



DEPARTMENTAL
GENERAL
ORDER

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Departmental Awards

DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS

The purpose of this order is to establish Departmental procedures for commending members, employees, private citizens and Departmental units for acts which deserve Departmental recognition. These awards and commendations shall be based upon 1) a specific act; 2) outstanding performance to the public within the framework of community policing; 3) improvement in a service delivery system; or 4) leadership activities.

I. DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS: ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA AND MANNER OF WEARING

Awards are listed in order of precedence.

A. Medals

Medals are bestowed upon individuals for a specific personal act of gallantry, heroic action, or meritorious service.

1. Medal of Valor

The Departmental Medal of Valor shall be awarded to members and employees who, while serving in an official capacity, conspicuously distinguish themselves by heroic action above and beyond the call of duty. Each nomination for the Medal of Valor shall be based on the following criteria:

- a. A strong possibility existed at the time that the member or employee acted, he/she could have suffered serious injury or death.
- b. The act was not foolhardy.
- c. The member or employee did not use poor judgment or procedures which created the necessity for his/her acts.

2. Blue Star Medal

The Departmental Blue Star Medal shall be awarded to members and employees who incur death or serious injury while engaged in an official capacity involving the safety of persons or property.

3. Silver Star Medal

The Departmental Silver Star Medal shall be awarded to members and employees for courageous actions when the circumstances do not fall within the provisions qualifying for the Medal of Valor.

The level of action, while of a lesser degree than that required for the Medal of Valor, must nevertheless have been performed with distinction and courage.

4. Medal of Merit

The Departmental Medal of Merit shall be awarded to members and employees who, while serving in an official capacity, distinguish themselves through distinctively meritorious service to the Department and/or the public. The Medal may be awarded for personally administering life-saving first aid if exceptional circumstances are involved.

5. John Grubensky Medal

The Departmental John Grubensky Medal shall be awarded to members and employees who demonstrate superior initiative or courage when attempting to render life-saving medical aid to members of the Department and/or the community.

Officer John William Grubensky courageously gave his life as he attempted to evacuate a family from their home during the Oakland Hills Firestorm. Officer Grubensky had already led dozens of community members to safety, and despite the growing fire, had elected to venture once again into danger to assist in the evacuation efforts. Officer Grubensky, along with five members of the community that he was attempting to rescue, became trapped within the area of the firestorm. Officer Grubensky was later found lying across the body of a community member in an apparent effort to shield them from the flames. Officer Grubensky's demonstration of superior initiative, courage, and sacrifice continues to serve as an example for all members of the Oakland Police Department.

Officer John William Grubensky; End of Watch: October 20th, 1991.

B. Manner of Wearing Medals and Corresponding Bars

1. Sworn

- a. Medals are worn only with the Class A uniform. The medals shall be centered on the left breast, in a single row, in order of precedence, from the sternum outward. The top edge of the suspension ribbon shall be flush with the top seam of the pocket flap.
- b. Bars are optional on the long sleeve or short sleeve Duty Uniform shirt. Bars are not authorized on the Field Utility Uniform. Up to three bars are worn on a single row. The bars shall be affixed so that the bottom edge of the bar(s) is/are flush with the top edge of the pocket flap. When more than three bars are authorized, the Medal of Valor bar shall form the top row. The bar shall be centered, with the bottom edge of the bar flush with the top edge of the lower row of bars. The other three medals shall form the bottom row and be affixed on the pocket flap, with the top edge of the bars flush with the top edge of the pocket flap.

2. Uniformed Employees

- a. Medals are worn only at formal functions. The medals shall be centered on the left breast, in a single row, in order of precedence, from the sternum outward. The top of the suspension ribbon shall be flush with the top edge of the breast pocket.
- b. Corresponding bars may be worn on the light blue long or short sleeve uniform shirt, above the left breast pocket. Up to three bars are worn on a single row.

The bars shall be affixed so that the bottom edge of the bar(s) is/are flush with the top edge of the pocket flap. When more than three bars are authorized, the Medal of Valor bar shall form the top row. The bar shall be centered, with the bottom edge of the bar flush with the top edge of the bottom row.

