POLICY AND PROCEDURE NO. 115

Exemplary Service Awards

Massachusetts Police Accreditation Standards:
26.1.2

Date Issued: November 27, 1992
Date Effective: March 1, 2026
Review Date: March 1, 2027 3 Pages

1. PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a mechanism to recognize and commend the exemplary deeds of department members for actions taken in the line of duty, or for services rendered to the Department or the City of Worcester that go beyond the call of duty. This policy also provides for recognition and commendation of citizens of the community for actions taken to assist law enforcement. MPAC 26.1.2

2. DESIGNATION:

On June 17, 2024, Officer Enmanuel Familia was posthumously presented the final Exemplary Service Award for Valor by the Worcester Police Department. On that same date, the Chief of Police renamed the Award for Valor as the Enmanuel "Manny" Familia Valor Award in lasting tribute to Officer Familia's sacrifice.

The officers who served alongside Officer Familia during the incident at Green Hill Park Pond on June 4, 2021, received the Valor Award on that date as well. All officers selected for the Valor Award going forward will be presented the newly named award.

3. AUTHORITY:

This policy is issued by the authority of the Chief of Police.

4. AWARDS CATEGORIES:

A. Enmanuel "Manny" Familia Valor Award (5 Stars)

Sworn department members who distinguish themselves by conspicuous bravery, heroism, or other outstanding action, and were aware of great personal danger prior to the performance of the act, are eligible for the Enmanuel "Manny" Familia Valor Award. Any sworn department member whose life is given in the line of duty, and circumstances indicate an act of valor was performed, will automatically be eligible for the posthumous awarding of this award.

In order to preserve the importance of this award, nominations will be carefully scrutinized by the Awards Review Committee. The award is based on the performance of a heroic act in excess of the normal demands of police service, in circumstances wherein the officer was fully aware of the scope of the feat attempted and the imminent threat to their physical safety.

B. Meritorious Service Award (4 Stars)

A sworn department member who performs an exceptional act, being unaware of great personal danger prior to initiating the act but who performs in a commendable manner upon becoming aware of the danger, is eligible for the Meritorious Service Award.

C. Distinguished Service Award (3 Stars)

Any sworn department member who performs an act worthy of merit in a commendable manner, such as saving the life of another person, when such an action may or may not have imperiled the officer's life and well-being, is eligible for the Distinguished Service Award.

D. Certificate of Commendation

Any sworn or non-sworn department member who performs an act of duty that brings credit to the Department, the community, or the member personally, is eligible for the Certificate of Commendation. This award may also be presented for an exceptional contribution to the betterment of the Department.

This award may be given when it is determined that the circumstances surrounding a particular act do not warrant a higher award but do warrant recognition of the employee.

E. Chief of Police Citation

This award may be given to a citizen of the community, or to any sworn or non-sworn department member, for commendable action taken to assist law enforcement, or for the performance of exemplary community service related to law enforcement.

5. PROCEDURES:

Any member of the Department, sworn or non-sworn, may nominate a department member or citizen for an Exemplary Service Award in any eligible category. Nominations may be based on the personal observations of the nominator, the recommendations of other officers or employees who witnessed the event, the employee's immediate supervisor, or the unit commander. Nominations shall be submitted in IDC report form and forwarded through the chain of command to the appropriate deputy chief. Nominations may also be submitted directly to the Awards Review Committee.

The deputy chief shall forward nominations with all supporting material to the Awards Review Committee. Recommendations from the Committee to the Chief of Police shall be in IDC report form, accompanied by all pertinent reports and memoranda.

6. CITATIONS:

A. Enmanuel "Manny" Familia Valor Award

Department members selected, including the families of those posthumously awarded the Enmanuel "Manny" Familia Valor Award, will receive a military citation ribbon with five (5) stars, suitable for wearing on the duty uniform directly above the name tag.

B. Meritorious Service Award

Department members awarded the Meritorious Service Award will receive a military citation ribbon with four (4) stars, suitable for wearing on the duty uniform directly above the name tag.

C. Distinguished Service Award

Department members awarded the Distinguished Service Award will receive a military citation ribbon with three (3) stars, suitable for wearing on the duty uniform directly above the name tag.

7. PLAQUES AND CERTIFICATES:

In all presentations of the Enmanuel "Manny" Familia Valor Award, the officer receiving the award, or the family accepting the posthumous award, will also receive a plaque and a certificate describing the award.

Department members awarded the Meritorious Service Award, the Distinguished Service Award, or Certificate of Commendation; and citizens or department members awarded the Chief of Police Citation, will receive a certificate suitable for display.

8. RECORDS:

A record of all awards presented under this policy shall be placed in the recipient's personnel file maintained in the Office of the Chief of Police. The Awards Review Committee shall maintain a log of all nominations received and awards recommended.

9. AWARDS REVIEW COMMITTEE:

The Awards Review Committee is authorized to conduct independent investigations, review all reports and files, and invite witnesses to a hearing, in order that all pertinent facts may be discovered surrounding those persons nominated for an Exemplary Service Award. The Committee's authority shall be limited to those situations involving persons nominated for an award, and its sole purpose is to recommend to the Chief of Police whether the persons nominated should be presented an award, and in which category. The Chief of Police is responsible for making the final determination.

The composition of the Awards Review Committee shall be several sworn department members appointed by the Chief of Police, consisting of at least one (1) Captain, one (1) Lieutenant, one (1) Sergeant, and two (2) Police Officers.

The awards presentation ceremony shall be a special event to include, when applicable, family, friends, and the media. At a minimum, if circumstances allow, the event will be conducted in the presence of the recipients' peers, to demonstrate the importance given to such commendable deeds and actions.

10. TRAINING:

Officers shall be notified of this policy and will receive training on this policy periodically as directed by the Training Division.

Per:

Paul B. Saucier
Chief of Police