



CONCORD POLICE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL ORDER

COMMENDATIONS

GENERAL ORDER: 03.14	CREATED: May 21, 2007	ISSUED: May 6, 2026
CALEA STANDARD: NCLEA STANDARD:		EFFECTIVE: May 20, 2026
ACTION: Amends general order dated January 4, 2023.		REVIEW:

03.14.0 **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this general order is to establish procedures for awarding commendations to coworkers, as well as citizens who take heroic action within the City of Concord.

03.14.1 **POLICY**

It shall be the policy of the Concord Police Department to confer a commendation award or official recognition upon any coworker for action taken on or off duty as outlined in this general order; or, any citizen as outlined in this general order.

03.14.2 **DEFINITIONS**

A. COMMENDATION CHIP

A form of currency that allows coworkers to purchase official department logo merchandise or other merchandise that may be available. Commendation Chips look like poker chips and mimic the look of the department challenge coin. Chips with a black border may be issued to non-supervisory coworkers while chips with a grey border may be issued to supervisory coworkers.

03.14.3 **ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM**

A. COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON

1. The Chief of Police shall appoint a member of the command staff to serve as the committee chairperson for a period of one year, unless otherwise extended. The chairperson shall serve at the discretion of the Chief of Police.
2. The chairperson shall schedule and facilitate committee meetings, provide guidance to committee members, and ensure consistency in the committee voting process.
3. The chairperson shall not normally vote, but may do so to break a tie or as otherwise directed by the Chief of Police.

B. COMMITTEE

1. The Chief of Police shall appoint officers and professional staff to serve as committee members for a period of one year, unless otherwise extended. Committee members shall serve at the discretion of the Chief of Police.

2. A minimum of five (5) committee members are needed to comprise a quorum.
3. Each committee member's vote carries equal weight. A majority vote is required to render a recommendation to the Chief of Police.
4. The committee shall convene monthly at the call of the chairperson. Committee meeting dates and times will vary to allow all committee members with opportunities to participate.
5. The committee shall review nominations for Coworker of the Month, Coworker of the Year, and nominations for service ribbons or other awards outlined in this general order.

C. COMMITTEE SELECTION PROCESS

1. New committee member requests can be submitted for consideration at any time. Interested coworkers can apply via memorandum through their chain of command.
2. Bureau commanders shall refer such requests to the committee chairperson, who shall review the requests and consult with the Chief of Police.
3. The Chief of Police shall periodically appoint members to the committee in order to maintain a reasonably sized pool of committee members for the chairperson to choose from for monthly meetings.

D. AWARD NOMINATION PROCESS

1. Any coworker may nominate another coworker by submitting a memorandum through their chain of command. Nominations shall detail the circumstances, coworker actions, or rationale for the nomination. Supporting documents or evidence shall be included with the nomination memo.
2. A nomination can include multiple coworkers who were involved in the same incident. However, the nomination shall include the specific action or justification for each coworker's nomination.
3. Rejected nominations shall not normally be resubmitted, unless extenuating circumstances exist. Absent additional information or evidence that is compelling in nature, resubmitted nominations shall not be considered.
4. Nominations for Coworker of the Month shall be submitted to the chairperson no later than the 10th of the following month.
5. Nominations for other awards may be submitted at any time, but shall be submitted within a reasonable period of time after the incident giving rise to the nomination.

03.14.4 HEROISM AWARDS**A. MEDAL OF VALOR**

1. The Medal of Valor is considered to be the highest award granted by the Concord Police Department. It is awarded for exceptional bravery at the imminent risk of death or serious bodily injury that goes beyond the call of duty.
2. The act may involve situations where deadly force is used against an officer, or a successful rescue situation in which there was substantial risk of death or serious injury to the coworker.
3. Upon the recommendation of the committee and approval by the Chief of Police, the Medal of Valor shall be conferred upon a coworker as soon as administratively possible.
4. The Medal of Valor award for an officer shall consist of a certificate, a medal, an award ribbon, and twenty (20) commendation chips.
5. The Medal of Valor award for professional staff shall consist of a certificate, a medal, and twenty (20) commendation chips.

