



**Charleston County Sheriff's Office
Policy and Procedures Manual**

Sheriff Carl Ritchie

2-20

AWARDS PROGRAM

- NEW
- REVISED
- REVIEWED

ACA Standards Reference:
CALEA Standards Reference: 26.1.2
NCCHC Standards Reference:
SCLEA Standards Reference:
SC Minimum Standards:

I. Purpose:

To establish a uniform system for the nomination and selection of employees of the Sheriff's Office and members of the general public in recognition of meritorious service.

II. Policy:

The Charleston County Sheriff's Office is committed to identifying personnel from the agency and the general public whose deeds stimulate a quest for excellence and merit attention and praise.

III. Definitions:

A. For purposes of this procedure, the word "deputy" applies to all agency employees with a certification classification of Class I, Class II, Class III, or Reserve Deputy as defined by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy.

The following terms are used interchangeably; however, they carry guidance to specific employees based on usage of the term:

1. Deputy, deputy sheriff, detention deputy, sworn employee, uniformed sworn employee, sworn administrative employee, etc., and
2. civilian, non-sworn employee.

B. *Employee*: When used without further clarification, the term employee is inclusive of all agency members (sworn and non-sworn).

IV. Procedure:

A. Nomination Process:

1. Nominations may originate from any employee within the Charleston County Sheriff's Office. The individual making the nomination does not have to be the nominee's supervisor. Any individual within the agency may nominate another for an award. All nominations will be entered into **Blue Team** for tracking and review.
2. Citizens or organizations in the private sector may request nominations from the Sheriff's Office via the Bureau Chiefs. No individual can be nominated for an outside award without the Bureau Chief's review and approval.
3. All Sheriff's Office personnel, as well as citizens meeting the criteria for eligibility, may be nominated to receive the applicable awards.

B. Selection Process:

1. **Chain of Command:** Nominations in Blue Team will be reviewed through the nominee's direct chain of command.
2. **Bureau Chiefs:** Following the chain of command, the respective Bureau Chiefs will review nominations to ensure compliance with stated criteria.
3. **Office of Professional Standards (OPS):** Bureau Chiefs will forward nominations through to the OPS.
4. **Public Information Office (PIO):** The OPS will forward nominations to the PIO.
5. **Final Decision:** The PIO will present the nominations to the Bureau Chiefs for the final decision.
6. **Notification:** Upon final approval, an award notification will be forwarded to the Office of Professional Standards and a copy of the award letter will be entered into the employee's personnel file.
7. Presentations of all awards will be made at formal quarterly awards ceremonies. Unless directed otherwise, all medals will be presented at quarterly awards ceremonies. Awards from outside agencies may be presented as announced.
8. If the recipient cannot be present to receive the award, the award will be announced to those in attendance, but not presented to a "stand in" for the employee. The captain, or designee, of the division in which the award is assigned will present the award and accompanying documents at their next shift briefing, unit meeting or team meeting that the employee is assigned.
(REF: CALEA 26.1.2)

C. Awards presented by the Charleston County Sheriff's Office, and their criteria, include:

1. **Medal of Honor:**

The highest award bestowed upon personnel of the Sheriff's Office. This medal may be awarded to personnel who, in the line of duty, give their life or distinguish themselves by the performance of an act of courage involving risk or imminent danger to their life, with knowledge of the risk. The act must have been performed for the purpose of saving or protecting human life. There may be no margin of doubt or possibility of error in awarding this honor. Personnel must render themselves conspicuous by an act so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes their courage. Nominations for the

Medal of Honor must be accompanied by supporting documentation relevant to the incident (e.g., incident and supplemental reports, statements from witnesses, etc.). The recipient will receive a commendation letter, the Medal of Honor, and a monetary award.

2. The Gold Star:

This medal may be posthumously awarded to the family of personnel who were killed or died under honorable conditions in the performance of official duties. Nominations for the Gold Star must be accompanied by supporting documentation relevant to the incident (e.g., incident and supplemental reports, statements from witnesses, etc.). The recipient will receive a commendation letter and the Gold Star Medal.

