department's commitment to the maintenance of a high standard of performance by its members, and motivating personnel to perform their duties at the highest possible level. Therefore, it is the policy of the Holmen Police Department to recognize and reward meritorious service through an awards program to be administered under the procedures set forth here- in.

### **I. STRUCTURE OF AWARDS PROGRAM**

#### **A. Awards Board**

- a. The Chief of Police shall appoint an Awards Board to receive and evaluate recommendations for awards. This Board shall determine whether an award should be presented and, if so, which award would be appropriate.
- b. The Board shall consist of the number of members determined to be appropriate by the Chief and shall represent a cross-section of departmental ranks and duty assignments.
- c. The member of the Board who is senior in rank shall serve as chairman of the Board.
- d. If a member of the Awards Board is under consideration for receipt of any award, that member shall be excused from the Board for the period when this award is under consideration. The Chief may appoint a member to the Board of appropriate rank to serve on the Board in place of the officer being considered for the period indicated.

#### **B. Awards**

- a. Medal of Valor.
  - Awarded to departmental members for conspicuous gallantry while acting in the line of duty. Presented to officers for acts of exceptional bravery performed at very high risk to their own lives with full awareness of the danger involved. This award will be presented in the form of a medal, a ribbon bar, and a certificate.
- b. Medal of Distinction
  - Awarded to departmental members who distinguish themselves in the line of duty by acts of personal bravery not falling within the guidelines for the Medal of Valor. This award will be presented in the form of a medal, a ribbon bar, and a certificate.
- c. Life-Saving Award
  - To be conferred upon any member of the department whose actions directly contribute to saving or significantly prolonging human life. This award will be presented in the form of a ribbon bar and certificate.

- d. Award for Meritorious Service
  - Awarded to any member of the department for outstanding job accomplishment that has contributed to a more effective and efficient police department. This may involve improved administration, improved operations, substantial cost savings, or other benefits to the department that have materially facilitated the effective performance of the department's mission. This award is presented in the form of a ribbon bar and a certificate.
- e. Certificate of Commendation
  - Presented in recognition of a high degree of competence and professionalism in the performance of departmental duties. This includes exemplary conduct during a field incident or operation, outstanding administrative work, the effective handling of a criminal investigation, the organization of a new and beneficial departmental program, designing and conducting a course of training, and commendable participation in any other activity that improves the department's functioning or brings credit upon the department in any way. It may also be presented to any employee who has demonstrated long-term excellence in service to the agency. This award is presented in the form of a certificate.
- f. Letter of Recognition
  - Presented to departmental members who perform their duties in a manner that demonstrates professionalism, devotion to duty, and dedication to the performance of the departmental mission. This award may also be presented for the submission of any suggestion subsequently adopted by the department that materially improves the efficiency of the department. This award is presented in the form of a letter to the employee signed by the Chief of Police. Line supervisors may make presentations of these awards to officers under their command as approved by the agency Chief.
- g. Citizen Commendation
  - This award may be presented to any person who is not a member of the department but who has materially aided the department or its officers in some way. This includes assistance in the solution of crime or the apprehension of criminals, aiding an officer in the field in a critical situation, and cooperation with or assistance to the department as a whole in any aspect of the department's administration or operations.
- h. Other Awards
  - The department may establish other awards as deemed desirable and as designated by the Chief. Any such additional awards shall be considered and presented in accordance with this policy.

## **I. PROCEDURES**

### **A. Recommendations for Awards**

- a. Who May Make Recommendations
  - Any departmental member may recommend another departmental member for any award. More than one person may make recommendations jointly.
- b. Form of Recommendations.
  - Award recommendations shall be neatly typed and shall set forth in detail the circumstances upon which the award is recommended. The recommendation must identify the person or persons making the recommendation and be signed by that person or those persons.
- c. Supporting Documentation
  - The recommendation form may be accompanied by such supporting documentation as is deemed desirable by the person or persons initiating the recommendation. This documentation may include such items as witness statements, photographs, pertinent departmental incident reports, medical reports, reports from other law enforcement agencies, statements from civilians familiar with the incident, newspaper articles, and any other evidence that will assist the Awards Board in determining the merits of the recommendation.

