

NORTHAMPTON POLICE DEPARTMENT Administration & Operations Manual		
Policy: Awards and Recognition Program		AOM: P-252
Massachusetts Police Accreditation Standards Referenced:		Issuing Authority <hr/> Jody Kasper Chief of Police
Dissemination Date: 1/10/2002 Effective Date: 1/10/2002	Amended: 3/05, 3/06, 9/08, 2/09, 3/11, 3/13, 7/14, 2/15, 3/17, 9/19, 4/21, 9/23 Reviewed: 1/05 2/09, 4/21*	

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I. Introductory Discussion

Awards and decorations are used to publicly recognize and reward extraordinary, exceptional, meritorious, or conspicuously outstanding acts of service, which while consistent with departmental guidelines, distinguish the individual or unit among those performing similar acts of service.

II. Recognition

Recognition has long been identified as a powerful motivator. It is the responsibility of all supervisory personnel to identify and recognize the legitimate efforts and contributions of all employees under their command in an appropriate fashion. This may be done in an informal conversational way or through formal documentation to be included in the employee’s personnel file.

A. Informal Levels of Commendation: Informal levels of commendation may include but are not limited to:

1. Undocumented verbal acknowledgement, or
2. Informal letter or memo with a copy to the employee's personnel file.

B. Formal Levels of Commendation: Formal levels of commendation may include:

1. Letter of praise or thanks received from community members
2. Bureau/Shift Commander's or Supervisor's Letter of Commendation
3. Chief's Letter of Commendation
4. Awards recommended by the Awards Committee and approved by the Chief of Police

Bureau/Shift Commanders or Supervisors will consult with the Chief of Police prior to the delivery of a letter of commendation.

III. Nomination for Awards

A. Departmental Award Eligibility: Except where otherwise noted, any member of the Department may nominate any individual or unit for receipt of an award. This is accomplished by completing and submitting *AOM P252.c Nomination for Recognition* as explained below. The Awards Committee will review the nomination and make a recommendation to the Chief of Police.

Procedure for completing the Nomination for Recognition form:

1. Complete *AOM P252.c Nomination for Recognition* form with the nominee's name, the date of the incident, and the reason for the nomination.
2. Attach any and all documentation to explain the incident/action (e.g., incident reports, media articles, and letters).
3. If appropriate, submit a separate detailed summary stating the specific actions deserving of recognition by the Department. Include as much information as possible.
4. Forward the Nomination Form to the member's Bureau/Shift Supervisor for approval/disapproval and comment.
5. The Shift Supervisor will then forward the nomination to the member's Bureau/Shift Commander for approval/disapproval and comment.
6. The Bureau/Shift Commander will next forward the nomination and all related paperwork to the Captain of Operations, who will then present the nomination to the Awards Committee.

IV. Awards Committee

A. The mission of the Awards Committee is to receive nominations, review and discuss them, and provide a recommendation to the Chief of Police who will make the final determination. The Awards Committee shall meet on a consistent basis so that

- nominations can be reviewed and recommendations can be made in a timely manner.
- B. Committee Makeup: Typically the Committee is comprised of the Administration of the Police Department, including the following:
1. Chief of Police (1)
 2. Captains (2)
 3. All Lieutenants (4)
- C. Members of the administration meet on a consistent basis multiple times per month. Nominations may be reviewed at meetings as they are received. A minimum of five people must be in attendance in order for an award to be recommended. When an odd number of people are in attendance, a recommendation requires a majority vote. When six people are in attendance, a recommendation requires four votes.
- D. Once an award is recommended and the Chief of Police has approved the recommendation, the award should be presented to the employee in a timely manner.

V. Types of Awards

- A. Departmental awards are listed below in order of precedence, with the most prestigious being number one (1).
1. Medal of Valor (formerly Combat Cross): Awarded for an individual act of heroism at imminent personal hazard of life while in combat with an assaultive, armed adversary, or while engaged in a high-risk life-saving action - worn on left breast.
 2. Meritorious Service Medal: Awarded for a highly unusual accomplishment under adverse conditions with some degree of hazard of injury to the nominee, or where injury to a third party is prevented - worn on left breast.
 3. Exceptional Duty Medal: Awarded for a highly commendable accomplishment or act on duty, accomplished as a result of training, devotion to duty, or service to the public - worn on left breast.
 4. Life Saving Medal: Awarded for an act performed in the line of duty with disregard of the nominee's personal safety, **or** through prompt and alert emergency medical action, results in saving a life - worn on left breast.
 5. Unit Citation Medal (formerly Grand Cordon): Awarded for participation of the members of an operating unit and/or departmental group in a noteworthy action, that through their individual contributions to a joint endeavor, results in commendable accomplishment, and/or public accolades bestowed upon them and the department as a whole - worn on left breast.
 6. Honorable Service Medal: Awarded for an outstanding creditable act or a history of accomplishments in the line of duty, performed in an exemplary manner, exhibiting initiative, dedication, a positive attitude, a consistent attention to duty, and represents praiseworthy service. - worn on left breast. *Note: Those members who have received three (3) EMS Awards from either Hampshire County or Western Massachusetts*