3. The Silver Star:

This medal may be awarded to personnel who, in the performance of their official duty, sustains serious physical injuries as a result of hostile behavior by another using a dangerous instrument or deadly weapon. Nominations for the Silver Star must be accompanied by supporting documentation relevant to the incident (e.g., incident, and supplemental reports, statements from witnesses, etc.). The recipient will receive a commendation letter, the Silver Star, and a monetary award.

4. Life Saving Medal:

This medal may be presented to personnel who physically rescue a person from the likelihood of certain death; or render first aid of a distinguished or unusually credible nature to a person whose life is in immediate jeopardy; or render first aid in a manner that sustains the person and enables the person to be delivered alive to a medical facility. Nominations for the Life Saving Medal must be accompanied by an incident report relative to the incident in question along with supporting medical documentation and/or supporting statements of the lifesaving efforts. The medical documentation may be in the form of a statement from a medical doctor attending the person, the person's family physician, or EMS statements, records, and/or statements of any qualified medical personnel who were at the scene. A statement from the person or a family member of the person whose life was saved may also be submitted as evidence of life saving efforts. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, the Life Saving Medal, and a monetary award.

5. Narcan Life Saving Award:

This award is presented to personnel who successfully administer Narcan (Naloxone) in response to an opioid overdose, resulting in the saving or preservation of a human life. This award recognizes the critical actions taken by deputies and personnel in rapidly identifying overdose symptoms,

administering life-saving aid, and stabilizing individuals in life-threatening situations. The recipient will receive a commendation letter.

6. Distinguished Service Medal:

This medal may be presented to any agency employee who, over the years, has a distinguished record of service to the Agency and law enforcement profession. Recipients of this award are leaders who have counseled others in their profession, given selflessly their time and talent to advance the Agency and law enforcement profession, improving its overall effectiveness. Recipients have a record of working with community groups to strengthen relations with the law enforcement community or providing charitable work to better the community in which they serve. Nominations for the Distinguished Service Medal must be accompanied by supporting documentation and/or statements reflecting the above criteria. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, the Distinguished Service Medal, and a monetary award.

7. Citizen Award:

A plaque and a monetary award, accompanied with a letter of appreciation and/or certificate of service, may be awarded by the Sheriff to a citizen who has rendered assistance to the Sheriff's Office in an emergency or special situation or who has contributed to the welfare of the community.

8. Deputy of the Quarter Award (Detention & Law):

This award may be presented to a non-supervisory, certified sworn employee who has exhibited exemplary performance in any aspect of law enforcement during the cited quarter. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award. The criteria for nomination may include:

- a. recognition of a heroic act;
- b. high personal standards and service above and beyond the call of duty;
- c. display of high level of technical excellence;
- d. display of innovation and initiative in creating new concepts or ideas;
- e. extensive years of service with the agency, completing a variety of successful tasks along his/her career; and/or

f. other exemplary performance as so deemed by the Sheriff.

9. **Deputy of the Year Award** (Operations, Investigations, Administration, Judicial, Detention, and Civilian):

This award may be presented to a non-supervisory, certified sworn employee who has exhibited exemplary performance in any aspect of law enforcement during the cited year for which the award is given. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award. The criteria for nomination may include:

- a. recognition of a heroic act;
- b. high personal standards and service above and beyond the call of duty;
- c. display of high level of technical excellence;
- d. display of innovation and initiative in creating new concepts or ideas;
- e. extensive years of service with the agency, completing a variety of successful tasks along his/her career; and/or
- f. other exemplary performance as so deemed by the Sheriff.

10. **Rookie of the Year** (Detention and Law)

This award is presented to a deputy who has excelled in the performance of his/her duties and demonstrated a high degree of professionalism that sets a positive example for other new employees to follow.

Candidates will have been employed with the Agency for no longer than eighteen months. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award.