The other three medals shall form the bottom row and be affixed on the pocket flap, with the top edge of the bars flush with the top edge of the pocket flap.

3. Civilian Employees (Non-Uniformed)

- a. Medals are worn only at formal functions. The medals shall be centered on the left breast suit pocket, in a single row, in order of precedence, from the sternum outward. The top of the suspension ribbon shall be flush with the top edge of the breast pocket.

- b. Corresponding bars are not authorized for wear on civilian clothing. In lieu of the commendation bars, non-uniformed employees are permitted to wear miniature bars on the lapel of a sport coat or suit jacket.

C. Commendation Bars

Commendation Bars are presented to individuals and/or operating units who have attained creditable, specific service requirements for certain distinguished actions or by sustained performance.

1. Officer of the Year

In addition to any other award, members selected Officer of the Year shall receive a Departmental commendation award. Officer of the Year selection is based on criteria set by the Oakland Police Officer's Association (OPOA) and evaluated by a volunteer nomination review committee.

The three highest scoring candidates will be voted on by the OPOA membership. Members similarly recognized by an Oakland-based service club (e.g., the Kiwanis) shall also be eligible for receipt of this award.

2. Chief's Leadership Award

Supervisory and command-level members and employees who exemplify and consistently demonstrate strong leadership skills shall be personally awarded a Leadership Commendation Award by the Chief of Police. Such leadership skills shall include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Challenging the status quo and fostering innovation and creativity in police service delivery;
- b. Displaying enthusiasm and inspiring others through personal effort towards the achievement of the Department's goals and vision;
- d. Supporting the efforts and developing the talents of others; and
- e. Displaying a commitment to and becoming a model of the Department's values.

3. Community Service Award

Upon the approval of the Chief of Police, the Community Service Award shall be bestowed on members or employees who perform an outstanding service within the framework of community policing.

Examples of members or employees eligible for receipt of this bar might include:

- a. A member or employee who develops an innovative community-based program, which brings state or national acclaim to the Department.
- b. A member or employee who annually donates 120 hours or more of personal time to mentor Oakland youth or to tutor at an Oakland school.
- c. A member or employee, not assigned to the Crime Prevention or Community Services Division, who works closely with a community group and helps the group to solve a persistent neighborhood safety problem.

4. Officer of the Month

This award shall be conferred on an officer or sergeant who, within a given month, has:

- a. Exhibited an act of heroism;
- b. Displayed keen investigative prowess, alertness and/or adherence to detail;
- c. Shown exceptional dedication to the Department and/or community;
- d. Demonstrated sound leadership ability (as set forth in Section I, C, 2 of this order); and
- e. Demonstrated his/her dependability in difficult and/or demanding situations.

Each Bureau Deputy Chief shall ensure that at least one Officer of the Month candidate has been nominated from their respective Bureau by the final day of each month.

5. Outstanding Performance Evaluation

This commendation shall be presented to members and employees who, for three consecutive years, achieve overall "Outstanding" ratings.

For each such member or employee, supervisors shall assess eligibility for this award when the member or employee's annual performance evaluation is due.

Eligibility for subsequent awards shall be evaluated after an additional three-year period has elapsed.

6. Good Conduct Award

This award shall be granted to members and employees who, for three consecutive years, are not the subject of any sustained complaint (per Departmental General Order M-3) or not disciplined as defined in the Manual of Rules.

For each such member or employee, supervisors shall assess eligibility for this award when the member or employee's annual performance evaluation is due.

Eligibility for subsequent awards shall be evaluated after an additional three-year period has elapsed.

7. Perfect Driving Award

This award shall be presented to members and employees who, while assigned to a field assignment (e.g., Patrol, Community Policing, or Traffic Enforcement) for three consecutive years, are not involved in any preventable collisions.

For each such member or employee, supervisors shall assess eligibility for this award when the member or employee's annual performance evaluation is due.

Eligibility for subsequent awards shall be evaluated after an additional three-year period has elapsed.

8. Perfect Attendance Award

This award shall be presented to members and employees who, for three consecutive years, lose no work time due to illness or off-duty injury.

