



ADMINISTRATIVE INSTRUCTION 29

INCENTIVE AND HONORARY AWARDS PROGRAM

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Approved by:	Barbara A. Westgate, Director, Washington Headquarters Services
Change 1 (Administrative) Approved by:	Christopher R. Choate, Chief, Directives Division

Purpose: This issuance, in accordance with the authority in DoD Directive 5110.04 and DoD Instruction 5025.01:

- Implements policy, assigns responsibilities, and provides procedures for the Incentive and Honorary Awards Program, in accordance with Chapters 21, 43, and 45 of Title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.), Part 451 of Title 5, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), and Volume 451 of DoDI 1400.25.
- Provides procedures for Time Off Awards (TOAs).
- Prescribes procedures for processing monetary awards for suggestions, inventions, and scientific achievements to Service members covered by this issuance, in accordance with Section 1124 of Title 10, U.S.C.

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SECTION 1: GENERAL ISSUANCE INFORMATION

1.1. APPLICABILITY. This issuance applies to:

a. Civilian employees and members of the Armed Forces assigned to OSD, and those Defense Agencies, DoD Field Activities, and other components of the DoD that receive human resource services from Washington Headquarters Services (WHS), referred to collectively in this issuance as the “WHS-serviced Components.”

(1) A civilian employee is an employee who meets the definition of “employee” under Section 2105 of Title 5, U.S.C., or who is in a position within the excepted service under the Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS) as identified in Section 1601 of Title 10, U.S.C. DCIPS personnel are eligible for honorary awards, but are not eligible for incentive and monetary awards under this issuance. DCIPS personnel must reference Volume 2008 of DoDI 1400.25 for applicable monetary and incentive awards.

(2) Members of the Armed Forces are eligible for monetary awards under this issuance for suggestions, inventions, and scientific achievements, in accordance with Section 1124 of Title 10, U.S.C.

b. A foreign national individual who meets the definition of “employee” as defined by Section 2105 of Title 5, U.S.C., and is paid with U.S. funds.

1.2. POLICY. It is DoD policy that:

a. Awards must be granted consistent with Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Employment Program policies, laws, regulations, and Executive orders.

b. Policies and standards governing awards for which both DoD civilian and military personnel are eligible must apply to both, consistent with applicable laws and regulations.

c. Awards are subject to applicable tax rules.

d. Awards granted pursuant to Volume 451 of DoDI 1400.25 are given due weight in qualifying and selecting an employee for promotion as required by Section 3362 of Title 5, U.S.C.

e. Only current DoD civilian employees or Service members may sponsor or endorse award nominations.

f. Nonappropriated Fund employees may **only** receive non-monetary awards under this issuance.

g. Private citizens are eligible to receive specified non-monetary awards under this issuance.

h. An indirect hire employee is not eligible to receive monetary awards but may receive non-monetary awards under this issuance.

i. The contributions of individuals, companies, and other organizations with a commercial or profit-making relationship with the DoD may not be recognized by awards, awards programs, ceremonies, or receptions.

(1) The only way an individual, company or other organization with a commercial relationship with the DoD can be recognized with an honorary award, in accordance with this issuance, is if the contribution is unrelated to, and completely outside of, any contractual relationship with the DoD. The recognition must clearly be in the public interest.

(2) Unless an exemption is specifically stated, recognition of an individual or an organization is limited to a letter or a certificate of appreciation signed at the lowest applicable organizational level.

j. WHS-serviced Components encourage participation by DoD personnel at all levels in improving government operations. This may include authorizing monetary awards, granting time off, or incurring necessary expenses for the recognition of personnel.

k. In accordance with Section 4502 of Title 5, U.S.C., acceptance of a monetary award constitutes an agreement that the U.S. Government's use of an idea, method, or device for which the award is made does not form the basis of a further claim of any nature against the U.S. Government by the employee, their heirs, or estate.

l. Expenditures for superior accomplishment awards, special act or service awards, supervisor's cash awards, and performance awards for Senior Executive Service (SES) (excluding performance bonuses), Scientific or Professional (ST), Senior Level (SL), Administratively Determined, General Schedule, or Federal Wage System employees assigned permanently or on detail from other organizations to activities for which operational support is provided by WHS must be paid from, and not exceed, the Component's annual awards budget allocation.

1.3. AWARD RESOURCES. Nomination templates for awards may be obtained by contacting WHS Human Resources Directorate (HRD), Performance Management and Awards Division (PM&AD).

1.4. SUMMARY OF CHANGE 1. The changes to this issuance are administrative and, in accordance with the January 19, 2022 WHS memorandum:

a. Correct WHS approval authorities in the issuance purpose statement.

b. Update authorities from the Chief Management Officer of the Department of Defense to the Director of Administration and Management (DA&M) in accordance with:

(1) Section 901 of Public Law 116-283, which eliminated the position of the Deputy Chief Management Officer of the Department of Defense effective January 1, 2021.

(2) The January 11, 2021 Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandums, which implemented Public Law 116-283 and reestablished the DA&M.

c. Update organizational titles and references and correct minor errors.

SECTION 2: RESPONSIBILITIES

2.1. DA&M. The DA&M:

- a. Works with the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness (USD(P&R)) to develop and establish DoD-wide awards and affiliated guidance.
- b. Administers the OSD-level Honorary Awards Program.
- c. Administers selection and appointment of Incentive Awards Board (IAB) members.
- d. Recommends monetary award nominees to the OUSD(P&R) for endorsement that must be forwarded to the Director, Office of Personnel Management (OPM) for presidential approval in accordance with Volume 451 of DoDI 1400.25.

2.2. DIRECTOR, WHS. Under the authority, direction, and control of the DA&M, the Director, WHS:

- a. Establishes polices for and administers the Incentive and Honorary Awards Program for WHS-serviced Components.
- b. Establishes the annual awards budget ceiling for WHS-serviced Components for payment of superior accomplishment awards, special act or service awards, supervisor's cash awards, and performance awards.
- c. Approves or denies single or cumulative monetary awards for ST, SL, General, or Federal Wage System employees that are in excess of \$7,500 up to \$10,000 within a fiscal year. This includes annual increases in basic pay resulting from a quality step increase or other accomplishments covered by this issuance.

