

# AURORA POLICE DEPARTMENT

## DIRECTIVE MANUAL

### 10.07 AWARDS FOR MEMBERS

<b>Approved By:</b>	Todd Chamberlain, Chief of Police
<b>Effective:</b>	Sep-01-1998
<b>Revised:</b>	Dec-16-2025
<b>Associated Policy:</b>	DM 08.01
<b>References:</b>	N/A
<b>Review Authority:</b>	Professional Standards and Training Deputy Chief and APD Legal Advisor(s)

#### 10.7.01 PURPOSE

This directive outlines available Department awards and the process for nominating, deciding, and presenting those awards.

#### 10.7.02 SCOPE

This Directive applies to all members of the Aurora Police Department.

#### 10.7.03 DEFINITIONS

Above and Beyond the Call of Duty: This is an exercise of a voluntary course of action, the omission of which would not reasonably subject the individual to censure for failure in the performance of duty. It includes the acceptance of existing danger or extraordinary responsibilities with praiseworthy fortitude and exemplary courage, in the highest degree. It involves the voluntary acceptance of additional personal danger and risk of death or serious bodily injury.

Heroism: This covers an act or actions by an individual engaged in actual combat with an armed suspect or in police operations that involve exposure to serious, imminent personal hazards.

Distinguished Themselves By: A person distinguishes themselves by praise-worthy accomplishment, set above and apart from other persons in the same or similar circumstances. Determination of this distinction requires careful consideration of exactly what is or was expected as the ordinary, routine, or customary behavior and accomplishment for individuals of like positions and experience for the circumstances involved.

#### 10.7.04 CLASSIFICATION OF AWARDS

Separate and distinct Department awards are authorized for the purpose of recognizing commendable and honorable deeds or acts performed by members in the line of duty. The definitions below are not intended to be all-inclusive. The Chief of Police recognizes that members will perform exemplary acts, which are not specifically defined herein. As such, the Chief of Police, at their discretion, may recognize a member for any award for his or her commendable acts.

The Department awards that may be bestowed upon a member are as follows:

1. Medal of Honor

The Medal of Honor may be awarded to members who distinguish themselves by intentionally and knowingly placing themselves in a situation that involves an actual and imminent danger of death and whose actions demonstrate conspicuous bravery or heroism significantly above and beyond the call of duty. The member

must perform an act so outstanding that it clearly demonstrates extraordinary courage beyond the requirements of the Distinguished Service Cross.

The member must have been aware of the great personal danger to himself or herself before the performance of the act, and the act must have involved an imminent, actual, and substantial threat to the member's life.

This award will be a medal, uniform ribbon, and a certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

## 2. Distinguished Service Cross

The Distinguished Service Cross may be awarded to members who distinguish themselves by demonstrating exceptional bravery despite an imminent risk of serious bodily injury or death. A member may be aware or unaware of great personal peril to himself or herself before the performance of the act.

This award will be a medal, uniform ribbon, and a certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

## 3. Purple Heart

The Purple Heart may be awarded to any member who sustains a gunshot wound, stab wound, or other serious injury, under aggravated and hostile circumstances, which could have resulted in death or could potentially result in a permanent disability, which may force the member to retire.

This award may also be awarded to a member who suffers a serious injury in the performance of their duties during an act of heroism, which could have resulted in death or could potentially result in a permanent disability, which may force the member to retire.

This award will be a medal, uniform ribbon, and a certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

## 4. Life-Saving Award

The Life Saving Award may be given to members who personally save a life. The lifesaving effort will normally involve one of the learned life-supporting processes: mouth-to-mouth resuscitation, cardiopulmonary resuscitation, the Heimlich maneuver for choking victims, or the control of severe bleeding. Actions meriting this award will be significant actions by the member and may include additional unspecified aid that was provided to ensure survivability.

The award will only be bestowed if the victim survives the incident. The nomination for a Life Saving Award should be accompanied by a document or statement from witnesses, attending physician, or medical professional stating the methods or actions applied contributed significantly to the victim's survival.