For each such member or employee, supervisors shall assess eligibility for this award when the member or employee's annual performance is due.

Eligibility for subsequent awards shall be evaluated after an additional three-year period has elapsed.

Note: Work loss due to an on-duty injury shall have consecutive perfect attendance time accrued before the injury added to the perfect attendance time accrued following the member or employee's return to work.

9. Advanced POST Certificate Award

Members who have received their Advanced POST Certificate will earn this award.

10. Tactical Operations Team Award

Members and employees who serve on the Sniper, Hostage Negotiation, Entry Team and/or Tactical Operations Support Team for three consecutive years shall receive this award.

11. Unit Citation Award

The Unit Citation Award may be conferred upon individuals for meritorious and exemplary performance while assigned to an organizational unit (division, watch, section, unit, team, or other combination of members and/or employees) of the Department. The accomplishment shall be the result of combined efforts of members and/or employees of a unit.

Examples of performance may include, but are not limited to:

- a. Exceptional performance in a program or operation that achieves an extraordinary quality of service;
- b. Exceptional performance in conducting a major investigation;
- c. Exceptional contribution in improving Departmental operations;
- d. Completion of a major project or task resulting in substantial benefits to the Department and/or the community.

D. Manner of Wearing Commendation Awards

1. Sworn

The commendation bars shall be worn on the right breast of the Class A uniform. Bars are optional on the long sleeve or short sleeve Duty Uniform shirt. Bars are not authorized on the Field Utility Uniform. Up to three bars are worn in a single row.

When more than three bars are authorized, they shall be worn in rows of three each. If bars are not in multiples of three, the top row contains the lesser number, and the center of this row sits over the center of the one below it.

The bars shall be centered, with the bottom edge of the first row of bars flush with the top edge of the pocket flap. Arrange bars in order of precedence, top row down, from the sternum outward.

2. Uniformed Employees

Bars may be worn on the long or short sleeve uniform shirt, above the right breast pocket. Up to three bars are worn on a single row.

When more than three bars are authorized, wear them in horizontal rows of three each. If bars are not in multiples of three, the top row contains the lesser number, and the center of this row sits over the center of the one below it.

The bars shall be centered, with the bottom edge of the first row of bars flush with the top edge of the jacket pocket. Arrange bars in order of precedence, top row down, from the sternum outward.

3. Civilian Employees (Non-Uniformed)

Corresponding bars are not authorized for wear on civilian clothing. In lieu of the commendation bars, non-uniformed employees are permitted to wear miniature bars on the lapel of a sport or suit jacket.

E. Certificates and Letters

1. Chief's Certificate of Commendation

The Chief's Certificate of Commendation shall be presented to members and employees who, while serving in an official capacity and in the best interests of the Department, distinguish themselves through the accomplishment of an outstanding service.

The certificate may be awarded for personally administering life-saving first aid when exceptional circumstances are not involved.

This award may also be awarded to private citizens who perform an outstanding act or service which aids the Department in carrying out its objectives.

2. Chief's Letter of Appreciation

A Letter of Appreciation from the Chief of Police may be awarded to members, employees and private citizens who perform acts of service deserving of Departmental recognition.

3. Certificate of Service (Retirement Certificate)

The Departmental Certificate of Service shall be presented to members and employees when they retire.

F. Multiple Awards

1. No limit shall be placed on the number of medals, commendation bars, certificates or letters that an individual may be awarded.
2. Only one kind of award shall be conferred for the same act, achievement or period of service, except for the Blue Star Medal, Officer of the Year, Officer of the Month, and Division-level awards, which may be awarded singularly or together with another Departmental medal, commendation bar, letter or certificate.
3. Once a medal or commendation bar has been presented to a member or employee, a bronze oak leaf cluster shall be presented in lieu of additional awards of the same medal or bar. A silver oak leaf cluster shall be worn in lieu of five bronze clusters.

G. Posthumous Awards

The appropriate next of kin shall be entitled to receive a service award earned by a deceased member, employee or citizen.