2.3. CHIEF HUMAN RESOURCES OFFICER, HRD. Under the authority, direction, and control of the Chief Human Resources Officer, WHS, the Director, HRD:

- a. Ensures that recipients of monetary awards meet the eligibility criteria and that monetary awards are otherwise made in accordance with applicable laws, regulations, and other rules as documented in Volume 451 of DoDI 1400.25.
- b. Allocates awards budgets on a fiscal year basis.
- c. Forwards to the DA&M for approval, individual civilian employee monetary award nominations that are in excess of \$10,000 up to \$25,000 in a fiscal year.
- d. Forwards via the DA&M to the USD(P&R) for submission to the Director, OPM, individual civilian employee monetary award nominations in excess of \$25,000 in accordance with Title 5, U.S.C. and Part 451 of Title 5, CFR.

- e. Forwards to the DA&M for approval, military nominations that are based on a suggestion, invention, and scientific achievement that are in excess of \$10,000 up to \$25,000.
- f. Documents and processes all approved monetary awards and TOAs, in accordance with Part 451 of Title 5, CFR.
- g. Ensures awards documents are filed in accordance with Part 451 of Title 5, CFR.
- h. Reports on awards data as required by OPM.

2.4. WHS-SERVICED COMPONENT HEADS. The WHS-serviced Component heads:

- a. Encourage supervisors to identify employees or groups of employees deserving award and recognition consideration, and request recommendations be submitted expeditiously.
- b. Ensure that expenditures on superior accomplishment awards, special act or service awards, supervisor's cash awards, and performance awards do not exceed allotted award budget allocations.
- c. Submit nominations for Secretary of Defense honorary awards, in accordance with DoD Manual 1432.04.
- d. Approve OSD-level honorary awards, in accordance with this issuance.
- e. Delegate approval authority for awards covered under this issuance; such delegations must be submitted to the Assistant Director (AD), PM&AD for review and record.
- f. Provide a copy of the award approval memorandum, signed certificate, and citation for all approved awards to PM&AD.
- g. Approve or deny, within the awards budget allocation, nominations for monetary recognition, including one-time monetary awards and increases in basic pay as a result of a performance award or quality step increase.
- h. Recommend that the Director of WHS approve single or cumulative monetary award nominations in excess of \$7,500 up to \$10,000 in a fiscal year.
- i. Recommend that the DA&M:
 - (1) Approve single or cumulative monetary award nominations for an employee that exceed \$10,000 up to \$25,000 in a fiscal year.
 - (2) Endorse single monetary award nominations that would grant more than \$25,000 to an employee for forwarding through the USD(P&R) for presidential approval.
- j. Approve or deny TOAs.

SECTION 3: PROCEDURES FOR HONORARY AWARDS

3.1. GENERAL GUIDANCE AND ELIGIBILITY. At the discretion of a WHS-serviced Component head, non-DoD personnel may be recognized with certain honorary awards as specified in Volume 451 of DoDI 1400.25 and as identified under specific awards outlined in Paragraphs 3.3. through 3.5.

3.2. PROGRAM OVERSIGHT. The AD, PM&AD:

a. Provides guidance to WHS-serviced Components on OSD-level honorary awards within this issuance.

b. Reviews and processes recommendations from WHS-serviced Component heads for Secretary of Defense honorary awards in accordance with DoD Manual 1432.04, and the OSD Medal for Valor, as outlined in this issuance.

c. Maintains a repository of approved OSD-level honorary awards and recognition.

d. Audits WHS-serviced Component head approved OSD-level honorary awards to ensure that recipients meet the eligibility criteria established in this issuance.

e. Provides reports to the DA&M, through the Director, WHS, and the Chief Human Resources Officer, HRD, regarding the numbers and types of OSD-level honorary awards approved by WHS-serviced Component heads.

f. Recommends procedures, guides, and standards for improving the awards program.

g. Provides guidance to WHS-serviced Components interested in developing formal and informal recognition programs and awards.

3.3. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE HONORARY AWARDS. Eligibility requirements, approval authority, and nominations are located in DoD Manual 1432.04.

3.4. OSD-LEVEL HONORARY AWARDS.

a. OSD Medal for Valor.

(1) **Background.** This honorary award recognizes the performance of an act of heroism or sacrifice, with voluntary risk to personal safety in the face of danger either on or off the job.

(2) **Eligibility.** The medal may be awarded to any private citizen or Federal Government civilian career or non-career employee.

(a) DoD employees: the act of bravery may be related to their government position, may enhance the reputation of the DoD, or may serve the public interest.

(b) Private citizens and other Federal employees: the act of bravery must be connected with a DoD employee or activity. The DoD in some way benefits from the act, e.g., one of our employees is saved by a private citizen.

(3) **Approval Authority.** Any OSD Component head.

(4) **Subsequent Awards.** Not more than one medal will be authorized for more than one act of heroism at the same instant.

b. Secretary of Defense Medal for the Defense of Freedom.

(1) **Background.** This medal recognizes and honors DoD civilian employees killed or wounded in the line of duty during a terrorist attack or any other hostile incident against the U.S. Government. Award of this medal acknowledges the fidelity and essential service of the DoD civilian workforce killed or wounded during the performance of their official duties.

(2) **Additional Information.** Further information on eligibility, criteria, and nominating procedures may be found in Volume 451 of DoD Instruction 1400.25.

c. Secretary of Defense Medal for the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).

(1) **Background.** The civilian equivalent of the GWOT Expeditionary Medal awarded to Service members. This medal recognizes the contributions of members of the WHS-serviced Component civilian workforce who, on or after September 11, 2001, participated abroad in direct support of a U.S. military GWOT operation in a designated geographic location approved for award of the GWOT Expeditionary Medal, or for a similar operation and location for which a separate military campaign medal was awarded (e.g., Afghanistan Campaign Medal).

