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<div><div>EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION PROGRAM</div></div>				
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PURPOSE

The purpose of this standard operating procedure is to establish a uniform system for the nomination and selection of members of the Punta Gorda Police Department for recognition of exceptional service.

SCOPE

This procedure shall apply to all Punta Gorda Police Department personnel.

DISCUSSION

The fundamental underlying principle that guides the Punta Gorda Police Department leadership team in planning for the future success of our organization is as follows – *our long-term organizational success is directly linked to the quality of individuals that comprise our organization*. With that premise in mind, it is the policy of the department to recognize agency members for outstanding performance, exceptional service to the City of Punta Gorda and its residents, and distinguished acts of heroism, bravery, and duty in protecting the citizens of our

community.

PROCEDURE

I. ANNUAL AWARDS COMMITTEE: The Annual Awards Committee shall be appointed by the Chief of Police and be comprised as follows:

- A. Chairperson;
- B. Immediate past chairperson;
- C. One non-supervisory sworn member;
- D. One professional staff member;
- E. One Command Staff Officer - rank of Captain ; and
- F. One line supervisor – Lieutenant or Corporal.

II. AWARDS (in order of precedence)

- A. Medal of Honor



The department's highest honor; awarded to a member of the department who distinguishes themselves conspicuously by gallantry, heroism, and courage at the risk of his/her life, above and beyond the call of duty, while engaged in armed conflict (award to be worn on right breast).

- B. Medal of Valor



The department's second highest honor; awarded to a member of the department who distinguishes themselves by bravery in action in a hazardous situation. The act performed must render the recipient well above the standard expected (award to be worn on right breast).

- C. Purple Heart



Awarded to a member of the department who has been seriously or critically injured, under honorable circumstances and as a result of hostile intent or hazardous operation.

The Purple Heart shall be awarded to the spouse/parent of an officer who is fatally injured during the cited action (award to be worn on right breast).

D. Chief's Award for Job Excellence



The Chief's Award for Job Excellence is given to sworn or professional members who the Chief of Police determines have performed their assigned tasks in a manner above and beyond the written job description. The recipients of this award are selected directly by the Chief of Police – not through the Annual Awards Committee.

E. Supervisor of the Year

Awarded annually to a supervisor that has demonstrated outstanding leadership skills throughout the year, is a team player and willing to go above and beyond the scope of their duties to ensure their unit, section, or division is efficient and effective. This award recipient will be selected by a majority vote from non-supervisory personnel at the end of the year.

F. Officer of the Year



Awarded annually to a sworn member based upon outstanding performance and dedication in the performance of his/her duties.

G. Professional Staff Member of the Year



Awarded annually to a civilian member based upon outstanding performance and dedication in the performance of his/her duties.

H. The Roger W. Fenneman Volunteer of the Year Award



Awarded annually to a volunteer based upon outstanding performance and dedication in the performance of his/her duties.

I. Life Saving Award



Awarded for an act in the line of duty which, through disregard of personal safety or prompt and alert action, results in saving a life (award to be worn on right breast, red field right).

J. Customer Service Award



Awarded annually to a member who has best demonstrated a consistent commitment to excellence through extraordinary and superior customer service over the course of the year. Command Staff will be the deciding entity.

K. Exceptional Team Performance of the Year



Awarded annually to one group, team, unit, or section for combined exceptional achievement through teamwork above and beyond the normal scope of duty. The nominees must have collectively achieved exceptional results which clearly contributed to the organizational effectiveness of the Punta Gorda Police Department through effective and focused teamwork (award to be worn on right breast).

L. Innovation Award: Awarded to a member, or group of members, whose creativity, forward-thinking, and action results in the implementation of a new system, process, product, or service that adds value to the organization and the customer.

M. Exceptional Duty Award



Awarded for a highly creditable accomplishment bringing public acclaim to the department or the police profession, as a result of training, devotion to duty or service to the public (award to be worn on right breast).

N. Special Recognition Award



Awarded for exceptional performance beyond the normal scope of one's duties. Recipient must have exhibited demonstrable initiative, dedication, and superior service. (award to be worn on right breast).

O. Family Member of the Year Award: Awarded to a family member whose outstanding support and significant contributions to the mission and objectives of the Punta Gorda Police Department and the Community we serve.

P. Veterans Award



Awarded to a member who has served in the United States Armed Forces. (award to be worn on right breast).

Q. FBI/NA AWARD



Awarded to a member who successfully completed the FBI National Academy, a ten week training which improves the administration of justice in the police department. (award to be worn on right breast).

- R. Extraordinary Service Award: Awarded by the Chief of Police to every member of the department for going beyond what is usual, regular, or customary and is exceptional to a very marked extent. Each Extraordinary Service Award will have its own specific award ribbon which will not be reissued for another event. The award is only issued to individuals who were current members of the department at the time of the event. (award to be worn on right breast).