B. MERITORIOUS CONDUCT

1. The Meritorious Conduct award is presented to coworker who has performed a deed of personal bravery or self-sacrifice that clearly distinguishes him/her for courageous behavior that does not rise to the standards of the Medal of Valor.
2. The act must be of such a nature that the coworker was fully aware of the threat to his/her personal safety. The coworker acted above and beyond the call of duty at the risk of their own life and demonstrated exceptional courage, extraordinary decisiveness, and keen presence of mind.
3. Upon the recommendation of the committee and approval by the Chief of Police, the Meritorious Conduct award shall be conferred upon a coworker as soon as administratively possible.
4. The award for an officer shall consist of a certificate, a medal, an award ribbon, and fifteen (15) commendation chips.
5. The award for professional staff shall consist of a certificate, a medal, and fifteen (15) commendation chips.

C. PURPLE HEART



1. To be considered for the Purple Heart award, a coworker must have been wounded while confronting a criminal element during the course of police interaction whether on or off duty. The injury or death cannot be attributable to accidental circumstances.
2. The coworker must have sustained a serious bodily injury or permanent disfigurement, a permanent or protracted impairment of the function of or any body part, or a permanent or protracted health impairment.
3. The Purple Heart award can be conferred in conjunction with another award.
4. Upon the recommendation of the committee and approval by the Chief of Police, the Purple Heart award shall be conferred upon a coworker as soon as administratively possible. In the event the coworker succumbs to the injury, the award shall be presented posthumously to the family in the following order:
 - i. Widow/Widower
 - ii. Oldest surviving child
 - iii. Mother
 - iv. Father
 - v. Oldest sibling
5. The award for an officer shall consist of a certificate, an award ribbon, and fifteen (15) commendation chips.
6. The award for professional staff shall consist of a certificate and fifteen (15) commendation chips.

D. LIFESAVING



1. To be considered for the Lifesaving award, a coworker must be directly responsible for saving a human life by applying knowledge of life saving or rescue techniques in a situation that does not threaten the life of the coworker.
2. The lifesaving effort shall be medically certified successful by a conferring physician or other qualified medical professional. This certification can be a verbal conversation with a supervisor or a written document.
3. Upon the recommendation of the committee and approval by the Chief of Police, the Lifesaving award shall be conferred upon a coworker as soon as administratively possible.
4. The award for an officer shall consist of a certificate, an award ribbon, and ten (10) commendation chips.
5. The award for professional staff shall consist of a certificate and ten (10) commendation chips.

03.14.5 SERVICE AWARDS**A. CHIEF'S SUPERIOR LEADERSHIP**

1. The Chief's Superior Leadership award is presented to any coworker at the discretion of the Chief of Police for leadership excellence in the performance of duty and/or honorable conduct and professionalism in pursuit of the department's mission.
2. The award shall be presented with marked appreciation and shall be directed to coworkers where a form of recognition is deemed appropriate and is warranted for such superior achievement reflecting distinction and noteworthy praise on the individual and the Concord Police Department.
3. The award for an officer shall consist of a certificate, an award ribbon, and five (5) commendation chips.
4. The award for professional staff shall consist of a certificate and five (5) commendation chips

NOTE: This award is conferred directly by the Chief of Police. Therefore, nominations are not applicable, and the committee does not review, recommend, or take any other action regarding this award.

B. CHIEF'S UNIT CITATION AWARD

1. The Chief's Unit Citation is awarded to any unit that consistently demonstrates exceptional service in the performance of its duties or undertakes significant or unusual responsibilities with initiative and professionalism.
2. To be eligible for this award, the unit's service must exceed normal job expectations and include at least one specific act of outstanding performance. This may involve executing a coordinated plan, program, investigation, or other official action that reflects positively on the Concord Police Department.
3. The award may also recognize a unit's outstanding performance in achieving departmental goals and objectives through projects, programs, or situations requiring exceptional dedication.
4. For sworn police units, the award shall include a certificate, an award ribbon, and three (3) commendation chips for each member of the unit.
5. For professional staff units, the award shall include a certificate and three (3) commendation chips for each member of the unit.
6. The award shall be presented to all unit members who were involved at the time of the action and who provided significant support.
7. The unit's bureau commander is responsible for documenting unit membership at the time of the action, as well as identifying those who provided significant support.

NOTE: This award is conferred directly by the Chief of Police. Therefore, nominations are not applicable, and the committee does not review, recommend, or take any other action regarding this award.