(2) **Additional Information.** Further information on eligibility, criteria, and nominating procedures may be found in Volume 451 of DoD Instruction 1400.25.

d. OSD Exceptional Civilian Service Award.

(1) **Background.** The highest OSD-level honorary award for career civilian employees of the DoD, established to recognize eligible personnel who have distinguished themselves by exceptional service to a WHS-serviced Component.

(2) **Eligibility.** Career civilian employees of WHS-serviced Components with at least 3 years of substantial and continuous creditable service within OSD.

(3) **Approval Authority.** A WHS-serviced Component head has approval authority for this award, unless otherwise delegated.

(4) **Subsequent Awards.** Eligible personnel may receive more than one OSD Exceptional Civilian Service Award. Subsequent awards consist of the medal set and a bronze, silver, or gold palm, as appropriate.

e. OSD Award for Excellence.

(1) **Background.** This award recognizes WHS-serviced Component career civilian employees who have made significant contributions to the mission of a WHS-serviced Component.

(2) **Eligibility.** Career civilian employees of WHS-serviced components that support a one-time project or participate in a detail assignment approximately 6 months in duration.

(3) **Approval Authority.** A WHS-serviced Component head has approval authority for this award, unless otherwise delegated.

(4) **Subsequent Awards.** Eligible personnel may receive more than one OSD Award for Excellence, but no palm will be provided to distinguish subsequent awards.

f. OSD Civilian Career Service Award.

(1) **Background.** This award recognizes career employees of a WHS-serviced Component who have made significant contributions to the mission of a WHS-serviced Component over an extended period of time and is presented in connection with the employee's retirement.

(2) **Eligibility.** Career civilian employees of WHS-serviced Components

(3) **Approval Authority.** A WHS-serviced Component head has approval authority for this award, unless otherwise delegated.

(4) **Subsequent Awards.** Only one Civilian Career Service Award is authorized per employee.

g. OSD Exceptional Public Service Award.

(1) **Background.** The highest OSD honorary award established to recognize contributions, assistance, or support to WHS-serviced Components.

(2) **Eligibility.** Eligibility is limited to personnel that do not derive their principal livelihood from the U.S. Government. Eligible individuals include:

(a) Non-career civilian Federal employees.

(b) Private citizens.

(c) Foreign nationals.

(3) **Approval Authority.** A WHS-serviced Component head has the approval authority for this award, unless otherwise delegated.

(4) **Subsequent Awards.** Eligible personnel may receive more than one OSD Exceptional Public Service Award. Subsequent awards consist of the medal set and a bronze, silver, or gold palm, as appropriate.

h. OSD Award for Outstanding Achievement.

(1) **Background.** This award recognizes non-career Federal employees, private citizens, and foreign nationals for their significant contributions to the mission of a WHS-serviced Component. This award is traditionally used to recognize personnel who support a one-time project or participate in a detail assignment approximately 6 months in duration.

(2) **Eligibility.** Eligibility is limited to personnel that do not derive their principal livelihood from the U.S. Government. Eligible individuals include:

- (a) Non-career civilian Federal employees.
- (b) Private citizens.
- (c) Foreign nationals.

(3) **Approval Authority.** A WHS-serviced Component head has approval authority for this award, unless otherwise delegated.

(4) **Subsequent Awards.** Eligible personnel may receive more than one OSD Award for Outstanding Achievement, but no palm will be provided to distinguish subsequent awards.

i. OSD Group Achievement Award.

(1) **Background.** This award is given for significant contributions to the mission of a WHS-serviced Component in recognition of group efforts.

(2) **Eligibility.** The recognized individuals must be one of the following:

- (a) Civilian employees of a WHS-serviced Component.
- (b) Active duty Service members.
- (c) Partners from other Federal agencies.

(3) **Approval Authority.** A WHS-serviced Component head has approval authority for this award, unless otherwise delegated.

(4) **Subsequent Awards.** Eligible personnel may receive more than one OSD Group Achievement Award, but no palm is provided to distinguish subsequent awards.

3.5. OTHER AWARDS.

a. Length of Service (LoS) Recognition. Career civilian employees of WHS-serviced Components who complete satisfactory periods of Federal service will be awarded LoS emblems and certificates applicable to their LoS, beginning with 10 years of service and every 5 years thereafter through 50 years.

(1) Total Federal civilian and all honorable military service may be creditable toward eligibility for LoS recognition.

(2) Creditable service is calculated using a service computation date established for each employee and verified by the Benefits and Worklife Division within HRD. Approval authority and nomination are not factors in presentation for this award.

(3) LoS recognition for 25 years or fewer are presented at the discretion of the WHS-serviced Component.

(4) LoS recognition for 30 or more years will be processed by PM&AD for the Secretary of Defense's signature.

b. Certificates, Letters of Appreciation, and Letters of Commendation. Supervisors may grant certificates, letters of appreciation, and letters of commendation to career and non-career employees for specific instances of high performance, advancement of workplace morale, and other occurrences that can be directly connected to mission accomplishment. This recognition is limited to a letter or a certificate of appreciation to the individual signed at the lowest applicable level of the organization.

c. Organizational Coins.

(1) **Authority.** The authority granted to the Secretary of Defense allows the use of appropriated funds (APFs) to purchase medals, trophies, badges, and similar honors to recognize members, units, or agencies under their jurisdiction and to incur necessary expense for the honorary recognition of an employee, in accordance with Section 1125 of Title 10, U.S.C.; Section 4503 of Title 5, U.S.C.; and Volume 451 of DoD Instruction 1400.25.

(2) **Award.** WHS-serviced Components may give an organizational coin as a "Component Award for Excellence."

(a) The award must recognize an accomplishment that contributes to the effectiveness of the component's mission or operation.

(b) Each component can and should establish an organizational coin for presentation of such award. The component must establish the award frequency, nomination process and criteria before coins may be used as non-monetary awards.