If documentation can't be obtained due to extenuating circumstances, witness statements, video evidence, or any form of documentation that details the member's efforts will suffice. The totality of the circumstances must showcase the member's methods or actions that contributed significantly to the victim's survival.

Qualifying lifesaving efforts do not include solely administering Narcan to the victim. If any of the additional lifesaving efforts listed above are utilized in addition to Narcan then the nomination meets the requirements for the award.

This award may also be given to Professional Staff at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

This award will be a uniform ribbon, and a certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

#### 5. Meritorious Service Ribbon

The Meritorious Service Ribbon may be awarded by the Chief of Police for service rendered in the line of duty when a member, because of diligence and perseverance, performs difficult tasks under unusual circumstances and goes far beyond that which is normally expected of members.

Professional Staff may be included as a recipient if they are a member of, or part of a sworn team receiving this award. This award is not eligible for professional staff on an individual basis.

This award will be a uniform ribbon, and a certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

#### 6. Firearms Recognition

The Firearms Recognition is awarded to members who obtain a qualifying score with their primary weapon of 90% or better at qualifications during a calendar year. The member must use the same weapon, and the score must be obtained during a 'cold' qualification. The member's immediate supervisor, along with the range staff, must confirm and record the qualifying score. Application for this award is made through the member's immediate supervisor to the Training Academy Range annually by February 15th for recognition of proficiency from the previous year.

#### 7. Innovation Award

This award recognizes specific members of a team, or an individual member who has developed innovative technologies, methodologies, or research programs to solve crimes or improve operational capabilities of the APD.

Criteria include:

- a. Suggests and/or develops new work methods that increase productivity that could save time and money.
- b. Developed a solution to a difficult existing problem effectively and productively or improved overall effectiveness through a new method or approach.
- c. Developed and implemented a plan for the good of the community.
- d. Generated novel and valuable ideas and used these ideas to develop new or improved processes, methods, systems, programs, or services for his or her team or department.

This award will be a certificate and lapel pin presented by the Chief of Police.

#### 8. Superior Service Award

This award recognizes a professional staff member who inspires others to strive for perfection. The professional staff member influences without authority, often putting others' interests ahead of his or her own interest. "A champion of the employees."

Criteria include:

- a. Fostered an atmosphere of collaboration and creativity, which contributes to the efficiency and effectiveness of productivity.

- b. Assists others with both personal and professional challenges that impact work life as a mentor by providing advice, guidance, feedback and encouragement.
- c. Showed true leadership qualities in managing his or her staff/service/system effectively.
- d. Led transformational change for the benefit of peers.
- e. Inspires and motivates others to take advantage of opportunities to enhance their own lives whether professionally or personally.

This award will be a certificate and lapel pin presented by the Chief of Police.

#### 9. Excellence Award

This award recognizes a professional staff member who, because of diligence and perseverance, goes far beyond that which is normally expected of members, and continuously seeks excellence in practice. The professional staff member often "takes it to the next level."

- a. Accepts responsibilities and performs duties above and beyond what is normally expected.
- b. Demonstrates extensive knowledge and competence in a wide array of work and related topics.
- c. Displayed initiative and excellence in significantly improving systems, technical procedures, or administrative practices using knowledge and expertise in troubleshooting/solving problems quickly.
- d. Handles additional duties increasing their workload effectively and in a timely manner.

This award will be a certificate and lapel pin presented by the Chief of Police.

#### 10. Chief's Commendation Certificate

May be awarded to individuals who, through exceptional dedication and personal initiative, perform their duties in an unusually effective manner, consistently demonstrating superior performance and embodying the highest standards of quality and professionalism.

This award may also be awarded to members who make exceptional contributions toward enhancing administrative or operational efficiency and advancing the overall progress of the Department.

The Chief of Police may recognize individual members of other law enforcement organizations or multi-jurisdictional task forces for this award.

This award will be a certificate presented by the Chief of Police or a member of the Chief's Executive Staff.

