

RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

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Chief of Police: Jason Soto /s/		
Approving Deputy Chief: Tom Robinson /s/		
General Order No: E-120-18	Issued: September 16, 2004	Revised: Dec 6th, 2018
General Order Title: EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION		

I. POLICY

Employees of the Reno Police Department often perform their duties in a manner that exceeds expected standards of professionalism. The Reno Police Department has established different levels of employee recognition that may be bestowed upon them depending on the manner in which they have honored the City, the Department, and/or the community.

II. DEFINITIONS

Awards and Commendations Board: The Awards and Commendations Board (Board) is comprised of members of the Department who represent each of the Department's bargaining groups. The Board is charged with evaluating award nominations, determining their merit and recommending appropriate levels of recognition, based on nominations, to the Chief of Police. The board is responsible for maintaining a written record of all cases reviewed, recommendations submitted to the Chief and the final outcome of the nomination.

Master Police Officer: A designation bestowed upon certain non-supervisory sworn police officers in recognition of consistent outstanding performance and consistent exemplary conduct in accordance with departmental values and core competencies.

III. FORMS OF EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

A. The Police Medal of Honor – The department's highest level of recognition. This medal may be awarded for an act that involves extreme risk to the employee's life, voluntarily taken with knowledge of the imminent threat of personal safety, who distinguishes themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty.

There must be no margin of doubt or possibility of error in awarding this honor. To justify this award, the act must be clearly rendered conspicuous above their comrades by an act so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes their gallantry beyond the call of duty from lesser forms of bravery; and it must be the type of deed which if not done, would not subject the individual to any justified criticism.

B. The Police Medal of Valor – The department’s second highest level of recognition. This medal may be awarded for an act that involves a significant risk to life of an employee, with a demonstration of courage that goes beyond behavior normally required of individuals in the law enforcement profession, and sets the individual apart from his or her fellow officers. Although the employee displayed extraordinary heroism, the act does not justify the Medal of Honor.

C. The Police Medal of Meritorious Service – The department’s third highest level of recognition. This medal may be awarded to an employee for meritorious service in a duty of great responsibility, involving operational risk to the employee. It may also be awarded to an employee for an act which results in the saving of a life or attempted saving of a life, during which extraordinary efforts were used and personal risk to the employee was involved.

D. The Police Cross Medal – This medal is awarded posthumously when an employee has lost his or her life in the performance of his or her duties under honorable circumstances.

E. The Purple Heart Medal – This medal may be awarded to an employee who is wounded in a significant nature during the scope of their employment. This could be from an altercation with a suspect or from an encounter with an individual whose use of a dangerous or deadly weapon has inflicted said wounds.

F. The Lifesaving Medal – This medal may be awarded to an employee who saves someone’s life under circumstances in which the employee was not in danger while doing so.

G. The Distinguished Service Medal – This medal may be awarded to recognize an employee’s positive contributions to the department or to recognize an employee’s accomplishments over the course of their career. Employees can qualify under one of three categories:

- 1) After serving a minimum of twenty (20) continuous years of exemplary service with the Reno Police Department;
- 2) After serving a minimum ten (10) continuous years of exemplary service with the Reno Police Department and separates from the department under honorable circumstances;
- 3) Or to represent a medal presented by another governmental agency for action taken in law enforcement capacity while employed by RPD, but that does not fall into the criteria of a departmental medal; and does not arise from the same event that another Reno Police medal was awarded.

In considering whether to recommend a qualified employee for this medal, the Awards and Commendations Board may also consider:

- 1) Whether the nominee was be deemed by their peer(s) and supervisor(s) to demonstrate departmental values and possess an outstanding work ethic.
- 2) Whether the nominee possessed a professional demeanor and outstanding job knowledge.
- 3) The disciplinary record of the nominee.

H. The Chief’s Commendation Medal – This medal may be awarded by the Chief/designee without the recommendation of the Board. This medal may be awarded to citizens, in addition to employees.

- 1) Employee: This is medal may be awarded to an employee, regardless of rank, for exceptional meritorious performance while conducting an administrative or operational assignment.

2) Citizen: This medal may be awarded to citizens, whose actions exemplify excellence in performance of civic responsibilities, showing unselfish devotion to the community, and/or bringing honor to themselves and recognition to the City through those actions.

I. Police Officer of the Year – This award is issued annually to the officer selected by the voting members of the R.P.P.A. For a period of one year, the chosen officer will serve as the Department's nominee for all local and national recognition awards that are associated with an Officer of the Year.

J. Chief's Certificate of Commendation – This certificate may be awarded to an employee or citizens under any of the following circumstances:

- 1) An employee of any rank for superior performance of duties or exemplary behavior that are either administrative or operational in nature;
- 2) An employee of another agency that qualifies under any of the above mentioned conditions, if earned while aiding, assisting, or working with any employee of the Reno Police Department;
- 3) Any distinct work group of employees when the actions of the group as a whole meet the qualifications; or
- 4) Citizens whose actions exemplify excellence in performance of civic responsibilities, showing unselfish devotion to their fellow humans and community, and/or bringing honor to themselves and recognition to the City through their actions.

K. Chief's Memorandum – May be issued to an employee or citizen whose actions or outstanding police work has brought credit to the Department. This award may also be issued by a Deputy Chief.

L. Employee Performance Comment Sheet (EPCO) – EPCO's may be awarded by a supervisor to an employee, in accordance with the EMPLOYEE EVALUATIONS General Order and/or the EPCO Training Bulletin, for incidents that do not meet the criteria for other forms of employee recognition.