C. DISTINGUISHED SERVICE



1. The Distinguished Service award is presented to any coworker who makes a significant contribution to the department's mission beyond the ordinary call of duty.
2. The Distinguished Service award shall recognize those incidents wherein a coworker's courage, resourcefulness, tenacity, diligence and/or perseverance in the line of duty goes beyond that which is normally encountered by coworkers in the protection of life or property, the prevention of a major crime or the apprehension of an armed and/or dangerous criminal.
3. Upon the recommendation of the committee and approval by the Chief of Police, the Distinguished Service award shall be conferred upon a coworker as soon as administratively possible.
4. The award for an officer shall consist of a certificate, an award ribbon, and three (3) commendation chips.
5. The award for professional staff shall consist of a certificate and three (3) commendation chips.

D. EXCELLENCE IN POLICE SERVICE



1. The Excellence in Police Service award is presented to any coworker who has continuously demonstrated exceptional service in the performance of their duties or great or unusual responsibility wherein he/she has displayed unusual responsibility and initiative, marked ability, keen observation skills, and exceptional energy.
2. To be considered for this award, service shall exceed normal job requirements with at least one specific act of outstanding performance. This may include a coworker proceeding with a pre-determined plan, program, investigation or other official act that exemplifies the Concord Police Department.
3. The award shall be presented to a coworker for outstanding performance in achieving departmental goals and objectives through projects, programs, or situations requiring exceptional dedication.
4. Upon the recommendation of the committee and approval by the Chief of Police, the Excellence in Police Service award shall be conferred upon a coworker as soon as administratively possible.
5. The award for an officer shall consist of a certificate, an award ribbon, and three (3) commendation chips.
6. The award for professional staff shall consist of a certificate and three (3) commendation chips.

E. COMMUNITY SERVICE



1. The Community Service award is presented to any coworker who has shown a commitment to the welfare of the community beyond the normal call of duty. Such commitment can be demonstrated in a single act or in a series of acts that focus on advancing the quality of life of city residents.
2. These acts may range from exceptional job related community interaction, to volunteer or community service work during the coworker's own time.
3. Upon the recommendation of the committee and approval by the Chief of Police, the Community Service award shall be conferred upon a coworker as soon as administratively possible.
4. The award for an officer shall consist of a certificate, an award ribbon, and three (3) commendation chips.
5. The award for professional staff shall consist of a certificate and three (3) commendation chips.

F. MERLYN C. HAMILTON IM-PACT (POLICE AND COMMUNITY TOGETHER)



1. The Merlyn C. Hamilton (IM-PACT) Award is presented to any coworker or group of coworkers who demonstrate effective problem-solving, and a partnership with the community to positively impact the quality of life by the reduction or removal of crime, social disorder, or other chronic problems.
2. To be considered for this award, coworkers shall submit documentation to the committee that supports their problem-solving efforts. The documentation shall demonstrate the principles of community policing as listed below.
 - a. The project or program shall focus on repeated incidents that occur in a community or citywide with related characteristics such as behavior, community and the police.
 - b. Use the S.A.R.A. (Scan, Analyze, Respond, and Assess) Model to formulate the problem solving effort.
 - c. Community partnership(s) shall play a role in the problem-solving effort.
3. Upon the recommendation of the committee and approval by the Chief of Police, the award shall be conferred upon the coworkers(s) as soon as administratively possible.
4. The award for an officer shall consist of a certificate, an award ribbon, and three (3) commendation chips.
5. The award for professional staff shall consist of a certificate and three (3) commendation chips.

03.14.6 **COWORKER OF THE MONTH**

- A. To be considered for the Coworker of the Month award, a coworker shall show that his/her work performance exceeded other peers. Work performance can be based upon a single incident or action taken, or a combination of factors as long as those factors occurred within the same calendar month.
- B. Upon the recommendation of the committee and approval of the Chief of Police, the Coworker of the Month award shall be conferred upon a coworker as soon as administratively possible during the following month.
- C. The Coworker of the Month award shall consist of a certificate and one (1) commendation chip.
- D. Coworker of the Month recipients become eligible for consideration for the respective Coworker of the Year award.