Emergency Medical Services or other such organizations shall be eligible for an Honorable Service Award based on the following:

- 3 EMS Awards: Honorable Service Bar
- 4-5 EMS Awards: Honorable Service Bar with star
- 5-6 EMS Awards: Honorable Service Bar with acorn
- 6+ EMS Awards: Honorable Service Bar with oak leaf

7. *Distinguished Service Medal*: Awarded for distinguished service on or off duty, that displays individual initiative and that contributes to the betterment of the department or the community- worn on left breast.
8. *Fitness Commendation Medal*: Awarded on a yearly basis to those personnel who successfully pass a voluntary physical fitness test. Commendation bar can be worn after successfully passing the fitness test but must be removed if the employee fails or does not take the fitness test when it is offered again. Worn on left breast.
 - a. Solid Bar: Meets “Good” standards
 - b. Solid Bar with star: Meets “Excellent” standards
 - c. Solid Bar with oak leaf: Meets “Superior” standards

Fitness Testing Procedure: Participation in the annual fitness test is completely voluntary. It is managed and conducted by two members of NPD who are tasked with organizing and conducting the testing. **Generally two testing dates will be established each year.** In exceptional circumstances, such as injury before the testing time, make-up testing may be arranged. Once testing is completed, the personnel tasked with overseeing the tests shall complete the *Annual Fitness Test Report (P-252 Appendix B)* and shall submit this form to the Captain of Operations for review.

Fitness Test Standards: NPD uses the Cooper Standards to guide physical fitness testing requirements. The categories of Good, Excellent, and Superior are the rating standards. Any sworn personnel who wish to take the fitness test must meet the following minimum standards:

MALES	PLANK	PUSH-UPS	1.5MILE RUN	FEMALES	PLANK	PUSH-UPS	1.5 MILE RUN
20-29 Superior	60 Sec.	37	11:31 or less	20-29 Superior	60 Sec.	30	13:24 or less
20-29 Excellent	30 Sec.	33	11:32-11:58	20-29 Excellent	30 Sec.	26	13:25-14:07
20-29 Good	30 Sec.	29	11:59-12:38	20-29 Good	30 Sec.	23	14:08-14:50
30-39 Superior	60 Sec.	30	11:56 or less	30-39 Superior	60 Sec.	24	14:04 or less
30-39 Excellent	30 Sec.	27	11:57-12:25	30-39 Excellent	30 Sec.	21	14:05-14:34

30-39 Good	30 Sec.	24	12:26-13:04	30-39 Good	30 Sec.	19	14:35-15:38
40-49 Superior	60 Sec.	24	12:25 or less	40-49 Superior	60 Sec.	18	14:44 or less
40-49 Excellent	30 Sec.	21	12:26-13:11	40-49 Excellent	30 Sec.	15	14:45-15:24
40-49 Good	30 Sec.	18	13:12-13:49	40-49 Good	30 Sec.	13	15:25-16:21
50-59 Superior	60 Sec.	19	13:32 or less	50-59 Superior	60 Sec.	17	16:21 or less
50-59 Excellent	30 Sec.	15	13:33-14:16	50-59 Excellent	30 Sec.	13	16:22-17:13
50-59 Good	30 Sec.	13	14:17-15:03	50-59 Good	30 Sec.	12	17:14-18:07

9. Academic Achievement Medal: This award is given to those Officers who have earned college degrees beyond an associate's level in any subject area. Officers who have earned a bachelor's degree may wear a plain bar. Officers who have earned more than one bachelor's degree may add an acorn. Officers who have earned a master's degree may add an oak leaf to the bar for each graduate degree earned-worn on left breast.
10. Honorable Discharge Medal: Awarded to an Officer who is eligible for retirement and/or entering new employment opportunities, and has served the community during their period of service in an honorable fashion.
11. Certificate of Commendation: Awarded as recognition of a member's actions that are worthy of notice, yet do not fulfill all the criteria for a medal award.
12. Civilian Service Award: Awarded to honor the personal assistance of a civilian who extends assistance to an Officer in the course of duty, or to aid other civilians in danger's way.
13. Letter of Merit: Presented to recognize a member's on or off duty accomplishment that reflects positively on the City, the member, and/or the Department.

Multiple Awards: Unless otherwise noted, those Officers who receive the same award multiple times may display the following appurtenances:

- 2-3: Award bar with star
- 4-5: Award bar with acorn
- 5+: Award bar with oak leaf

VI. Authorization to Issue Awards

The Chief of Police must authorize all departmental awards.

VII. Non-Departmental Awards

Awards of recognition from outside groups or agencies may be accepted by members, however, the Chief of Police must determine the appropriateness of wearing the award as part of the recipient's uniform.