



AWARDS & OFFICE COMMENDATION PROCEDURES	
new: ✓ rescinds: 17.1 ✓ amends:	
cross-reference: accreditation standards: NYSLEAP Standard(s): 17.1 NYSSA Standard(s): 51	
effective date: July, 2011	amend/update date: September, 2023

I. PURPOSE

The basic responsibility of good supervision is the recognition and reporting of outstanding actions or exceptional performance by office personnel. All personnel, regardless of rank, are urged to report outstanding or heroic actions of which they have knowledge.

II. POLICY

- A. Any employee of the Tompkins County Sheriff’s Office witnessing an exemplary act by a member of this office may make a recommendation to the Sheriff for an award. In the case of a sworn member, persons submitting a recommendation should include the name of the recognition or award for which the employee is being recommended.
- B. Recommendations shall be forwarded through the chain of command to the Lieutenant or Jail Administrator of their respective division. Nomination shall be submitted on the [Award & Office Commendation Nomination Form](#). Each supervisor, through whom the form passes, may comment on the incident and the merits of the award nomination.
- C. The Lieutenants and Jail Administrator, in consultation with the Awards Committee shall review all nominations and make the following recommendations to the Sheriff.
 - 1. Endorse the nomination as submitted, or
 - 2. Choose another appropriate award to be presented, or
 - 3. Request additional documentation to be submitted, or
 - 4. Determine that no award will be presented.
- D. The Sheriff shall appoint designees to serve on the Awards Committee. *Updated 9/2023*
- E. Decisions will be based upon a majority vote of the members of the Awards Committee with equal votes regardless of position or rank.

- F. Once a nomination for an award/commendation has been approved and authorized by the Sheriff, the recipient shall receive a Letter of Award from the Sheriff notifying them of the selection. A copy of the award is to be included in the member's personnel file. The Sheriff shall determine the method to present the award to the office member.

III. AWARDS

A. Medal of Honor

1. The Medal of Honor may be awarded to a member of the Sheriff's Office who, intelligently and in the line of duty, gives their life or distinguishes him or herself by an act of extreme courage involving the risk of imminent danger to their life, with knowledge of such risk, above and beyond the call of duty. The aforementioned act must have been performed for the purpose of saving or protecting human life.

B. Medal of Valor

1. The Medal of Valor may be awarded to a member of the Sheriff's Office, who intelligently and in the line of duty, distinguishes themselves in the performance of an act of courage involving risk of imminent serious physical injury, with knowledge of such risk, for the purpose of saving or protecting human life; or who, in the course of an extended investigation of a nature where they continuously and singly exposed themselves to grave personal hazard, willingly accepts such risk in the service of this office.

C. Distinguished Service Medal

1. The Distinguished Service Medal may be presented to any member of this agency who performs:
 - An act of intelligent and valuable service, demonstrating special faithfulness or perseverance, or
 - Highly creditable acts of service over an extended period of time, or
 - An intelligent act, materially contributing to a valuable accomplishment or an established office goal, or
 - Submission of a device or method designed to increase efficiency in an administrative or tactical procedure that is subsequently adopted by this office.

D. Purple Heart

1. This award may be presented to any member of this office who, in the line of duty, sustains a *serious physical injury* as the result of hostile behavior by another person, or posthumously to any member who is killed in the performance of their duties. This award may be presented in addition to another office award.

E. Life Saving

1. The Life Saving award may be issued to a member of this office who performed extraordinary actions to save the life of a person that would have likely died if not for that action.

F. Specialist Badges *Updated 9/2023*

1. The following awards will be given to a member who completes the required training for the particular award or ribbon.

- Field Training Officer
- Police Instructor- General Topics
- Firearms Instructor
- SRT
- CNT
- Marine Patrol
- K9 Officer
- Bike Patrol
- Drone
- Mental Health Officer (CARE Team)
- School Resource Officer
- Physical Fitness Instructor
- Defensive Tactics Instructor
- Drug Recognition Expert
- Accident Reconstructionist
- Honor Guard
- Firefighter
- EMT
- Educational Excellence (Associate, Bachelor, or Master's degree from an accredited college)
- Military Service (Served in the United States Armed Forces and obtained an honorable discharge)
- FBI National Academy
- FBI LEEDA Trilogy

G. Letter of Recognition

1. A letter of Recognition may be issued by the Sheriff for instances where a member of the office should be recognized for an individual act or some performance of duty. These letters may be written to recognize actions that are commendable but does not reach the criteria for another award.

H. Service Stars *Updated 9/2023*

1. Wearing the service star(s) is optional.
2. Each star represents five years of civil service time as a police officer/deputy sheriff.

Nothing in this General Order shall prevent the Sheriff, under extraordinary circumstances, from granting immediate office recognition to any employee who has performed an act consistent with the standards contained herein.

Attachments:

- A. [Award & Office Commendation Nomination Form](#)
- B. [Awards & Specialist Badges](#)

By Order Of

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Derek Osborne".

Derek Osborne
Sheriff