#### 11. Chief's Unit Citation

May be awarded to an entire unit whose members perform their assigned duties in an unusually effective manner.

The Chief of Police may recognize units comprised of officers from the Aurora Police Department as well as other organizations, or multi-jurisdictional task forces, for this award.

This award will be a certificate presented by the Chief of Police or a member of the Chief's Executive Staff. This award should be tracked to the Chief's Office Administrator.

## 12. Community Commitment Certificate

May be awarded to members who, through their own efforts, display an unusually effective manner of employing the Aurora Police Department's community commitment philosophy by providing the public with police services which embody the concepts of:

- a. Police employee/community identification, ownership, and trust or;
- b. A two-way dialogue between the police organization and the community or;
- c. A problem-solving approach to the delivery of police services or;
- d. An attention to those factors that contribute to deteriorating conditions in neighborhoods and community decay or;
- e. An official recognition of and an action-oriented approach to those issues which give rise to fear of crime in the community or of crime in the community or;
- f. A skilled utilization of the network of governmental and community resources using specific referrals and coordination or;
- g. An orientation toward the facilitation of community self-help through involvement, knowledge, and organization.

This award will be a certificate presented by the Chief of Police, Chief's Executive Staff, or any District Commander or Bureau Captain.

## 13. Commander's Commendation Certificate

The Commander's Commendation Certificate may be awarded to those members who, through their own efforts, perform their jobs in such a manner as to reflect high quality and professionalism in the performance of their duties.

Track to the command officer in the nominator's chain of command.

This award will be a certificate presented by any command-level officer.

## 14. Certificate of Appreciation - Citizen's Award

The Certificate of Appreciation may be awarded to any citizen who renders valuable, courageous, or heroic assistance to members of the Aurora Police Department.

This award will be a certificate presented by the Chief of Police, Chief's Executive Staff, or any District Commander or Bureau Captain.

## 15. Campaign Ribbons

Campaign Ribbons may be awarded to members following a "Specially Designated Incident" as identified by the Chief of Police.

This award will be a uniform ribbon and a certificate presented by the Chief of Police.

## 16. Earned Wellness Recognition

The Earned Wellness Award recognizes members who demonstrate exemplary commitment to physical fitness, discipline, resilience, and professional responsibility. The assessment will be conducted biannually and coordinated by the Wellness Unit.

Criteria include:

- a. Achieving a qualifying score of 90% or better on the Beep Test, demonstrating aerobic proficiency.
- b. Excelling in the required strength and endurance exercises as identified by the Wellness Unit.

Members who score 90% or above proficiency in the beep test and meet minimum requirements in the selected exercises may be awarded the Earned Wellness Service Ribbon in acknowledgment of their dedication to physical excellence and operational preparedness.

This award consists of a service ribbon presented upon the successful completion of the assessment.

#### 17. Annual “Of The Year” Sworn and Professional Staff Team and Individual Awards

The department will recognize sworn and professional staff teams and individuals whose duty performance over the current awards year demonstrates exemplary actions by distinguishing themselves on a specific incident or on a series of actions that led to a positive outcome. Possible criteria of exemplary actions include judgment, initiative, courage, teamwork, investigative skills, commendations, specific incidents of exemplary performance, work on special projects, a response to a specified criminal incident, or a major critical incident. Nominations should include a letter articulating the specific actions of the team to demonstrate how they meet the criteria.

The three eligible team categories within the APD that have provided the most outstanding service to the department during the year will be recognized:

- a. Sworn Member Team
- b. Investigations Team
- c. Professional Staff Team

Individual “Of the Year” awards will follow the same criteria as the listed eligibility criteria for the team nominations. Nominations should include a letter articulating the specific actions of the individual to demonstrate how they meet the criteria. The nomination should also include the following, if applicable:

- a. Commendations and Departmental awards
- b. Specific incidents and detailed examples of exemplary performance
- c. Specific work on special projects with a measurable outcome or result
- d. Community involvement with specific details of their activities

The six eligible individual categories within the APD that have provided the most outstanding service to the department during the year will be recognized:

- a. Officer
- b. Agent
- c. Sergeant
- d. Command Officer (Lieutenant and above)
- e. Professional Staff member
- f. Professional Staff Supervisor

Any member (sworn or non-sworn) can complete a nomination. All nominations should go through the nominee's chain of command up to that division's commander or manager. That division's commander or manager, with their approval, will track the approved nominations to the Awards Board Chairperson through the personnel tracking system. The board will review the nominations and vote based on the information provided in the submitted nominations.