(c) Each component may modify internal awards in order to include the organizational coin as the non-monetary award instrument for a particular existing award.

(d) Organizational coins are intended to provide tangible honorary recognition and must not be distributed as a memento, to improve morale, or simply in recognition of expected service to the organization.

(3) **Official Use.** Organizational coins will be awarded uniformly and provide:

(a) Honorary recognition, on the basis of merit, to individuals and groups for superior performance, special acts or services, or other personal efforts that substantially exceed normal standards or expectations and result in improved government operations and services.

(b) Awards, on a one-time basis, when the accomplishment is unique and clearly contributes to increased efficiency or effectiveness of service.

(4) **Approving Authority.** A WHS-serviced Component head is the approving authority for the procurement and award of organizational coins under this issuance. This authority may be further delegated in writing within WHS-serviced Components.

(5) **Procurement.** Organizational coins as described in this issuance may be purchased with APFs. This issuance does not address coins procured with non-appropriated funds, official representation funds, or private funds.

(a) Organizational coins purchased with APFs are to be used as a Component Award for Excellence to recognize outstanding performance or in connection with an established award once added to the component award policy.

(b) The organizational coin can be used as the Component Award for Excellence, or as an established component award. The criteria and accountability for the use of organizational coins must be developed by the component before presentation of the organizational coin as an award.

(c) Organizational coins may not be given as an “on-the-spot” award or outside of a formal, written awards program.

(d) Coins given outside of this formal awards program must be purchased with non-appropriated funds, official representation funds, or private funds.

(e) Organizational coins purchased with APFs may not be presented to contractors.

(6) **Private Funds.** Coins may be purchased with private funds.

(7) **Coin Design.**

(a) Custom minted emblazoned coin, typically with an insignia on the front side (obverse) and inscription on the reverse side.

(b) Must include the phrase “For Excellence” on the reverse side.

(c) Coins will not include an individual's name nor any personalization and may identify the presenter only by position and title of the presenter or the name of the agency presenting the coin (example: "Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness" or "USD(P&R)").

SECTION 4: PROCEDURES FOR MONETARY AWARDS

4.1. GENERAL GUIDANCE AND ELIGIBILITY.

- a. Supervisors identify employees or groups of employees whose superior accomplishments or suggestions merit special recognition and recommend them for appropriate monetary recognition.
- b. Supervisors evaluate suggestions and ideas from employees to determine applicability in their respective administrative areas and possible application in other WHS-serviced Components or Federal agencies.
- c. Political appointees, including Schedule C employees, are ineligible for monetary awards.
- d. For an employee's single contribution, a supervisor may grant a monetary award or a TOA, but not both. A contribution that serves as the basis for a monetary award or TOA may serve as the basis for honorary recognition.

4.2. PROGRAM OVERSIGHT. The AD, PM&AD:

- a. Provides guidance and procedures to WHS-serviced Components on all monetary awards within this issuance.
- b. Reviews and processes WHS-serviced Component recommendations for monetary awards.
- c. Maintains records of WHS-serviced Component approved monetary awards.
- d. Receives recommendations from WHS-serviced Component heads requesting DA&M approval of monetary awards that would cause the gross cumulative dollar amount of monetary recognition for an employee to exceed \$10,000 up to \$25,000 in a fiscal year. This includes one-time monetary awards and increases in basic pay as a result of a performance award or quality step increase.
- e. Routes to the IAB monetary and honorary awards that require review as identified within this issuance.

4.3. MONETARY AWARDS.

a. Superior Accomplishment Award. To be considered for the Superior Accomplishment Award, employees must have made a contribution occurring within the employee's job responsibilities that results in tangible benefits or savings or intangible benefits to the U.S. Government.

- (1) **Eligibility.** Civilian employees covered by Paragraph 1.1.a.(1) of this issuance.

(2) **Limitations.** Within their respective awards budget allocation WHS-serviced Component heads may:

(a) Approve monetary awards that would cause the gross cumulative amount of recognition for an employee within a fiscal year to reach \$7,500.

(b) Delegate approval of monetary awards in accordance with this issuance.

(c) Recommend that the Director of WHS approve monetary award nominations that would cause the gross cumulative amount of recognition for an employee within a fiscal year to exceed \$7,500 up to \$10,000.

(d) Recommend that the DA&M approve monetary award nominations that would cause the gross cumulative amount of recognition for an employee within a fiscal year to exceed \$10,000 up to \$25,000.

(e) Recommend that the DA&M review and endorse single monetary award nominations that would grant more than \$25,000 to an employee for forwarding through the USD(P&R) to the Director, OPM for presidential approval.

(3) **Submission Requirements.** The WHS-serviced Component head informs the AD, PM&AD, via memorandum, of approved monetary awards. The AD, PM&AD, will review for compliance with this issuance and process approved awards of \$7,500 or less. For awards over \$7,500, the AD, PM&AD will then submit the memorandum to the appropriate review or approval authority. The monetary award nomination memorandum will contain:

(a) A description in detail of the achievement being recognized. Tangible and intangible benefits must be described separately. The justification must refer to the applicable award scales in Appendix 5A.

(b) Justifications, which will document the employee's performance and accomplishments and why they are deserving of cumulative monetary recognition that exceeds the limits in the fiscal year (if applicable). The justification should also confirm that there are sufficient awards funds available to pay the recognition. Authority to recommend such approval may not be delegated.

b. Special Act or Service Award. To be considered for a Special Act or Service Award, employees must be recognized for a non-recurring contribution, usually outside of the employee's job responsibility, or the courageous handling of an emergency that results in tangible benefits or savings or intangible benefits to the U.S. Government or the public.

(1) **Eligibility.** Civilian employees covered by Paragraph 1.1.a (1) of this issuance.

(2) **Limitations.** See Paragraph 4.3.a.(2).

