



## Policy 1712

Subject	
<b>DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS AND COMMENDATION</b>	
Date Published	Page
<b>4 April 2017</b>	<b>1 of 7</b>

*By Order of the Police Commissioner*

### **POLICY**

It is the policy of the Baltimore Police Department (BPD) to recognize and acknowledge the meritorious service of its members.

### **PROCEDURE**

#### **Supervisory Personnel**

1. Are encouraged to nominate any member of the agency or non-member of the agency (to include a member of another public safety organization or citizen) by completing Form 050/84, Meritorious Conduct Award. Upon completing the form forward the form to the nominee's Commanding Officer for remarks and signature. Scan/email the completed form to: [MeritoriousService@BaltimorePolice.org](mailto:MeritoriousService@BaltimorePolice.org).
2. Clearly and thoroughly explain the level of participation for each participant in the incident.
3. All submissions for unit citations should be for the following time periods: January 1 - June 30, July 1 – December 31, or January 1 – December 31. The exception would be for a unit that performed duties that were case specific.
4. Submit all nominations for the Citation of Valor, via official channels, to the Police Commissioner.

#### **Commanding Officer**

1. Recognize meritorious service by members of your command.
2. Review and provide a recommendation on Form 050/84, Meritorious Conduct Award.
3. Retain a copy of all commendatory action reports and recognition of the award in the member's personnel jacket at the district/division/bureau of origin.

#### **Chairperson, Meritorious Service Board**

1. The Director, Professional Development and Training Academy (PDTA) or designee will serve as the Chairperson, Meritorious Service Board. The Chairperson will hold the rank of Lieutenant or above.

2. Be accountable to the Police Commissioner and act as his/her designee, for the actions of the Board.
3. Conduct meetings of the Board when necessary.
4. Call witnesses and request reports when appropriate.
5. Provide the Board with proper guidance, when needed. Ensure all decisions of the board reflect a majority vote. The Chairperson will vote only to break a tie.
6. Make all necessary preparations for the appropriate awards ceremony.

**Members, Meritorious Service Board**

1. Meet when notified by the Chairperson, Meritorious Service Board.
2. Consider award nominations submitted.
3. Do not vote when you are involved in or a witness to any matter under review.
4. Review the facts and circumstances of each Meritorious Conduct Award Report submitted and select one of the following options:
  - 4.1. Deny a Meritorious Service Award.
  - 4.2. Defer action on a particular report pending additional information.
  - 4.3. Recommend a Meritorious Service Award for the Police Commissioner or his/her designee's consideration.

**Director, Human Resources Section**

1. Ensure the approved Meritorious Service Award Report is included in the member's personnel file.
2. Retain the original letter of appreciation or commendation with the copy of the commanding officer's acknowledgement in the member's personnel record.

**Composition of the Meritorious Service Board**

The Police Commissioner will appoint the members of the Meritorious Service Board for a term of two years. The Board will be composed of 13 members from each rank and civilians. Seventy percent of the Board (i.e., nine members) must be appointed from the Chief of Patrol. Three alternate members will also be appointed to the Meritorious Service Board.

**Display of Awards**

1. Above the Badge - Wear in lines, centered over and approximately ¼" above the badge:
  - 1.1. Medal of Honor.
  - 1.2. Legion of Merit.

- 1.3. Silver Star.
- 1.4. Bronze Star.
- 1.5. Life Saving Award.
- 1.6. Distinguished Service Award.
- 1.7. Commendation.
2. Display these awards, two to a line, with the highest award being worn to the right (inboard) or above awards of lesser distinction.
3. When the number of ribbons constitutes an odd number, wear the highest award above awards of lesser distinction. If the Legion of Merit is displayed, it shall be centered above all other awards subordinate to the Medal of Honor. If the Medal of Honor is displayed, it shall be worn centered over the badge and above all other awards.
4. Wear the following awards in a line centered over and approximately ¼" above the name plate:
  - 4.1. Citation of Valor.
  - 4.2. Gun Arrest Award.
  - 4.3. Service Cross.
  - 4.4. Unit Citation.
  - 4.5. Special Service Commendation.
  - 4.6. Sergeants' Leadership Ribbon.
  - 4.7. Safe Driver Commendation.
  - 4.8. Expert Pistol Ribbon.
  - 4.9. Patrol Rifleman Pin
5. Display these awards, two to a line, with the highest award being worn to the right (inboard) or above awards of lesser distinction.
6. Wear two color ribbons with the orange or gold portion inboard to the black or blue portion of the ribbon. Awards with a gold star are worn with the point of the star up.
7. Wear awards or commendations from other agencies and/or the military only with the prior approval of the Police Commissioner. Awards of this nature will be worn above the badge subordinate to any departmental awards, but in the same manner as departmental awards. Awards from other law enforcement agencies shall be worn above military awards or commendations.

