



Approved:  
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Subject:

# 820. Awards

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Page:  
1

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## 820.1: PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides guidelines to recognize, thank, and encourage members who excel and achieve excellence.

### 820.1.1: CATEGORIES

- a. **Medal of Honor** – The Medal of Honor may be awarded to member(s) who, while acting in an official capacity, distinguish themselves conspicuously by the performance of heroic act(s) beyond the normal demands of police service and where the member(s) were aware of an imminent threat to their personal safety.
  - 1) Injury to the member is not a criterion for the award.
  - 2) The intention is that these be given out only for extremely hazardous situations that are truly noteworthy.
  - 3) These situations should involve criminal law violations, lives saved, and weapons.
    - A. The situation was extremely hazardous;
    - B. A strong possibility existed at the time the member acted that they could have suffered serious injury or death;
    - C. The act was not reckless;
    - D. The member did not use poor judgment, thus creating the necessity for their act.
- b. **Medal of Valor** – The Medal of Valor may be awarded to members who, while acting in an official capacity, distinguished themselves by reacting to a situation in a positive and professional manner, thereby reducing the risk of loss of life or injury to citizens.

- 1) This could involve incidents of exceptional bravery that may not be as extraordinary as the Medal of Honor.
  - 2) Injury to the member is not a criterion for the award.
  - 3) These incidents should involve criminal law violations and lives saved.
    - A. The situation demanded immediate action;
    - B. The possibility of injury or death to citizens was present;
    - C. The act was not reckless;
    - D. The member did not use poor judgment, thus creating the necessity for their act.
- c. **Lifesaving Merit Award** – The Lifesaving Merit Award may be awarded to a member who, while acting in an official capacity, performs an active, distinctive, and successful lifesaving of another person, and:
- 1) The member was aware of the seriousness of the situation
  - 2) The act was purposely done
  - 3) The member did not use poor judgment, thus creating the necessity for their act.
  - 4) A strong possibility must exist that the person would have died if the member had not taken action.
- d. **Public Service Award** – The Public Service Award may be awarded to members who distinguish themselves and bring credit to the law enforcement profession by highly creditable and unusual acts in the performance of police duties.
- 1) This could be awarded to someone who put forth an innovative idea that significantly improved police practices and/or service to the public.
  - 2) Citizens who distinguish themselves by highly commendable or unusual acts may also be awarded the Public Service Award.
  - 3) The Public Service Award may be awarded to a person who meets the above criteria, and:
    - A. The member or citizen used proper judgment and did not precipitate the necessity for the act;
    - B. The act was not reckless;
    - C. The member or citizen made a significant and lasting contribution to law enforcement or public service.
- e. **Department Coins** – See Section 820.6.

- f. **Letter of Commendation** – Recognition of outstanding performance member on police operations, projects, programs, or situations requiring exceptional service.
- g. **Division Employee of the Quarter** – Recognition of a member who throughout the quarter displays exceptional work performance, professionalism and/or customer service.
- h. **Department Employee of the Year** – Recognition of an Operations, Support Division, and Supervisor of the Year who, throughout the year, have consistently displayed exceptional work performance, professionalism, and/or customer service.

### 820.2: POLICY

**It is the policy of the Albany Police Department to acknowledge Department members or citizens who provide exemplary service to the Department or the community.**

### 820.3: NOMINATIONS

Any member may nominate another member or citizen for award consideration. The nomination process shall follow this procedure:

- a. The written nomination should include a detailed description of the incident or service provided, supporting documentation, and explanation of how this meets the criteria of the award.
- b. The nomination will be submitted, via the chain of command, to the Chief of Police.
- c. The Chief of Police will review the nomination and forward it to the Commendations Review Committee. This will consist of one Command staff member, one Police Officer, one Communications Specialist, one Support Services member, and one member from the community. The Commendations Review Committee will meet quarterly, if needed.
- d. The Commendation Review Committee will make a recommendation to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police may then act on that recommendation.
- e. The Commendation Review Committee may review awards presented to a member by other law enforcement agencies or other groups to determine if the incident or service met the criteria of this General Order. They may then make a recommendation to the Chief of Police.
- f. The nomination for a Letter of Commendation can be submitted by any supervisor through their chain of command to their Division Captain. The Captain over that Division approves the award. The name is then submitted to the Office of the Chief for tracking purposes.
- g. Each quarter, the Commendations Review Committee chair will solicit nominations from supervisors for Division Employees of the Quarter. The captain of each division will select the Employee of the Quarter for their division from the submitted nominations.
- h. At the conclusion of the year, the Commendations Review Committee will review, the Operations and Support Division Employees of the Quarter awards, and any other awards given during the previous

calendar year. The Commendations Review Committee will select the Division Employees of the Year for the Operations and Support Divisions from the selected employees of the quarter.