- d. Forwarding of Recommendation
    - The recommendation shall be forwarded to the Awards Board in the manner and through the channels established by the Board.
  - e. Nomination of Private Citizens for Awards
    - Any member of the department who is given significant assistance by a citizen, or any member of the department who is aware that such assistance has been given to another employee, may nominate that citizen for a Citizen Commendation. Such nominations shall be prepared and forwarded in the manner prescribed for recommendations of departmental personnel.
  - f. Letters from Citizens Commending a Departmental Employee
    - Letters from citizens commending a departmental employee shall be forwarded to the Chief. If the Chief concludes that an award to the employee may be justified, he or she shall prepare and forward to the Awards Board a recommendation for award in accordance with the procedures set forth in this policy.
- B. Determination of Awards
- a. All recommendations for departmental awards are to be kept on file pending the next meeting of the Awards Board.
  - b. The Awards Board shall meet monthly or at such other intervals as are directed by the department. Special meetings may be held at the discretion of the Board Chair to consider recommendations requiring the Board's immediate attention. Where the recommendation is for an award to be presented posthumously, or for an award to a departmental member who has been seriously injured in the incident that is the subject of the recommendation, the Board shall convene to consider the award as soon as possible following receipt of the recommendation.
  - c. The Awards Board shall conduct a hearing to examine the circumstances of the recommendation and collect all of the facts pertinent to the case. This fact-finding process may include the hearing of witnesses, the examination of supporting documents submitted with the recommendation, the examination of any other reports prepared in connection with the incident, and, if necessary, field investigation to determine the accuracy of the testimony and documentation submitted.
  - d. Upon completion of the fact-finding process, the Board shall consider the case in closed session and vote upon the recommendation. A majority of the votes of the Board members present and voting shall be sufficient to determine the Board's recommendation.
  - e. The Board may make any one of the following findings:
    - i. That the case meets the standards for the award that is the subject of the recommendation, and that the award is therefore approved, or
    - ii. That the circumstances justify recognition, but that it has been determined that the presentation should be for an award other than that specified in the initial recommendation, or
    - iii. That the facts as currently known do not justify an award at this time.
  - f. Following the Board's deliberations, a written report shall be forwarded to the Chief setting forth the Board's findings.
  - g. Upon receipt of the Board's report, the Chief may approve, disapprove, or modify the Board's findings.
  - h. Only one award shall be made to an individual for any one act, achievement, or period of meritorious service. However, there is no limit to the number of medals, certificates, or letters of recognition that may be awarded to an individual for separate acts.
  - i. The Awards Board shall maintain an Awards Case File. This file shall contain copies of each report of the Board's deliberations upon each recommendation received. This includes all recommendations for awards to departmental members, together with copies of any supporting documents submitted with the recommendations. The Awards Case File shall be maintained alphabetically by employees' names, and shall be open for inspection to any member of the department. Recommendations for commendation of civilians for assistance to the department shall be maintained in a similar manner.

- j. Prior to January 1 of each year, the Board shall prepare and forward to the Chief an annual report stating the number of award recommendations received during the prior year, the total number of awards presented during that year, and the number of each type of award presented.
- C. Notification of Award
- a. Personnel for whom departmental awards have been approved shall be notified immediately of the award through the Chief.
  - b. Notices of all departmental awards shall be posted on departmental bulletin boards and noted in appropriate departmental documents and publications.
  - c. All departmental awards shall be made a matter of record in the employee's personnel file. A photocopy of the certificate of award shall be included in the file. All awards shall be considered in connection with future personnel decisions, such as promotion or assignment to a particular duty or location.
  - d. Where appropriate, press releases regarding departmental awards should be made available to local media representatives.
  - e. A copy of the citizen's letter of commendation shall be forwarded to the employee, another copy shall be placed in the employee's personnel file, and further copies shall be posted on departmental bulletin boards or otherwise disseminated within the department.
  - f. Citizens who have received departmental commendations for assistance to the department should be notified in a similar manner.
- D. Presentations of Awards
- a. Presentation of all departmental awards other than Letters of Recognition shall be made at a formal ceremony deemed appropriate by the Chief. Letters of Recognition may also be presented at a formal ceremony at the discretion of the Chief or by another command or supervisory officer as designated by the Chief.
  - b. During awards ceremonies, presentations of awards shall be made whenever possible by the Chief or another high-ranking departmental executive as designated by the Chief.
  - c. All personnel not otherwise engaged in duty assignments shall be encouraged to attend the presentation. All personnel attending such ceremonies should be properly attired under guidelines established by the department.
  - d. Members of the recipient's family shall be invited to attend the ceremony and, upon arrival, should be escorted to a position that provides a full view of the proceedings.
  - e. Members of the local press shall be invited to attend presentations of awards of the Medal of Valor, Medal of Distinction, and the Life Saving Medal.
  - f. Normally the individual who has earned the award will accept the award in person at the presentation ceremony.
  - g. Posthumous awards shall be received by the next of kin. "Next of kin" normally is construed to mean one of the following:
    - i. Widow or widower
    - ii. Eldest son or daughter
    - iii. Parent
    - iv. Eldest brother or sister
    - This order of preference may be modified as circumstances dictate in individual cases.
  - h. Posthumous awards may be presented at the memorial or funeral service for that individual, or at such other time as is deemed appropriate by the next of kin.
  - i. Letters of recognition not presented at a formal ceremony shall be placed in the employee's personnel file and a copy posted on departmental bulletin boards or otherwise disseminated through the department.
  - j. Commendations to civilians may be presented at a formal ceremony at the discretion of the Chief, but only with the prior approval of the citizen concerned.
- E. Wearing Awards
- a. Medals are not intended for wear on the duty uniform.
  - b. Award ribbon bars may be worn on the duty uniform. If worn on the duty uniform, ribbon bars shall be placed on the uniform as directed by the departmental policy governing the wearing of the uniform.

- c. When worn on the duty uniform, multiple ribbon bars shall be displayed in the order of preference of the award, with the highest award being displayed on the employee's right.
- d. Ribbon bars worn on the duty uniform shall be maintained in good condition at all times.
- e. No medals, ribbons, or pins of any type shall be worn on the uniform unless the department specifically authorizes such wear.

Chief of Police  
Shane Collins