The criteria for nomination may include:

- a. performing a courageous or life-saving act early in the deputy's career;
- b. maintaining high personal standards and providing service above and beyond the call of duty during the initial period of employment;
- c. displaying a high level of technical excellence and a rapid mastery of law enforcement or detention procedures;

- d. displaying initiative in suggesting or creating new concepts or ideas that improve agency operations;
- e. demonstrating an outstanding early career trajectory through the successful completion of various tasks and responsibilities;
- f. other exemplary performance as so deemed by the Sheriff.

11. **Civilian Employee of the Quarter/Year Award** (Detention and Law):

This award may be presented to civilian employees who, in the capacity of their employment, exhibited exemplary performance in any aspect of their duties of employment with the agency during the cited quarter or year for which the award is given. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award. The criteria for nomination may include:

- a. high personal standards and service above and beyond the call of duty;
- b. display of high level of technical excellence;
- c. display of innovation and initiative in creating new concepts in serving the public or this office;
- d. extensive years of service with this agency, completing a variety of successful tasks along their career;
- e. recognition of a heroic act; and/or
- f. other exemplary performance as so deemed by the Sheriff.

12. **Supervisor of the Quarter:**

This award may be presented to any supervisor who, in the capacity of their employment, exhibited exemplary performance in any aspect of their supervisory duties with the agency. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award. The criteria for nomination may include:

- a. recognition of a heroic act;
- b. high personal standards and service above and beyond the call of duty;

- c. display of high level of technical excellence, or supervisory leadership responsibilities;
- d. display of innovation and initiative in creating new concepts or ideas;
- e. extensive years of service with this agency, completing a variety of successful tasks along his or her career;
- f. outstanding efforts in the furtherance of the provision of law enforcement or detention services; and/or
- g. other exemplary performance as recognized by the Sheriff.

13. **Supervisor of the Year** (Operations, Investigations, Administration, Judicial, Detention, and Civilian):

This award may be presented to any supervisor who, in the capacity of their employment, exhibited exemplary performance in any aspect of their supervisory duties with the agency. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award. The criteria for nomination may include:

- a. recognition of a heroic act;
- b. high personal standards and service above and beyond the call of duty;
- c. display of high level of technical excellence, or supervisory leadership responsibilities;
- d. display of innovation and initiative in creating new concepts or ideas;
- e. extensive years of service with this agency, completing a variety of successful tasks along his or her career;
- f. outstanding efforts in the furtherance of the provision of law enforcement or detention services; and/or
- g. other exemplary performance as recognized by the Sheriff.

14. **Traffic Deputy of the Year:**

This award is presented to personnel for exemplary performance, high technical excellence, and dedication to traffic safety and enforcement. The

recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award. The criteria for nomination include:

- a. recognition of a heroic act;
- b. high personal standards and service above and beyond the call of duty;
- c. displaying a high level of technical excellence in traffic reconstruction, enforcement technology, or safety analysis;
- d. showing initiative in creating new concepts or ideas for traffic safety programs or enforcement strategies;
- e. extensive years of service with the agency, completing a variety of successful tasks along his/her career; and/or
- f. other exemplary performance as so deemed by the Sheriff.

15. School Resource Officer of the Year:

This award is presented for exemplary service, initiative, and community relation efforts within the school system. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award. The criteria for nomination include:

- a. recognition of a heroic act performed within the school environment or in protection of students and staff;
- b. high personal standards and service above and beyond the call of duty;
- c. display of a high level of technical excellence in school safety planning, threat assessment, or juvenile law.
- d. display of innovation and initiative in creating new programs or concepts to improve relations between students and law enforcement;
- e. extensive years of service with the agency, specifically demonstrating a long-term positive impact on the school community; and/or
- f. other exemplary performance as so deemed by the Sheriff.

16. Investigator of the Year:

This award is presented for outstanding investigative skill, dedication to cases, and technical excellence in the field of investigations. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award. The criteria for nomination include:

- a. recognition of a heroic act;
- b. high personal standards and service above and beyond the call of duty in the pursuit of justice and case resolution.
- c. display of high level of technical excellence;
- d. display of innovation and initiative in creating new concepts or ideas;
- e. extensive years of service with the agency, successfully closing a wide variety of cases throughout their investigative career; and/or
- f. other exemplary performance as so deemed by the Sheriff.