(3) **Submission Requirements.** See Paragraph 4.3.a.(3).

c. Supervisor's Cash Award. To be considered for a Supervisor's Cash Award, employees must be recognized for a day-to-day work accomplishment. To determine the amount of the award, consideration should be given to the significance and the amount of effort required for the employee's contribution. Examples of achievements warranting the Supervisor's Cash Award are streamlining, eliminating, or modifying an office procedure to improve effectiveness, efficiency, or timeliness; or accomplishing a specific, short-suspense project that contributed to the mission of the organization.

(1) **Eligibility.** Civilian employees covered by Paragraph 1.1.a (1) of this issuance.

(2) **Limitations.** An individual award may not exceed \$500.

(3) **Submission Requirements.** The WHS-serviced Component forwards a memorandum (see Appendix 4.A) addressed to the AD, PM&AD, and signed by an official at least one level higher than the recommending official (e.g., first and second line supervisor). The memorandum will contain the information described in Appendix 4A.

d. Suggestion Award. To be considered for a suggestion award, an employee's suggestion must identify an improvement in the quality of operations, a cost reduction opportunity, or an improvement in the timeliness of service delivery that results in tangible or intangible benefits to the U.S. Government and must be adopted in whole or in part for implementation. The suggestion must establish a specific proposed course of action to achieve the improvement or cost reduction and must not already be under consideration.

(1) **Eligibility.** Civilian employees and Service members covered by Paragraph 1.1.a. of this issuance are eligible for this award in accordance with Volume 451 of DoD Instruction 1400.25, Volume 451.

(2) **Time Limits.** Suggestion awards submitted for consideration after the adoption of the suggestion must be submitted not more than 3 months after adoption.

(3) **Restrictions.** The Executive Secretary of the IAB will forward the suggestion to the organization responsible for its consideration. Individuals cannot be considered for an award if the suggestion would:

- (a) Raise the need for routine maintenance work.
- (b) Recommend enforcement of an existing rule.
- (c) Propose changes in housekeeping practices or changes in working conditions for personal comfort.
- (d) Call attention to errors or alleged violations of regulations.
- (e) Result in intangible benefits of "good will."

(4) Considerations for a Suggestion Award.

(a) Suggestions must be typed or printed on a DD Form 355, "Employee Suggestion," and submitted through an employee's immediate supervisor, if the suggestion pertains to the employee's job responsibilities or work of the office by which employed, or directly to the AD, PM&AD, Attention: IAB.

(b) The employee submitting the suggestion must fully complete the DD Form 355 and include a complete, factual, and specific explanation of the present practice, the suggested changes, where and how the suggestion may be used, and how it will benefit the DoD. It will include all information available, such as stock and form numbers, titles, etc.

(c) The employee must sign the form. The signature constitutes agreement that the adoption or use of the suggestion will not form the basis of any claim against the United States by the employee or their heirs or estate and a warranty that at the time the award is accepted, the employee has not assigned or otherwise been divested of legal or equitable title to any property right residing on the idea, method, or device for which the award is made.

(5) Processing a Suggestion Award Nomination.

(a) All DD Forms 355 submitted by an employee or supervisor of a WHS-serviced Component must be forwarded to the AD, PM&AD, Attention: IAB, through the suggester's supervisor.

(b) The AD, PM&AD, will coordinate with the Executive Secretary of the IAB, who will route the suggestion to the office of primary responsibility for evaluation. The AD, PM&AD, and the Executive Secretary will:

1. Forward the suggestion to the office with responsibility for implementing the suggestion for evaluation, and follow up on the referral to determine the status, as necessary.

a. The evaluating office will determine whether the suggestion is eligible or ineligible for adoption, complete the DD Form 2800, "Suggestion Evaluation," and forward to the responsible OSD Component head.

b. The WHS-serviced Component will analyze and adjudicate the suggestion evaluator's findings and recommendations; adopt or disapprove the suggestion; and, if approved, recommend the amount of the monetary award. The WHS-serviced Component head will complete DD Form 2800 and forward it to the AD, PM&AD, with certification that the suggestion will or will not be implemented and a recommendation of the award amount.

2. Review the recommendation of any award granting \$10,000 or less to the suggester for compliance with established tangible and intangible benefits scales, and approve or deny recommendations. If approved, the IAB will check the award recommendation for compliance with established tangible and intangible benefits award scales (see Appendix 5A), and authorize the award for payment.

3. Forward to the DA&M the recommendation of any award for more than \$10,000 for review and approval.

(c) If denied, the AD, PM&AD, will inform the suggester of the reason.

e. Invention Award.

(1) **Eligibility.** Civilian employees and Service members covered by Paragraph 1.1.a of this issuance are eligible for this award in accordance with Volume 451 of DoD Instruction 1400.25.

(2) **Processing an Invention Award Nomination.**

(a) Service members and civilian employees are encouraged to submit communications on inventions to the office responsible for patent matters in the appropriate Military Department.

(b) The office responsible for patent matters will determine that the invention is of value or potential value to the DoD and that the invention was made under circumstances that resulted in the U.S. Government initiating action to obtain the title or license.

(c) The applicable office responsible for patent matters will verify to the IAB that all conditions were met to be considered for an award.

(d) If the conditions are not met, but the invention is valuable to the DoD and the inventor consents to award consideration, then:

1. The inventor will sign a claim waiver agreement to be paid an award.

2. Invention value is determined by the office responsible for patent matters.

(e) Eligible personnel may be paid a nominal monetary award initially and an additional monetary award when the patent covering the invention is issued.

(f) If an application for a patent is placed under a secrecy order, the inventor will become eligible for the additional award when the U.S. Patent Office issues a notice of allowance instead of a patent.

(g) Awards for inventions are not authorized if a monetary award was paid for the same contribution as a suggestion.

f. Scientific Achievement Award.

(1) **Eligibility.** Civilian employees and Service members covered by Paragraph 1.1.a. of this issuance are eligible for this award in accordance with Volume 451 of DoD Instruction 1400.25.