03.14.7 **COWORKER OF THE YEAR**

- A. To be considered for the Coworker of the Year award, a coworker shall be a previous Coworker of the Month award recipient for the applicable calendar year; or, a heroism or service award recipient during the applicable calendar year. Work performance can be based upon a single incident or action taken, or a combination of factors as long as those factors occurred within the same calendar year.
- B. Upon the recommendation of the committee and approval of the Chief of Police, the Coworker of the Year award shall be conferred upon a coworker as soon as administratively possible during the following calendar year.
- C. The Coworker of the Year award for an officer shall consist of a certificate, an award ribbon, and ten (10) commendation chips.
- D. The Coworker of the Year award for professional staff shall consist of a certificate, ten (10) commendation chips, and recognition in the department's public display case.

03.14.8 **COMMENDATION CHIP**

- A. Irrespective of the awards listed above, a supervisory coworker (sworn or professional staff) may issue a single commendation chip to any coworker for praiseworthy work performance. Examples of such work performance include but are not limited to:
 - 1. A random act of kindness to a citizen that goes above and beyond what is normally expected of the coworker.
 - 2. Exceptional customer service that goes above and beyond what is normally expected of the coworker (refer to Concord's Principles of Excellent Service for guidance).
 - 3. A demonstrable act that embodies City of Concord or Concord Police Department Core Values, for which no other award applies.
- B. A supervisory coworker does not have to witness the act or work performance in order

to award a commendation chip to a coworker; however, he/she must verify the act or work performance with the coworker (if not witnessed) and confirm that no other commendation chip has already been awarded for said act or work performance **prior** to awarding a commendation chip.

- C. All supervisors shall maintain a sufficient quantity of commendation chips for issuance to coworkers. Captains and higher, as well as the Code Enforcement Manager, shall also maintain a sufficient quantity of gray bordered chips to be issued to supervisory staff.
- D. The acts or work performance that justify being nominated for one of the aforementioned awards deserve the issuance of a single commendation chip pursuant to this section. Therefore, if a coworker does something that warrants being nominated for Coworker of the Month, the nominating supervisor shall issue the coworker a single commendation chip prior to or at the time of nomination (assuming a chip was not already issued to said coworker by another supervisor). If that coworker is ultimately awarded Coworker of the Month, he/she shall also be issued an additional commendation chip by the Chief of Police as outlined in 03.14.6(C), for a total of two (2) commendation chips. Likewise, a Distinguished Service award – as an example – shall result in a total of four (4) commendation chips; one (1) chip at the time of the act (or time of the nomination) plus three (3) chips by the Chief of Police if the award is approved by the Commendation Committee. Therefore, coworkers who are nominated for any award and who ultimately are not selected by the Commendations Committee shall at minimum receive one (1) commendation chip from a supervisor.
- E. Chips may be redeemed at the coworker's discretion to obtain official department logo merchandise. Merchandise shall remain on display at police headquarters – Office of the Chief of Police. Contact the Office of the Chief of Police (x5007 or x5001) to obtain merchandise.
- F. The department shall maintain logo merchandise in stock, in varying levels of value (1 chip and higher). A single chip can be redeemed for a 1-chip level of merchandise; or, multiple chips can be saved and later redeemed for higher level merchandise.
- G. Periodically, the department will allow coworkers to redeem multiple chips with an approved vendor for non-logo merchandise, or merchandise otherwise not kept in stock. A memorandum shall be published outlining specific details, including the vendor. Coworkers can decide how many chips they want to redeem and shall receive instructions on how to go about obtaining merchandise. It is anticipated this option will be made available at least two times per fiscal year.
- H. **Commendation chips hold no cash value**. However, IRS regulations dictate certain limits on redemption of chips to avoid the possibility of negative tax consequences. Coworkers should not redeem their chips more than once per fiscal quarter (90-days) and avoid redeeming more than ten (10) chips per quarter.
- I. For purposes of identifying non-cash value, a single commendation chip generally carries the equivalent of \$10 US.

NOTE: Coworkers are encouraged to identify and recommend to the Chief of Police logo merchandise to keep in stock. Such merchandise shall not exceed a value of \$100 per item. Apparel items will not typically be included in this program based upon the varying sizes needed to be kept in stock. Apparel items may be made available for order outside of this program from time to time.

03.14.9 TRAINING AND CERTIFICATION AWARDS

Requests for training and certification awards shall be made by the employee. Requests shall be made in writing and include documentation or proof of the training or certification attained. All requests shall be forwarded through the chain of command and be referred to the committee chairperson for review and verification.