The recipients of the annual individual awards will be presented at the annual award ceremony. Any member during this time frame who has been sustained on an Internal Affairs Investigation will not be considered unless there is approval from the Chief of Police. The Awards Board will review nominations, members' eligibility and discipline status.

The Chief of Police will present a ribbon and certificate to the annual "Of the Year" award recipients.

#### 10.7.05 REPLACEMENT OF MEDALS AND RIBBONS

Members receive one medal and/or ribbon for each awarded event. It is the responsibility of the member to properly care for and maintain their medals and ribbons. In special circumstances, members may submit a written request explaining their situation and the need for replacement medals or ribbons. Qualifying circumstances may include natural disasters, fire, flood, or theft. If the circumstance is deemed qualifying, the issued award can be replaced at the department's expense. The board will review and vote on the request in the next meeting, and the Chairperson will communicate the decision.

If a member's request is denied due to lack of availability or high cost of replacement, they may purchase duplicate medals and ribbons at their own expense. In such cases, the board will provide the member with the manufacturer's contact information and any necessary details.

#### 10.7.06 PROCEDURE FOR NOMINATING A MEMBER FOR AWARDS

Any member may nominate another member as a candidate for any of the awards listed in 10.7.1. The circumstances of an act or contribution to the department's objectives must meet the prerequisites of the specific award.

Members making an award nomination will use the current Digital Tracking System, accompanied by any supporting reports or documentation attached as exhibits if possible.

Nominations for the Medal of Honor, Distinguished Service Cross, Meritorious Service Ribbon, Purple Heart, Life Saving Award, the Innovation Award, the Superior Service Award and the Excellence Award, "Of the Year", and Certificate of Appreciation – Citizens Award will be forwarded via Digital Tracking System through the member's chain of command and tracked to the acting Awards Board Chairperson.

Nominations for the Commander's Commendation Certificate, the Chief's Commendation Certificate, and the Chief's Unit Citation will not be processed through the Awards Board.

Nominations for the Chief's Commendation Certificate, and the Chief's Unit Citation, will be forwarded via Digital Tracking System to the Office of the Chief of Police. Upon approval, the certificate will be awarded by the Chief of Police or a member of the Chief's Executive Staff during events throughout the year.

Nominations for the Commander's Commendation Certificate and the Community Commitment Certificate will be forwarded via Digital Tracking System only as far as the appropriate Commander or Captain. It is the Commander or Captain's responsibility to review and distribute the certificate in a timely manner to the member.

## 10.7.07 AWARD BOARD SELECTION PROCESS

The Chief of Police will appoint an Awards Board, hereinafter referred to as the Board, to inquire into, and evaluate, the circumstances for which members have been nominated for awards.

The Board will consist of seven (7) voting members and one (1) non-voting member. At a minimum, there will be one (1) Lieutenant or Sergeant assigned as Chairperson of the Board, one (1) Sergeant, one (1) Agent, one (1) Officer and one (1) civilian. The two (2) remaining positions may be filled from any rank. The non-voting member can be sworn or non-sworn, but will assist the board with administrative needs. If a vacancy occurs on the Board, the Chairperson will poll members of the department via e-mail to determine those who are interested. Those names will be voted on by the existing committee members for selection. The Chief of Police will approve a new Chairperson from the existing board when that position is vacated.