(2) **Requirements.** To be considered for an award, a scientific achievement must:

- (a) Be based on an act, deed, or accomplishment that establishes a scientific or technological basis for technical improvements of military or other national significance;
- (b) Be of such quality and effectiveness that it materially advances the research and development of a U.S. Government activity, group, project, or service to the public;
- (c) Contribute materially to the welfare of the Military Services and the nation;
- (d) Be the subject of an article accepted for publication in a nationally recognized scientific publication; or
- (e) Be the subject of a technical paper presented to a professional society that constitutes a substantial contribution to scientific knowledge.

(3) **Tangible or Intangible Benefits.** The achievement must result in tangible or intangible benefits to the U.S. Government in accordance with Volume 451 of DoD Instruction 1400.25. The amount of the award is determined by the award scales for tangible and intangible benefits in Appendix 5A and will be awarded within the WHS-serviced Component's awards budget allocation.

(4) **Format.** See Appendix 4B.

(5) **Time Limits.** The completed nomination will be submitted within 3 months of the specific accomplishment giving rise to the nomination.

APPENDIX 4A: SUPERVISOR'S CASH AWARD TEMPLATE

Figure 1. Supervisor's Cash Award Template

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
AND AWARDS DIVISION, HUMAN RESOURCES
DIRECTORATE, WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS
SERVICES

SUBJECT: Supervisor's Cash Award

In accordance with Administrative Instruction 29, the following individual is recommended for a Supervisor's Cash Award:

Name: *[last name, first name, middle initial]*
EIN:
Title, Series, Grade:
Organization and Location:
Period Covered by Award:
Award Amount:

[Mr./Ms./Mx./Dr. last name]'s contributions for this award have not been and will not be recognized with any other monetary award or Time-off award.

Description of Achievement Being Recognized:
[Mr./Ms./Mx./Dr. last name] was instrumental in...

*[Employee's Second-Level Supervisor
Signature Block]* *[Employee's First-Level Supervisor
Signature Block]*

*[WHS-Serviced Component head Signature
Block]*

APPENDIX 4B: SUPERIOR ACCOMPLISHMENT OR SPECIAL ACT AWARD TEMPLATE

Figure 2. Superior Accomplishment or Special Act Award Template

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
AND AWARDS DIVISION, HUMAN RESOURCES
DIRECTORATE, WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS
SERVICES

SUBJECT: Superior Accomplishment Award or Special Act Award (*choose one*)

In accordance with Administrative Instruction 29, the following individual is recommended for a [*type of award from Subject*]:

Name: [*last name, first name, middle initial*]
EIN:
Title, Series, Grade:
Organization and Location:
Period Covered by Award:
Award Amount:

[*Mr./Ms./Mx./Dr. last name*]'s contributions for this award have not been and will not be recognized with any other monetary award or Time-off award.

Description of Achievement Being Recognized:
[*Mr./Ms./Mx./Dr. last name*] was instrumental in...

Per AI 29, Appendix 5A, the extent of the application is [*use appropriate extent*] and the value of the benefit is [*use appropriate benefit*].

[*WHS-Serviced Component head Signature Block*]

SECTION 5: PROCEDURES FOR TOAS

5.1. GENERAL GUIDANCE AND ELIGIBILITY.

- a. Supervisors identify employees or groups of employees that merit TOA recognition.
- b. Political appointees and Schedule C employees are eligible to receive TOAs.
- c. Either a monetary award (i.e., performance or bonus) or a TOA, but not both, will be granted to an employee for any single contribution. A contribution will not serve as the basis for more than one monetary award, including a performance award or bonus, or for a monetary award and a TOA. Contributions supporting a monetary award or a TOA may serve as the basis for honorary recognition.
- d. Determination for the amount of time off granted is based on the cost in lost production and the benefits gained from the employee's contributions. A TOA does not convert to a cash payment under any circumstances.

5.2. PROGRAM OVERSIGHT. The AD, PM&AD:

- a. Provides guidance to WHS-serviced Components on the TOA.
- b. Reviews and processes WHS-serviced Component approved TOAs.
- c. Maintains records of WHS-serviced Component approved TOAs.

5.3. TOA.

- a. Civilian employees covered by this issuance are eligible for a TOA.
- b. Limitations.
 - (1) Full-time employees may be granted up to 80 hours of time off during a leave year without charge to leave or loss of pay.
 - (a) The maximum amount of time off that may be granted to a full-time employee for a performance appraisal or any single contribution is 40 hours.
 - (b) The maximum amount of time off that may be granted to a part time employee (an employee who works less than 40 hours a week) is the average number of hours in the employee's biweekly scheduled tour of duty. The maximum award for a single contribution is half of the maximum amount of time that could be granted during the year.
 - (2) TOA cannot be transferred. A TOA that is approved and not used, or partially used, at the time an employee transfers to a non-WHS-serviced Component will lose its value. Every effort will be made to allow the employee to use the TOA before the employee's transfer.

e. See Appendix 5B for format.

f. Using A TOA.

(1) Time off may not be used and recorded on time and attendance records until documentation, approval, and processing requirements are completed. This process usually occurs within 20 workdays of submission to the AD, PM&AD. The Standard Form 50, "Notification of Personnel Action," will serve as confirmation that the TOA has been approved and processed.

(2) Time off granted as an award should be scheduled and used within 90 days of the effective date of the award, but in no case more than 1 year after the effective date.

(3) The employee will be able to schedule the time off in addition to other projected leave within 90 days of the effective date of the award, but in no case more than 1 year after the effective date.

g. The following non-exhaustive parameters will be considered when deciding whether to grant the use of a TOA.

(1) The benefits realized by the organization from the employee's contributions support the amount of time off approved after considering the cost of this TOA in lost production (including using Tables 1 and 2 in Appendix 5A).

(2) The organization's workload and the employee's projected leave must be considered.

5.4. LIMITATIONS ON AWARDS DURING A PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION. Monetary awards and TOAs may not be granted during a Presidential election period to employees who are non-career or limited term SES appointees, in SES positions, or in excepted service positions of a confidential or policy determining character (e.g., Schedule C appointees), in accordance with Volume 451 of DoDI 1400.25.