A. NORTH CAROLINA ADVANCED CERTIFICATION

1. The North Carolina Advanced Certification ribbon shall be awarded by the State upon completion of established training and education requirements.
2. Upon verification by the committee and Chief of Police, the North Carolina Advanced Certification ribbon shall be conferred upon an officer as soon as administratively possible.

B. FEDERAL BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION NATIONAL ACADEMY

1. The F.B.I. National Academy ribbon shall be awarded to officers who successfully complete the F.B.I. National Academy program.
2. Upon verification by the committee and Chief of Police, the F.B.I. National Academy ribbon shall be conferred upon an officer as soon as administratively possible.

C. NCJA MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

1. The North Carolina Justice Academy Management Development Program ribbon shall be awarded to officers who successfully complete the NCJA Management Development Program.
2. Upon verification by the committee and Chief of Police, the NCJA Management Development Program ribbon shall be conferred upon an officer as soon as administratively possible.

D. PERF - SENIOR MANAGEMENT INSTITUTE FOR POLICE

1. The Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) - Senior Management Institute for Police (SMIP) ribbon shall be awarded to officers who successfully complete the PERF - SMIP Program.
2. Upon verification by the committee and Chief of Police, the PERF - SMIP ribbon shall be conferred upon an officer as soon as administratively possible.

E. INSTRUCTOR

1. The Instructor ribbon shall be awarded to all state certified instructors upon successful completion of an approved general instructor course. Instructor certification must remain current as long as the ribbon is worn.
2. Upon verification by the committee and Chief of Police, the Instructor ribbon shall be conferred upon an officer as soon as administratively possible.

F. MASTER CERTIFICATION



1. The Master Certification ribbon shall be awarded to officers who complete a recognized law enforcement certificate program.
2. The certificate program shall require at least 250 course mandated classroom hours. The following certificate programs are examples that meet these qualifications.
 - 1) Community Policing Certificate Program (NCJA)
 - 2) Criminal Investigation Certificate Program (NCJA)
 - 3) School Resource Officer Certificate Program (NCJA)
 - 4) Tactical Training Certificate Program (NCJA)
 - 5) Traffic Enforcement Certificate Program (NCJA)
 - 6) Supervisor Certificate Program (RCCC)

NOTE: The Chief of Police may consider other certificate programs on a case by case basis.

3. Upon verification by the committee and Chief of Police, the Master Certification ribbon shall be conferred upon an officer as soon as administratively possible.

03.14.7 **MILITARY SERVICE RECOGNITION**



- A. The military service recognition ribbon is presented to a coworker that has been or is currently assigned to a branch of the United States Military service. A coworker having been discharged dishonorably from military service shall be disqualified from wearing a military service recognition ribbon.
- B. The coworker shall submit a memorandum requesting a military service recognition ribbon through their chain of command to the Administration Bureau commander.
- C. Upon verification by the Administration Bureau commander, the Military Service Recognition ribbon shall be conferred upon a coworker as soon as administratively possible.

03.14.8 **CITIZEN AWARDS**

The Concord Police Department does not expect citizens to take heroic action or place themselves at risk during a criminal act in progress. However, some citizens are driven to service and take action despite the risks. Under such circumstances any coworker may nominate a person for a citizen award as outlined in this general order.

A nomination, including supporting documentation, shall be forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief of Police. The committee shall review the nomination and submit a recommendation to the Chief of Police.

The following awards may be presented to citizens upon the approval of the Chief of Police:

1. Valorous Conduct

A certificate shall be awarded to a citizen in situations where the same conduct by a coworker would have resulted in recognition of the Medal of Valor, Meritorious Conduct, or Lifesaving awards.

2. Distinguished Service

A certificate shall be awarded to a citizen in situations where the same conduct by a coworker would have resulted in recognition of a service award.

3. Certificate of Appreciation

A certificate shall be awarded to a citizen or community organization in recognition of outstanding service to the Concord Police Department or for extraordinary assistance in law enforcement efforts.

03.14.9 **COMMENDATION RIBBONS AND LAPEL PINS**

- A. Commendation ribbons may be worn on the Class A police uniform shirt, or Class A dress blouse for executive officers.
- B. Officers may wear up to six (6) commendation ribbons on the police uniform simultaneously. The highest honor/commendation ribbon awarded shall be worn closest to the breastbone. If two rows of ribbons are worn, then the highest honor/commendation ribbons shall be worn on the top row.



JAMES S. HUGHES
CHIEF OF POLICE