1. Hurricane Charley Extraordinary Service Award



Hurricane Charley was the third named storm, the second hurricane, and the second major hurricane of the 2004 Atlantic hurricane season. Charley lasted from August 9 to August 15, and at its peak intensity it attained 150 mph (240 km/h) winds, making it a strong Category 4 hurricane on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Scale. The storm made landfall in Punta Gorda on August 13, 2004, at maximum strength, thus making it the strongest hurricane to hit the United States since Hurricane Andrew struck Florida twelve years before, in 1992.

The most severe damage from Hurricane Charley occurred in Charlotte County. In Port Charlotte and Punta Gorda, many buildings, RVs, and mobile homes were completely destroyed, while other buildings were unroofed due to the powerful winds. One-third of Charlotte County's schools were destroyed by Charley's impact where there were eight direct fatalities, 16 indirect fatalities, and 792 injuries across the state attributed to the storm. Property damage was estimated at \$5.4 billion, and approximately \$285 million in agricultural damage.

Members of the Punta Gorda Police Department rose to the challenge of responding to this hurricane. Members rode out the storm at various facilities and worked tirelessly for weeks afterwards to restore some sort of normalcy to not just the police department but the city of Punta Gorda. For their efforts, the Hurricane Charley Extraordinary Service Award was issued by Chief Charles Rinehart to each member of the agency.

2. Excelsior Accreditation Extraordinary Service Award



In 1993, Florida Statute 943.125 directed that the Florida Sheriffs' Association and the Florida Police Chiefs' Association create a voluntary state law enforcement accreditation program. Today, the Commission consists of chiefs of police, sheriffs, a city manager, a county commissioner, a state law enforcement agency head, a state inspector general, and a circuit judge from across the State of Florida. The Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA) meets three times a year to oversee the accreditation program and to officially accredit agencies which have passed the rigorous review process.

The Punta Gorda Police Department was initially accredited by CFA on May 27, 1998, in Clearwater Beach, Florida, and was the 11th municipal Police Department in the State of Florida accredited. On June 27, 2013, the Punta Gorda Police Department was awarded Excelsior status from the Commission of Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation in Bonita Springs, Florida. To achieve Excelsior status, an agency must achieve accreditation and subsequently five reaccreditations without any noncompliance issues. For their efforts, the Excelsior Accreditation Extraordinary Service Award was issued by Chief Albert A. Arenal to each member of the agency.

3. Hurricane Irma Extraordinary Service Award



Hurricane Irma was an extremely powerful and catastrophic Cape Verde-type hurricane, the strongest observed in the Atlantic since Wilma in 2005 in terms of maximum sustained winds. It was the first Category 5 hurricane to strike the Leeward Islands on record, followed by Hurricane Maria only two weeks later. It was also the most intense Atlantic hurricane to strike the United States since Katrina in 2005, and the first major hurricane to make landfall in Florida since Wilma in 2005. The ninth named storm, fourth hurricane, and second major hurricane of the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season, Irma caused widespread and catastrophic damage throughout its long lifetime, particularly in parts of the northeastern Caribbean and the Florida Keys.

Irma traveled up the west coast of Southwest Florida and was classified as a Category 2 Hurricane as it passed the Punta Gorda area. Throughout Florida, at least 82 people died in this storm-related incident. In Punta Gorda, residents sustained minor to moderate structural damage and some storm surge related flooding. The most significant impact was the failure of approximately 15 miles of seawalls which is estimated at over \$25 million dollars to repair and replace.

Members of the Punta Gorda Police Department rose to the challenge of responding to this hurricane. Members rode out the storm at various facilities and worked tirelessly for days afterwards to restore some sort of normalcy to not just the police department but the city of Punta Gorda. For the first time, headquarters was completely evacuated during the storm event in anticipation of catastrophic storm surge which never materialized. Members have gone beyond what is usual, regular, or

customary and is exceptional to a very marked extent. For their efforts, the Hurricane Irma Extraordinary Service Award was issued by Interim Chief Jason Ciaschini.

4. COVID-19 Extraordinary Service Award



Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is a contagious disease caused by severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). The first case was identified in Wuhan, China, in December 2019. It has since spread worldwide, leading to an ongoing pandemic. Over the span of a year over 365,000 people died in the United States, in excess of 22,000 people have died in the State of Florida, and more than 240 people died in Charlotte County because of COVID-19.