APPENDIX 5A: MONETARY AWARD AND TOA SCALE

5A.1. Table 1 helps determine the amount of an award that should be granted for the adoption of a suggestion, an invention, a special act or service, or a scientific achievement when the benefits to the U.S. Government are intangible.

Table 1. Monetary Award and TOA Scale (Intangible Benefits)

VALUE OF BENEFIT	EXTENT OF APPLICATION			
	LIMITED	EXTENDED	BROAD	GENERAL
VALUE OF BENEFIT	1. Affects functions, mission, or personnel of one facility, installation, regional area, or an organizational element of headquarters; or 2. Affects a small area of science or technology.	1. Affects functions, mission, or personnel of an entire regional area, command, or bureau; or 2. Affects an important area of science or technology.	1. Affects functions, mission, or personnel of several regional areas or commands, or an entire department or agency; or, 2. Affects an extensive area of science or technology.	1. Affects functions, mission, or personnel of more than one department or agency; or 2. Is in the public interest throughout the Nation and beyond.
<u>MODERATE</u> Change or modification of an operating principle or procedure with limited use or impact.	\$25–\$125 or 2–4 hours off	\$126–\$325 or 5–7 hours off	\$326–\$650 or 8–11 hours off	\$651–\$1,300 or 12–16 hours off
<u>SUBSTANTIAL</u> Substantial change or modification of procedures. An important improvement to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	\$125–\$325 or –7 hours off	\$326–\$650 or 8–11 hours off	\$651–\$1,300 or 1–16 hours off	\$1,301–\$3,150 or 17–24 hours off
<u>HIGH</u> Complete revision of a basic principle or procedures; a highly significant improvement to the value of a product or service.	\$325–\$650 or 8–11 hours off	\$651–\$1,300 or 12–16 hours off	\$1,301–\$3,150 or 17–24 hours off	\$3,151–\$6,300 or 2–32 hours off

Table 1. Monetary Award and TOA Scale (Intangible Benefits), Continued

VALUE OF BENEFIT	EXTENT OF APPLICATION			
	LIMITED	EXTENDED	BROAD	GENERAL
<u>EXCEPTIONAL</u> Initiation of a new principle or major procedure; a superior improvement to the quality of a critical product, activity, program, or service to the public.	\$650–\$1,300 or 12 – 16 hours off	\$1,301–\$3,150 or 17 –24 hours off	\$3,151–\$6,300 or 25–32 hours off	\$6,301–\$10,000 or 33–40 hours off

5A.2. Table 2 helps WHS-serviced Components determine the amount of an award that should be granted for the adoption of a suggestion, an invention, a special act or service, or a scientific achievement when the benefits to the U.S. Government are tangible.

Table 2. Monetary Awards and TOA Scale (Tangible Benefits)

VALUE OF ESTIMATED FIRST YEAR BENEFIT TO GOVERNMENT	AWARD AMOUNT		APPROVAL REQUIRED
	Up to \$100,000 in tangible benefits to the U.S. Government.	Up to 10 percent of tangible benefit to the U.S. Government.	
\$100,001 and above in tangible benefits to the U.S. Government.	\$10,000 plus 1 percent of benefits above \$100,001, not to exceed \$25,000.		DA&M.
	\$10,000 plus 1 percent of benefits above \$100,001, if in excess of \$25,001.		Presidential approval is required for award amounts exceeding \$25,000 and must be submitted to the USD(P&R) for endorsement to the OPM.

APPENDIX 5B: TOA TEMPLATE

Figure 3. TOA Template

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT
AND AWARDS DIVISION, HUMAN RESOURCES
DIRECTORATE, WASHINGTON HEADQUARTERS
SERVICES

SUBJECT: Time Off Award

In accordance with Administrative Instruction 29, the following individual is recommended for a Time Off Award:

Name: *[last name, first name, middle initial]*

EIN:

Title, Series, Grade:

Organization and Location:

Period Covered by Award:

Award Amount (in hours):

[Mr./Ms./Mx./Dr. last name]'s contributions for this award have not been and will not be recognized with any other monetary award or Time-off award.

Description of Achievement Being Recognized:

[Mr./Ms./Mx./Dr. last name] was instrumental in...

Per AI 29, Appendix 5A, the extent of the application is *[use appropriate extent]* and the value of the benefit is *[use appropriate benefit]*.

*[WHS-Serviced Component Head Signature
Block]*

SECTION 6: INCENTIVE AWARDS BOARD

The IAB is composed of five members appointed by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, all of whom will be selected from OSD and serve a term of 2.5 years. The IAB:

- a. Recommends to the Director of WHS:
 - (1) Non-performance based monetary award nominations in excess of \$7,500 and up to \$10,000.
 - (2) Non-performance based monetary awards that would grant \$10,000 or less to a SES, SL, or ST employee.
- b. Recommends to the DA&M:
 - (1) Non-performance based monetary award nominations that are in excess of \$10,000.
 - (2) Monetary award nominations based on a suggestion, invention, or scientific achievement for service members of \$10,000 up to \$25,000.
- c. Notifies the AD, PM&AD, of actions taken on awards nominations.
- d. Reviews and acts on employee suggestions that result in recommendations for a suggestion monetary award.
- e. Monitors the operation of the Secretary of Defense Honorary Awards Program to ensure uniformity of policy and coordination with related programs.
- f. Recommends procedures, guides, and standards for improving the Secretary of Defense's Honorary Awards Program.
- g. Does not review performance based monetary awards in accordance with the IAB Charter.

GLOSSARY

G.1. ACRONYMS.