## 10.7.08 DUTIES OF THE AWARD BOARD

The Board will meet as needed to consider and review nominations. The Board will only review and vote on the following awards:

1. Medal of Honor
2. Distinguished Service Cross
3. Meritorious Service Ribbon
4. Purple Heart
5. Life Saving Award
6. Innovation Award
7. Superior Service Award
8. Excellence Award
9. "Of the Year"

At the direction of the Assistant Chief, the Board may also vote on:

10. Certificate of Appreciation – Citizens Award

Once a nomination is received by the Board Chairperson, it will be formally processed, logged, and presented to the Board. The Board may investigate the circumstances of the nomination and collect facts, both favorable and unfavorable to the member for whom the nomination was made. Nominees may be interviewed by the Board before a vote and nomination to the Assistant Chief of Police.

The Board, having heard all witnesses and evaluated all reports and written statements, will deliberate the facts presented in a closed session. Each Board member's vote is considered confidential and will only be disclosed if requested by the Chief of Police. If a board member is a nominator, they will exclude themselves from the presentation and voting, and the eighth member of the board will vote in their place. Upon reaching a conclusion, the Board will recommend to the Assistant Chief of Police one of the following alternatives in writing:

1. That the facts, as presented, do not warrant further action on the matter at hand.
2. That some justification for recognition exists, but that such recognition has been determined by the Board to be for a lesser award than was recommended by the nominating member.
3. That the circumstances surrounding the act met the prerequisites of the award recommended by the nominating member and that it is the decision of the Board that the nomination be approved.

4. That the circumstances surrounding the act met the prerequisites for a higher award than was recommended. The decision of the Board is that the higher award be approved.

### 10.7.09 DISTRIBUTION OF APPROVED AWARDS

Awards will be distributed as follows:

1. A copy of the nomination and original award(s) paperwork will be retained by the Board indefinitely, either digitally or in paper copy. The Board Chairperson is responsible for maintaining a historical record of all award nominations, whether approved or disapproved by the Board.
2. Once an award(s) has been voted on by the Board and approved by the Assistant Chief of Police, the Board Chairperson will notify the member and his or her immediate supervisor via the current digital tracking system of the recommendation. This recommendation should be included in the members' working personnel file as a PAE and yearly evaluation.
3. The Board will be responsible for planning an annual awards ceremony. All department members, as well as immediate family members, are invited to attend.
4. Members receiving an award need to give a copy to their immediate supervisor to be included in their working electronic employee file. Supervisors will document any award in the administrative management system (AMS) and annually in the member's evaluation.
5. The Awards Board is responsible for maintaining and updating the awards history spreadsheet, which documents all awards that have been issued. This should be done annually after the awards ceremony. The Board is also responsible for maintaining an adequate inventory of medals, ribbons, and/or pins to meet the demand for the annual awards ceremony.

### 10.7.10 APPROVAL AND PRESENTATION OF AWARDS

The Chief of Police or designee will make the final decision on all awards after reviewing any comments or recommendations that may have been submitted through the chain of command review process and after receiving the recommendations of the Board. Any member may appeal a Board decision on a nomination directly to the Chief of Police.

Formal presentation of all awards may be made by the Chief of Police or designee, Commander or Bureau/Section Command Officer as appropriate. The formal presentation will be during the annual award ceremony.

### 10.7.11 WEARING OF AWARDS

Members wearing awards will do so according to Department Directive 08.01 - Appearance.

### 10.7.12 APPEALS PROCESS

Board members will review and vote on submitted nominations before the submission deadline. If the board's consensus determines that the nomination does not meet the prerequisites of the specific award, the nominator or nominee may appeal the board's decision. An appeal may be submitted in writing to the board chairperson, followed by a presentation to present their case. At the conclusion of the appeals presentation, the presenter/nominator shall not be present while members of the board reconsider all facts and information made available before voting to reconsider the presentation of the award.

The nominator must complete APD Form [304 Awards Board Appeal Form](#) and submit it to the board for review at the next scheduled Awards Board meeting.

Appeals will only be considered for the formal awards and will not apply to the 'Of the Year' awards.