During this time full-time employees and sworn reserve police officers of the Punta Gorda Police Department endured great hardship because of the COVID-19. Like most people across the country police department members had to make great adjustments to their personal lives. As a department, significant changes had to be made to the way business was conducted. The Punta Gorda Police Department moved away from proactive policing, limited the types of calls that were handled, and certain ancillary services that were provided to the public were eliminated. Additionally, some of the professional staff members were assigned to telework and the way Public Safety Dispatchers processed calls drastically changed. Initial availability of personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies was limited. Police department personnel were placed in harm's way so the department could continue their mission of serving the citizens of the City of Punta Gorda. Although there was a lot of apprehension surrounding COVID-19, Punta Gorda Police Department employees remained dedicated to protecting the community even at risk to their own health. For their efforts, the COVID-19 Extraordinary Service Award was issued by Chief of Police Pamela Davis to each member of the agency.

5. Hurricane Ian Extraordinary Service Award

Hurricane Ian was a dangerous, high-end Category 4 storm, tying the record for the fifth-strongest hurricane on record to strike the United States. Ian entered the southern Gulf of Mexico the night of September 26, 2022 into the morning of September 27th as a Category 3 hurricane with max sustained winds of 115mph, the strongest September hurricane in the Gulf of Mexico since Hurricane Irma in 2017. On the morning of September 28, 2022, Ian intensified into a Category 4 hurricane over the Gulf of Mexico, with maximum sustained winds of 155mph, just shy of a Category 5 storm.

Hurricane Ian came ashore just south of Punta Gorda, making landfall in Cayo Costa at 3:05pm with maximum sustained winds of 150mph. It was the strongest hurricane to hit Florida since Hurricane Michael in 2018 and the first Category 4 hurricane to impact Southwest Florida since Hurricane Charley in 2004. In all, the storm knocked

out power to more than four million customers in Florida and 87 deaths were reported. Residents in Florida and the Carolinas faced recovery costs estimated to be around \$47 billion in insured losses.

Members of the Punta Gorda Police Department rose to the challenge of responding to this hurricane. Members rode out the storm at various facilities and worked tirelessly for weeks afterwards to restore some sort of normalcy to not just the police department but the city of Punta Gorda. Headquarters was completely evacuated during the storm and patrol and communications worked an Alpha/Bravo schedule for 11 days.

Between September 27, 2022 and October 3, 2022, almost 5,000 telephone calls were received/made by communications personnel and between September 27, 2022 and October 7, 2022 officers conducted 176 welfare checks. For their efforts, the Hurricane Ian Extraordinary Service Award was issued by Chief Pamela Davis.

S. City of Punta Gorda Certificate of Service

1. A City of Punta Gorda Certificate of Service shall be awarded to employees for every five (5) years of service.
2. Certificates awarded for ten (10) years of service and above, in five year increments, shall be presented to the employee by the Mayor at a regularly scheduled City Council meeting. This public presentation shall be pre-approved by the Chief of Police and the employee receiving the award.

III. ANNUAL AWARDS NOMINATION PROCESS: It shall be the privilege of any member to nominate any person for recognition as an award recipient. The member must submit the nomination electronically, in memorandum format to the Awards Committee chairperson for presentation to the full committee.

IV. ANNUAL AWARDS COMMITTEE CONDUCT AND PROCEDURE: The Awards Committee shall convene a minimum of once every twelve (12) months, normally during the 2nd week of January, or at the direction of the Chairperson. This meeting shall be formally structured and shall abide by Roberts Rules of Order.

- A. Each nomination shall be individually presented by a member of the committee.
- B. Each nomination shall require a second of the nomination to continue for discussion.
 1. The committee shall be empowered to approve, disapprove or amend any nomination.

2. The committee shall be empowered to summon members and documents related to the nomination to corroborate the facts and determine the nominee's eligibility for an award.
- C. Voting: The committee shall confirm the recommendation for presentation of each award by at least a 4-1 vote.
 - D. The committee shall be empowered to review every nomination submitted for its attention and may recommend awards pursuant to the criteria set forth herein.
 - E. The committee chairperson shall report to the Chief of Police the names of those recommended to receive awards and the category of award to be received.
 - F. The Chief of Police shall review the recommendations and findings of the committee and may either accept, disapprove, or modify the recommendation. The Chief of Police shall be the final arbitrator of the disposition of every incident reviewed by the Awards Committee.
 - G. Confidentiality: The names of all prospective recipients shall remain confidential. Only the Awards Committee, appropriate Command Staff Officers, and the Executive Assistant will be made aware of the specific award and the recipient.
- V. **QUARTERLY AWARDS:** The department will recognize an outstanding Employee and Volunteer of each quarter of the year. The quarters will be January through March, April through June, July through September, and October through December. Persons receiving such honors shall be selected from a group of nominees submitted in the following manner:
- A. Employee and Volunteer of the Quarter nominations shall be made by any employee or volunteer of this agency. All nominations are to be submitted to the Executive Assistant prior to the last day of the quarter.
 - B. This award is primarily for job performance activities and is separate from the annual awards.
 - C. The nominations will be reviewed during the first staff meeting of the next quarter and a joint decision will be made on the selected personnel.
 - D. Personnel selected as Employee and Volunteer of the Quarter will have their photographs displayed in the lobby of the Police Department.
 - E. Personnel selected as Employee and Volunteer of the Quarter will personally receive a certificate and all department personnel will be notified of this accomplishment via an email from the Chief of Police.