AD	assistant director
APFs	appropriated funds
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
DA&M	Director of Administration and Management
DCIPS	Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System
DoDI	DoD instruction
GWOT	Global War on Terrorism
HRD	Human Resources Directorate
IAB	Incentive Awards Board
LoS	length of service
OPM	Office of Personnel Management
PM&AD	Performance Management and Awards Division
SES	Senior Executive Service
SL	Senior Level
ST	Scientific or Professional
TOA	Time Off Award
U.S.C.	United States Code
USD(P&R)	Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness
WHS	Washington Headquarters Services

G.2. DEFINITIONS. These terms and their definitions are for the purpose of this issuance.

award. A monetary, or other tangible item bestowed upon an individual, or an action taken to recognize and reward individual or team achievement that contributes to meeting organizational goals or improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of the U.S. Government or is otherwise in the public interest. Such awards include, but are not limited to, employee incentives based on predetermined criteria.

career employee. An employee who has served 3 years of substantially continuous creditable service and is currently in a permanent position, which is inclusive of excepted service personnel under the DCIPS.

civilian employee. An individual that meets the definition of “employee” under Section 2105 of Title 5, U.S.C. or who is in a position within the excepted service under the DCIPS as identified in Section 1601 of Title 10, U.S.C.

contribution. An achievement, through an individual or group effort, that takes the form of a suggestion, invention, superior accomplishment, or other personal effort. Such an achievement must contribute to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of U.S. Government operations or achieve a significant reduction in paperwork. It also can take the form of a special act or service in the public interest in connection with or related to official employment.

Foreign National Employee. An individual who meets the definition of employee as defined by Section 2105 of Title 5, U.S.C.

honorary award. Not a cash payment or TOA, but rather an award of an honorific value (e.g., a letter, certificate, citation, medal, plaque, coin, or other similar item).

highly-qualified expert. An individual appointed, in accordance with Section 9903 of Title 5, U.S.C., who possesses uncommon and recognized knowledge, skills, and experience in an occupational field, and judgment that is accorded authority and status by peers or the public. A highly-qualified expert has substantive experience or education in a variety of occupational fields such as soft and hard sciences, engineering, technology, human resources, business, transformation, education, medicine, languages, and logistics but is generally credentialed, and has proven ability in a particular field or fields. Highly qualified experts may be hired to mentor, lead, oversee, direct, manage, or consult on DoD programs and initiatives, including high profile and fast track assignments.

IAB. A board composed of five members appointed by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, all of whom will be selected from WHS-serviced Components. Each member serves for a term of 2.5 years.

indirect hire employee. A foreign national individual who is paid on a cost reimbursable basis by agreement with a foreign country.

intangible benefit. Savings to the U.S. Government that cannot be measured in terms of dollars. Awards that are measured on the basis of judgment rather than precise facts and provable calculations.

monetary award. A cash payment for superior accomplishment, special act or service, supervisor’s cash awards, performance, and suggestion or invention that does not increase the employee’s rate of basic pay and is subject to applicable tax rules. All monetary amounts contained within are gross values.

non-appropriated fund employees. Employees paid with non-appropriated funds.

non-career Federal employee. An employee who has not served 3 years of substantially continuous creditable service and is not currently in a permanent position

Presidential election period. Any period beginning on June 1 of a calendar year in which the popular election of the U.S. President occurs and ending on January 20 following the date of the election.

political appointee. Any employee who is appointed by the President, the Vice President, or agency head.

quality step increase. The award of an increase in basic pay through the advancement to the next step within the employee's current grade (e.g., from Step 4 to Step 5) as a result of outstanding personal performance (generally results in a 3.3 percent increase in pay from the basic pay of Step 1 within a grade).

Superior Accomplishment Award. A monetary form of recognition granted for a contribution occurring within the employee's job responsibilities that results in tangible benefits, savings, or intangible benefits to the U.S. Government.

Special Act or Service Award. A monetary form of recognition granted for a non-recurring contribution, usually outside of the employee's job responsibility, or the courageous handling of an emergency that results in tangible benefits, savings, or intangible benefits to the U.S. Government or the public.

Supervisor's Cash Award. A monetary form of recognition granted for a day-to-day work accomplishment. To determine the amount of the award, consideration should be given to the significance and the amount of effort required for the employee's contribution. Examples of achievements warranting the Supervisor's Cash Award are streamlining, eliminating, or modifying an office procedure to improve effectiveness, efficiency, timeliness, or accomplishing a specific, short-suspense project that contributed to the mission of the organization.

tangible. Savings to the government that can be measured in dollars.

TOA. TOA from duty, without loss of pay or charge to leave, granted to a Federal employee as a form of incentive or recognition. A TOA also may be used as an annual rating-based performance award as defined in Part 451 of Title 5, CFR. A TOA is intended to increase employees' productivity and creativity by rewarding contributions to the quality, efficiency, or economy of US government operations. With the exception of TOAs granted in connection with a performance appraisal, TOAs are given for accomplishments, special acts or service, contributions that are of a one-time, nonrecurring nature, etc. TOAs related to a performance appraisal may be used alone or in combination with a performance award to recognize an employee's end-of-year performance contributions.

REFERENCES

- Code of Federal Regulations, Title 5
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Re-establishment of the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Intelligence Oversight and the Director of Administration and Management,” January 11, 2021
- Deputy Secretary of Defense Memorandum, “Disestablishment of the Chief Management Officer of the DoD and Realignment of Functions and Responsibilities,” January 11, 2021
- Director of Administration and Management Memorandum, “Office of the Secretary of Defense Medal for Valor,” October 29, 2001
- Incentive Awards Board Charter, December 2008
- DoD Directive 5110.04, “Washington Headquarters Services (WHS),” March 27, 2013
- DoD Instruction 1400.25, Volume 451, “DoD Civilian Personnel Management System: Awards,” November 4, 2013
- DoD Instruction 1400.25, Volume 2008, “Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS) - Awards and Recognition,” September 12, 2012, as amended
- DoD Instruction 5025.01, “DoD Issuances Program,” August 1, 2016, as amended
- DoD Manual 1432.04, “Secretary of Defense Honorary Awards Program,” August 10, 2018
- Public Law 116-283, “William M. (Mac) Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021,” January 1, 2021
- United States Code, Title 5
- United States Code, Title 10
- Washington Headquarters Services Memorandum, “Administrative Changes to Administrative Instructions,” January 19, 2022