8. When you have received more than two of any single award, a gold numeral indicating the total number received may be affixed to one ribbon and worn in conformance with the guidelines above.
9. Soliciting, accepting, or wearing awards from the community without obtaining specific permission of the Commanding Officer is prohibited.

### **Award Ceremony Procedure**

1. The Chairperson of the Meritorious Service Board shall organize an award ceremony after a date and time given by the Police Commissioner has been determined. The Police Commissioner (or designee) will present award(s) to recipient(s) at a ceremony at the Police Headquarters Building or at an appropriate time or place.
2. Posthumous awarding of the Medal of Honor or Citation of Valor by the Police Commissioner (or designee) shall be accomplished either at a ceremony at the Police Headquarters Building, at roll call attended by the deceased member's shift or at the residence of the next of kin, in conformance with the wishes of the deceased member's next of kin.
3. The District Commander/Commanding Officer (or designee) will present the following awards: Unit Citation, Life Saving Award, Commendation, Special Service Commendation, and Commendatory Letter. Presentation of these awards shall be made at roll call.

### **Departmental Commendations – Standards for Achievement**

The standards for achievement are explained for the following awards:

1. **MEDAL OF HONOR** – The Medal of Honor is awarded by the Police Commissioner to members who distinguish themselves conspicuously by gallantry and courage at the risk of their own lives, above and beyond the call of duty, in an extraordinary act of heroism and bravery without endangering or jeopardizing the lives of others and without detriment in any way to their sworn oath. A member must perform an act so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes superlative courage, beyond the call of duty, from lesser forms of bravery. The Medal of Honor, when awarded posthumously, shall be affixed to a plaque with a replica of the member's badge and an appropriate inscription. This plaque shall be presented to the deceased member's next of kin by the Police Commissioner or his/her designee. A plaque of similar design shall be displayed in the Departmental Memorial Shrine located in the lobby of the Headquarters Building.
2. **LEGION OF MERIT** – Awarded by the Police Commissioner to members who have distinguished themselves and the Baltimore Police Department through conspicuously outstanding accomplishments in law enforcement. This award may be given for exceptionally meritorious conduct in the performance of outstanding service in a law enforcement agency. This activity must be beneficial to and acknowledged by law enforcement agencies in other jurisdictions and so conspicuously outstanding in achievement to impact upon future endeavors in the field of law enforcement.
3. **SILVER STAR** – Awarded by the Police Commissioner for an exceptional act or execution of duty performed in the presence of great danger and personal risk without endangering or jeopardizing the lives of others, and performed in such a manner as to clearly indicate that the sworn member displayed outstanding ability and judgment in the performance of duty. This

exceptional performance of duty should have resulted in the prevention or solution of a crime, the arrest of those responsible, and thereby sets apart and distinguishes the member from other members. To merit this award the act must be heroic, but not to the degree justifying the Medal of Honor. This award shall not be granted for arrests resulting solely from information from an informant.