II. DIVISION-LEVEL AWARDS

A. Captain's (or Unit Commander's) Certificate of Commendation

The Captain's (or Unit Commander's) Certificate of Commendation may be awarded by a Captain or Unit Commander to a member, employee or private citizen who performs an act or a duty in a manner showing dedication and service above what is normally expected or required by the Department.

A copy of the certificate shall be forwarded to the Personnel Section for inclusion in the member's or employee's personnel file.

B. Letter of Appreciation

Any member or employee may write, through the chain of command, a Departmental memorandum expressing their appreciation for the excellent service provided by another member, employee or private citizen.

If approved by the Chief of Police, a copy of the letter shall be forwarded to the Personnel Section for inclusion in the member or employee's personnel file.

III. AWARD NOMINATION PROCEDURES

- A. Employees and members of any class or rank may submit a Departmental memorandum to their unit commander or independent section supervisor nominating other members and employees or private citizens for awards.
- B. Whenever unit commanders or independent section supervisors learn of service which deserves Departmental recognition, they may nominate the member, employee or private citizen for an appropriate award.

- 1. Retirement Certificate

Nominations shall not be necessary for the award of a Certificate of Service. When notified that a member or employee intends to retire, the Personnel Section shall generate a Duplicating Work Request (TF-059) for the printing of a Certificate of Service. The certificate shall state the number of years, rounded off to the nearest full year, that the individual has worked for the Department.

- 2. All Other Awards to Members, Employees and Private Citizens

Members and employees shall make nominations regarding all other awards for members, employees and private citizens via a Departmental memorandum, which shall be forwarded through channels to the Chief of Police.

Each nomination statement shall include:

- a. The date, time, place, and a detailed account of the act or service performed by the nominee.
- b. Suggested wording, if any, to be inscribed on the certificate or letter of recognition.
- c. Copies of applicable reports.
- d. A completed Duplicating Work Request if the award will require the printing of a certificate.
- e. An appropriate letter of recognition typed for the signature of the Chief of Police, if the recommended award is a Chief's Letter of Appreciation or a Letter of Commendation.

The Office of Chief of Police shall send copies of all nominations regarding members and employees to the Personnel Section for administrative processing.

IV. NOMINATION AND AWARD APPROVAL PROCEDURES

A. Retirement Certificates

The Identification Unit of the Operations Support Division shall frame each Certificate of Service and forward it to the Administrative Assistant to the Chief of Police, who shall ensure that it is presented to the recipient.

B. Medals, Commendation Awards, and Chief's Certificates

1. A Captain's or Unit Commander's Commendation may be issued subject to review and approval of a Bureau Commander. An informational copy shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police. A copy of the commendation shall be forwarded to the Personnel Section for inclusion in the recipient's personnel file.
2. Nominations received by the Personnel Section shall be submitted to and reviewed by commanders at the quarterly Unit Commander's meeting chaired by the Chief of Police.
3. Approved nominations shall be returned to the Personnel Section for implementation.
4. The Personnel Section shall coordinate all activities necessary for the preparation of medals, plaques, bars, certificates and the presentation of the awards. Division commanders or independent section supervisors, in conjunction with the Personnel Section, shall coordinate all activities necessary for the presentation of commendation bars.
5. The Personnel Section shall place duplicate copies of certificates in recipients' personnel files and enter approved awards on the Kardex Folder.

C. Letters of Appreciation to Departmental Personnel or Private Citizens

Whenever the Chief of Police approves a nomination to award a letter of recognition to a member, employee, or private citizen, the Office of Chief of Police shall ensure that the prepared letter is signed and presented to the recipient in accordance with the Chief's instructions.

Chief's Letters of Commendation to members, employees and private citizens shall be typed on Chief's letterhead stationery. Chief's Letters of Appreciation to members, employees or private citizens shall be typed on green and white letterhead stationery.

Each letter of recognition to a member or employee shall be forwarded to him/her through the chain of command. A copy of the letter of recognition shall be forwarded to the Personnel Section for inclusion in the member's or employee's personnel file.

The Personnel Section shall maintain a file of all approved Chief's Letters of Appreciation and Chief's Letters of Commendation to Departmental personnel.

By order of

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. Armstrong', with a stylized flourish at the end.

LeRonne L. Armstrong
Chief of Police