M. Departmental Certificate of Service – This certificate is presented to an employee upon separation from the department under honorable circumstances.

IV. PROCEDURES

A. Nomination Procedure - Police Department employees of any class or rank, who have first-hand knowledge of an incident worthy of recognition, may nominate an employee or a citizen for an award by submitting an interoffice memorandum to the Board or to the Chief of Police. The nomination memorandum should provide a brief description of the incident and identifying information of the nominee(s). When appropriate, supportive reports, diagrams or photographs should be added to explain unusual circumstances. The Chief of Police shall forward all award nominations to the Awards and Commendations Board for consideration and for record keeping.

B. Evaluation of Nominations - The Board shall complete a review of each nomination and may seek additional information from the nominator, witness to the event, primary case investigator, immediate supervisor, or the nominee to determine the merits of the nomination.

The Board shall forward their findings and recommendation to the Lieutenant designated by the Chief of Police to be the Awards Committee Liaison. Recommendations shall be based on a

majority affirmative vote of the Board. The Chief of Police has the ultimate authority to award or deny any commendations from the department. The Board's by-laws will not supersede this general order.

C. Award Presentations - The following awards will be presented by the Chief of Police/designee to the recipient employee at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Reno City Council: The Police Medal of Honor, Police Medal of Valor, The Police Medal of Meritorious Service, Purple Heart Medal, and Lifesaving Award.

The Awards Committee's Lieutenant Liaison will be the point of contact and coordinator for the facilitation of award presentations. Other commendations, awards, and certificates may be presented by the Chief/designee during departmental ceremonies.

D. Departmental Ribbons - A recipient of any of the following medals shall be issued a corresponding colored ribbon: Medal of Honor, Medal of Valor, Police Cross, Medal of Meritorious Service, Purple Heart, Life Saving Award, Distinguished Service Medal, Chief's Commendation and Officer of the Year.

The ribbon bar will be worn horizontally on the uniformed officer's shirt, immediately above the left pocket. No more than three ribbons will be worn on a tier. Awards received in excess of three will be worn on successive tiers of three each. Ribbons not constituting a full tier will be centered above the completed tier. Ribbons shall be dressed from right to left, top to bottom, in order of importance.

Other ribbons authorized by the Chief of Police, but not issued by the Reno Police Department, such as the National Law Enforcement Officers ribbon, are to be worn evenly dressed above the officer's name tag above the right breast pocket.

E. Master Police Officer Procedures - Any non-supervisory Reno Police Department employee may nominate a non-supervisory police officer for the Master Officer Designation. Nominations shall be made in writing and shall include endorsements from at least three (3) other sworn non-supervisory. Nominations shall follow the nomination procedures above in Subsection A.

1) Selection Criteria - In considering a nominee for Master Officer, the following criteria will be evaluated:

- a) Tenure: 10 years of continuous exemplary service with the Reno Police Department, is generally considered the minimum acceptable tenure.
- b) Values: Whether or not the nominee adhered to departmental values, vision and mission.
- c) Performance: Whether or not the nominee demonstrated outstanding work ethic, professional demeanor and exceptional competence.
- d) Disciplinary Record: nominees having a sustained policy violation within the previous five years are generally not eligible for consideration.
- e) Development: to what extent the nominee participated in personal, professional development.

2) Selection Process - The Chairman of the Awards and Commendations Board will oversee the Master Police Officer selection process and assure the minimum qualifications have been met prior to consideration by the Master Police Officer group. An appointed member of the RPPA Board of Directors will be required to be present and

monitor any selection or removal process. A majority vote by the Master Police Officer group is needed for approval of the Master Police Officer designation. The Awards and Commendation Board Chairman does not have a vote in the selection process. Upon approval by the Master Police Officer group, the Awards and Commendation Chairman will forward the recommendation up the chain of command to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police/designee can veto recommendations issued by the Master Police Officer group.

3) Removal Process - The Master Police Officer Group is responsible for the removal of any member that engages in behavior or is involved in an incident that may discredit the designation or the department. The Master Police Officer Group will review any incidents by their members that involve the lack of professionalism, integrity, ethics or honesty. All reviews will take place at the conclusion of any administrative or judicial process. A majority vote of the existing Master Police Officers will be required for the removal of the Master Officer designation. As described in the selection process, all recommendations for removal will be forwarded through the chain of command. Decisions for removal are final and not subject to contractual grievance procedures or appeal.

Determination as to the severity of the offending act and its impact on the Master Police Officer program shall be determined by the Master Police Officer group. Officers failing to maintain the high standards of professionalism required for selection may be removed from such designation for any act that brings discredit upon themselves, their profession, or the Department. As in the selection process, the Master Police Officer group's decision is final and not subject to contractual grievance procedures or appeal.

4) Wearing of Insignia - The insignia designating a Master Police Officer is a wreath design of yellow (gold) color. It shall be worn directly above the officer's service stripes on the long sleeve shirt and affixed to the short sleeve shirt 1 ½ inches below the Department's patch on the left sleeve, centered on the crease, like the patch. The insignia shall only be worn on the Department's class "A" uniform.

Unless removed by a decision of the Master Police Officer group, officers shall carry the Master Police Officer designation for the balance of their careers, or until promoted to a supervisory rank. The Master Police Officer insignia shall not be worn in conjunction with any other rank or insignia.