17. Explorer of the Year Award

This award is presented to a member of the Charleston County Sheriff's Office Explorer Program who has demonstrated outstanding dedication, professionalism, and commitment to the mission and values of the agency. The recipient will receive a commendation letter and a plaque.

18. Running Shoe Quarter/Yearly Award:

- a. The award will be presented to any sworn personnel who apprehend an individual during a foot pursuit during that quarter. The recipient will receive a commendation letter for the quarterly award. Nominations for this award must be accompanied by a copy of the incident report as supporting documentation.
- b. A yearly award will be presented to the employee who has earned the most Running Shoe Awards during that calendar year. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award.

19. Special Recognition Commendation:

The Awards Committee recognizes that sometimes an employee does something that is "deserving of special recognition," which does not fall

into any of the above categories. This category is devised to recognize exceptional employees for actions during the cited quarter for which the award is being given. The recipient will receive a commendation letter.

20. Chief Deputy Carroll B. Gordon Award:

In order to qualify for nomination for this annual award, the employee must exhibit the following characteristics:

- a. unwavering commitment to the citizens of Charleston County;
- b. devotion to the mission of the Charleston County Sheriff's Office;
- c. devotion to fellow Sheriff's Office employees;
- d. exemplify the positive aspects of the Sheriff's Office in all actions and deeds; and
- e. genuine concern for others, based on benevolence and charitable compassion.

The recipient will receive a commendation letter, plaque, and a monetary award.

21. Reserve Deputy Sheriff of the Year Award:

The reserve deputy sheriff who has given the most hours of service during the current year will be recognized at the annual awards banquet. The recipient will receive a commendation letter, and a plaque.

22. Unit of the Quarter Award/Year Award (Detention and Law):

This award may be presented to any organized group or unit who, within the capacity of their employment, has exhibited exemplary performance in their duties and responsibilities with this agency. The yearly award will include a letter from the Sheriff and a trophy, which will be retained by the unit selected until relinquished at the end of the year when a new Unit of the Year is named. The Unit of the Quarter will receive a plaque and a letter from the Sheriff. The criteria for nominations may include:

- a. recognizable high standards and/or service above and beyond the call of duty;
- b. recognition of a heroic act;
- c. display of high level of technical excellence exceeding normal

expectations;

- d. outstanding efforts in the furtherance of the provision of law enforcement or detention services;
- e. display of new concepts, innovative ideas, or initiatives in the development and implementation of new programs;
- f. recognizable team efforts in working toward achievement of a unit or group goal; and/or
- g. other exemplary performance as recognized by the Sheriff.

23. Length of Service Award:

- a. **Sworn Personnel:** The agency will recognize sworn personnel who permanently retire in good standing. Sworn personnel will be presented a Badge and I.D. card with rank and word "Retired" written across the top. This is presented in a black leather I.D. folder. The old badge and I.D. card will be returned to Logistics. According to the length of continuous service with the Charleston County Sheriff's Office, the retiree will also receive one of the gifts stated below under Levels of Service.

Sworn personnel who permanently retire in good standing, with a minimum of 5 years of continuous service with the Charleston County Sheriff's Office, may purchase their issued pistol and/or shotgun that they would otherwise not be presented with as a Length of Service Award.

A documented transfer of weapon ownership will be completed by an agency approved licensed mediator prior to transferring the weapon to the retiree; whether transferred as a gift or purchased by the retiree.

- b. **Civilian Personnel:** The agency will recognize civilian personnel who permanently retire in good standing. Civilian personnel will receive a plaque and another gift depending on their length of continuous service with the Charleston County Sheriff's Office as stated below under Levels of Service.

- c. **Levels of Service:**

<u>Years</u>	<u>Law</u>	<u>Detention</u>	<u>Civilian</u>
5-9	Plaque	Plaque	Plaque

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**Procedure 2-20
Awards Program**

10-19	Plaque Shotgun \$400	Plaque \$400	Plaque \$400
20+	Shadowbox Pistol \$700	Plaque \$700	Plaque \$700

(REF: CALEA 26.1.2)