4. **BRONZE STAR** — Awarded by the Police Commissioner to sworn members who distinguish themselves by displaying exceptionally meritorious service to the department and to the community. The sworn member must have displayed abilities and exercised judgment well above the expected standard and thereby contributed materially to the success of a major mission, investigation or endeavor. It may be awarded for an act involving personal danger under aggravated or hostile circumstances and for protecting or saving the life of another.
5. **LIFE SAVING AWARD** — Awarded by the Police Commissioner to sworn members whose decisive actions save the life of another person. Situations include: CPR, Heimlich Maneuver, prompt application of first aid in potentially fatal situations, and any other act that saves a life. This award may also be granted to members for the above described actions taken when, despite the member's best efforts, the victim dies.
6. **CITATION OF VALOR** — Sworn members who have sustained gunshot wounds, stab wounds, or serious injury under aggravated and hostile circumstances which could result in death or permanent disability while acting in their official capacity are eligible for this award. Authority for the issuance of the Citation of Valor lies solely with the Police Commissioner.
7. **GUN ARREST AWARD** — Awarded by the Police Commissioner to a sworn member who has the highest number of incidents department-wide during a 28-day period, which led to arrestees being charged with firearms related offenses, OR to a sworn member who has conducted an exceptional investigation that led to an arrest for a firearms related offense.
8. **DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD** — Awarded by the Police Commissioner to members who have distinguished themselves by exceptionally meritorious service. The Distinguished Service Award may be awarded to sworn and civilian members who have displayed their abilities well above the expected standards reflecting technical or administrative achievement or exceptional leadership in achieving a specific goal, objective or innovation. It distinguishes the individual's performance which is identifiable in achievement, effect or consequence.
9. **COMMENDATION** — To merit this award, the act of service must be accomplished or performed in a manner above what is normally expected. It must be sufficient to distinguish the individual member above those of comparable positions and responsibility and reflect a highly credible accomplishment. The award may be given for submitting an adopted suggestion which constitutes a definite contribution to the department, such as, invention or innovation resulting in an improved design, procedure, organization or relating to crime prevention or crime resistance. It may be awarded when members have displayed extraordinary intelligence, coverage and ability in effecting arrests, preventing a crime or solving a case.
10. **UNIT CITATION** — Any bureau, division, district, section, subdivision, unit or squad of members of the department is eligible for this award. The Unit Citation is awarded by the District Commander/Commanding Officer (or designee) to commend extraordinary law enforcement performance attention to duty, contribution to this agency or to the general welfare of the citizens of the City of Baltimore. The criteria for the awarding of this recognition are the same as that for the Commendation when a group effort is recognized. The mutual and full participation

of all unit members in the cited activity must be explained in detail in order to be considered for this unit distinction.

11. **EXPERT PISTOL RIBBON** — Awarded by Range personnel to all sworn members who score 100 percent during both daytime and nighttime qualifications. A member who was issued a ribbon and fails to maintain the established score during the following qualification must return the ribbon to the Range.
12. **PATROL RIFLEMAN PIN** — Awarded by Range personnel to all sworn members upon successful completion of the Department's Patrol Rifle Training Program. The pin shall be worn on the right side of the uniform shirt centered just above the name plate.
13. **SPECIAL SERVICE COMMENDATION** — Awarded by the Police Commissioner upon an occasion of meritorious service or special achievement by members of the Department. The design of this award may vary according to the occasion. Authority for the issuance of the Special Service Commendation lies solely with the Police Commissioner.
14. **SERGEANTS' LEADERSHIP RIBBON** — Awarded by the Police Commissioner to agency sergeants upon successful completion of the Department's Sergeants' Leadership School.
15. **SAFE DRIVER COMMENDATION** — Awarded as part of the departmental Fleet Safety Awareness Program to those members not involved in a departmental accident classified as preventable for a period determined by the Police Commissioner.
16. **SPECIAL CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION** — A special certificate signed by the Police Commissioner recognizing a law enforcement officer and/or any individual who works in Public Safety for their contribution to this department and the community as a whole. Any Public Safety Official who is not a member of the Baltimore Police Department is eligible for this award presented by the Police Commissioner for valuable or courageous acts, which render assistance to this department.
17. **CITIZEN'S AWARD** — A certificate of appreciation signed by the Police Commissioner noting the citizen's contribution to this department and the community as a whole. Any person who is not a member of the Baltimore Police Department is eligible for this award presented by the Police Commissioner for valuable, courageous, or heroic acts, which render assistance to this department.
18. **CIVILIAN SERVICE AWARD** — A special lapel pin awarded to civilian employees by the Police Commissioner commemorating 20 and 30 years of service, respectively.
19. **COMMENDATORY LETTER** — A personal letter of commendation from the Police Commissioner directed to the member for acts of courtesy, professionalism, etc. as recommended by the Meritorious Service Board.

### **Appeals Process**

If a member feels an exemplary work event or performance has been overlooked, he/she may submit an administrative report through his/her chain of command to the Meritorious Service Board for consideration and review. However, the authority to award a meritorious service award rests

solely with the Police Commissioner or his/her designee. A decision for or against an award is made for every submission and the decision is final.

**RESCISSION**

Remove and destroy/recycle Policy 1712, *Departmental Awards and Commendations*, dated 23 Jun 2016.

**COMMUNICATION OF POLICY**

This policy is effective on the date listed herein. Each employee is responsible for complying with the contents of this policy.