- F. The Employees and Volunteers of the Quarter winners throughout the year will be considered as nominees for the Employee and Volunteer of the Year, if the nomination is supported by the supervisor and can be documented with additional justification of outstanding performance throughout the year.

VI. AWARDS PRESENTATION

- A. Command Staff shall establish protocol for the formal presentation of awards, as necessary, either at the annual agency ceremony, the monthly staff meetings, or during other special events as designated by the Chief of Police.
- B. The formal presentation of awards shall be made by the Chief of Police, or their designee.
- C. Each award recipient will receive:
 - 1. A corresponding award ribbon and/or trophy;
 - 2. An award certificate; and
 - 3. A copy of the nomination which will be placed in the members personnel file.
 - 4. Civilian of the Year recipients will receive use of a reserved parking space in front of the Public Safety Building for the next award cycle.

VII. DISPLAY OF AWARD

- A. Each member shall be required to display an award in a specific manner and position while wearing the police department uniform.
- B. Ribbon bar and pin attachment awards shall be worn on the police department uniform in the following manner:
 - 1. One (1) bar - centered at the top of the right breast pocket above the nameplate;
 - 2. Two (2) or more bars - with the award of highest achievement first, centered vertically, one beneath another at the top of the right breast pocket above the nameplate, to a maximum of six (6) bars; and
 - 3. In the event that an individual receives the same award more than once, a numeral shall be displayed on the award indicating the number of times the award has been received.
- C. Awards presented by recognized community service organizations may be worn by the recipient with the approval of the Chief of Police.

D. Awards issued under previous awards policies shall remain in effect and can be displayed on the uniform as described by this policy. The following awards have been changed or replaced:

1. Meritorious Service Award (replaced by the Medal of Valor): Awarded for a highly unusual accomplishment under adverse conditions with some degree of hazard to life and limb to the nominee or where death or injury to a third party is prevented; and
2. Honorable Service Award (no longer awarded under current policy): Awarded for a creditable act in the line of duty which meets some, but not all of the requirements for other medals, is unusual in nature and shows initiative and accomplishment.

E. Awards from other agencies: Members may convert their awards received while employed at other law enforcement agencies to Punta Gorda Police Department awards of equal merit. To be considered to receive the award, members shall submit a memo requesting award conversion to the Chief of Police detailing the award type and reason they were nominated to receive the award.

VIII. CITIZEN AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS: The department recognizes that citizen and business involvement in the community, especially in law enforcement, is extremely valuable. The department shall encourage citizen and business involvement and recognize good deeds that significantly assist the department. To that end, the department has established a Community Alliance Award.

- A. Community Alliance Award: The Chief of Police may present a Community Alliance Award (in the form of a plaque, trophy, or other appropriate item) to any citizen or business that has assisted the police department in any significant endeavor.
- B. The Community Alliance Award shall be presented personally by the Chief of Police at a time and place mutually agreed to by the Chief of Police and the recipient.
- C. Citizen Award For Valor - Awarded by the Chief of Police to private citizens who risk life and personal injury in assisting a Punta Gorda Police Officer. This award is evidenced by a framed certificate.
- D. Citizen's Life Saving Award - Awarded by the Chief of Police to private citizens in appreciation for the prompt and unselfish act of rendering aid and assistance to a fellow citizen that resulted in the saving of a life. This award is evidenced by a framed certificate.
- E. Citizen Public Service Award – Awarded by the Chief of Police to private citizens who render aid and/or assistance to a Punta Gorda Police Officer and/or a fellow citizen. This award is evidenced by a framed certificate.

- F. Outstanding Citizen Award - Awarded by the Chief of Police to private citizens who risk life and personal injury in rendering aid to a fellow citizen. This award is evidenced by a framed certificate.

APPROVED

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Pamela R. Smith". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Pamela" being the most prominent.

PAMELA R. SMITH, CHIEF OF POLICE

STAFF REVIEW DATES: 10-29-1997, 01-06-2000, 06-04-2002, 06-03-2004, 05-15-2007, 04-28-2010, 04-24-2012, 05-19-2014, 06-28-2016, 11-06-2018, 02-14-2020, 01-28-2022, 04-08-2025

REVISION DATES: 10-29-1997, 01-06-2000, 06-04-2002, 06-03-2004, 05-15-2007, 04-28-2010, 04-24-2012, 05-19-2014, 06-28-2016, 11-06-2018, 02-14-2020, 02-09-2021, 01-28-2022, 01-06-2023, 04-08-2025