- i. At the conclusion of the year, the Commendations Review Committee Chair will solicit nominations from department employees for a Supervisor of the Year Award. The nominations will be reviewed/approved by both the Operations and Support Division Captains. Should a Captain receive a nomination, the responsibility for the selection of a recipient would defer to the Chief of Police.

1) Supervisors are not eligible to be the recipient of the Operations or Support Division Employee of the Quarter/Year.

#### 820.4: PRESENTATION

- a. The presentation of Medals will normally be made in a City Council meeting.
  - 1) The citation for the incident or service will be read and the appropriate plaque and/or medal will be awarded.
  - 2) The recipient may request that a different forum (department meeting, briefing, private, etc.) be used for the Medal and/or Award presentation.
- b. The Letter of Commendation will normally be presented in a briefing setting by the Chief or the Captain assigned to that Division.
- c. The Division Employee of the Quarter recipients will be presented with a commemorative plaque and their name will be posted on a plaque in the Hall of Honor.
- d. The Operations and Support Division Employees of the Year recipients will be presented with a plaque at a City Council meeting, and their name placed on a permanent plaque in the Hall of Honor.
- e. The Supervisor of the Year award recipient will be presented with a plaque at a City Council meeting their name placed on a permanent plaque in the Hall of Honor.

#### 820.5: RIBBONS, MEDALS, AND PLAQUES

- a. **Medal of Honor** – The recipient of this award shall receive a commemorative plaque, medal and ribbon.
  - 1) The ribbon may be worn on the uniform shirt centered and directly above the name tag.
  - 2) The award is presented with a certificate that contains a brief narrative of the incident and is signed by the Chief of Police, City Manager, and Mayor.
- b. **Medal of Valor** – The recipient of this award shall receive a commemorative plaque, medal and ribbon.
  - 3) The ribbon may be worn on the uniform shirt centered and directly above the name tag.

- 4) The award is presented with a certificate that contains a brief narrative of the incident and is signed by the Chief of Police, City Manager, and Mayor.
- c. **Lifesaving Merit Award** – The recipient of this award shall receive a commemorative plaque, medal, and ribbon.
- 1) The ribbon may be worn on the uniform shirt centered and directly above the name tag.
  - 2) The award is presented with a certificate that contains a brief narrative of the incident and is signed by the Chief of Police, City Manager, and Mayor.
- d. **Public Service Award** – The recipient of this award shall receive a commemorative plaque and certificate signed by the Chief of Police, City Manager, and Mayor.

#### 820.6: DEPARTMENT COIN

The Albany Police Department Coin provides Department leaders an effective means to recognize personnel for exceptional service and achievement in meeting the Department mission and/or exceptionally reflecting our Vision and Values.

- a. Actions that significantly further the efficiency or effectiveness of the City of Albany Police Department, well above and beyond performance of routine duties, may warrant Department Coin presentation.
- b. The Department Coin is designed to significantly contribute to the esprit de corps, pride, morale, and cohesion of our department.
- c. The Chief of Police and Captains possess the authority to award Department Coins, except Captains will not present to another Captain or the Chief.
  - 1) Department Coin presentation will be based on the consensus of the command staff and does not require Commendation Review Committee action.
  - 2) Command staff may elect to present the Department Coin to deserving citizens or members of other local, state, or federal agencies to acknowledge exceptional service and achievement that significantly assist in meeting the Albany Police Department Mission.
- d. The Department Coin presentation will be decided by Command staff and will be uniquely personal in its presentation. The recipient of this award shall receive the Department Coin and a certificate signed by the Chief of Police.