	NEW PALTZ POLICE DEPARTMENT Policy and Procedures	
	<i>Subject</i> Performance Recognition Awards	
	ISSUED: April 14, 2017	EFFECTIVE: April 14, 2017
	REVISED: November 11, 2021	RESCIND:
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Performance Recognition Awards


PURPOSE

The purpose of the awards program is to enhance positive morale within the Department by publicly recognizing and providing tangible reward to eligible Members in recognition of commendable performance of duty and to recognize and appreciate an individual or organization for their contribution to the Department's mission.


PROCEDURE:


Definitions – the following definitions apply to this policy:


1. Awards Committee - The Chief of Police shall formulate an Awards Committee which shall be comprised of the Chief of Police, the Lieutenant, at least two Supervisors and a member of the PBA for a minimum of five members. The Committee will meet as needed to make a determination of awards to department members for the annual awards banquet. The review and final selection of award nominations shall be concluded by February 1st of the following year.
2. Awards Notification and Presentation - Upon approval for an award, the recipient shall be notified by memorandum by the Chief of Police, a copy of which shall be posted in the department patrol room. The award shall be presented by the Chief of Police. A copy of the award certificate shall become a part of the recipient's personnel file.
3. Chief's Commendation Letter – Issued for note worthy actions or behaviors demonstrated by an officer pursuant to a case, situation or incident. This general commendation letter is forwarded to the Lieutenant for review and/or approval. If the Lieutenant agrees with the commendation, it is forwarded to the Chief for recognition and placed into the officer's personnel folder. A copy is given to the officer and it will be included in the Chief of Police's monthly police commission packet and announced at the police commission meeting.
4. Awards and Criteria
 - a.  **Medal of Honor Citation** Awarded for outstanding act in the line of duty at imminent personal hazard to the recipient's life with full knowledge of the risk involved.


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- b.  **Combat Cross Citation** Awarded for an individual act of heroism.
- c.  **Meritorious Service Citation** Awarded for a highly unusual accomplishment under adverse conditions with some degree of hazard to life and limb to the nominee or where death or injury to a third party is prevented.
- d.  **Meritorious Police Investigation Citation** – Investigation Awarded to a police officer who has demonstrated exceptional initiative and skill at investigation.
- e.  **Wound Citation** - Awarded for a wound received in the line of duty inflicted intentionally by an armed adversary resulting in severe injury.
- f.  **Life Saving Citation** - Awarded for an intelligent act performed in the line of duty which through disregard of personal safety or prompt and alert action results in saving a life.
- g.  **Police Duty Ribbon Honorable Service Citation** - Awarded for a creditable act in the line of duty, which meets some, but not all of the requirements for other citations and is unusual in nature, showing initiative and accomplishment.
- h.  **Exceptional Duty Citation** - Awarded for a highly creditable accomplishment to duty or service to the public.
- i.  **Unit Citation** - Awarded for the participation of members of an operating unit and/or the entire departmental staff in a cited action.
- j.  **Drug Buster Citation** - Awarded for the successful arrest of a narcotic criminal.
- k.  **Gallantry Star Citation Bar** – Awarded for the arrest of a person who is a major threat to the community.


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- l.  **Chief's Citation** - Awarded for any act or achievement that brings public acclaim to the department or the police profession. Award is given solely by Chief of Police.


- m.  **Police Service Citation** - Awarded to recognize continuous service with the department. Levels of longevity are represented by numerals designating years of service.

- n.  **Educational Achievement Citation** - Awarded for achieving a degree from an accredited college or university during their employment. Recognition is given for each level of accomplishment; an associate's degree merits the award, a bachelor degree merits a silver star and a master degree or higher merits a gold star.


- o.  **Military Service Citations** - Those members who are currently serving or have received an Honorable Discharge for their service. Eligibility for the citation must be presented in the suitable documentation.

- p.  **Honorable Discharge Citation** – Awarded for recognition of an officer who is eligible for retirement and/or entering new employment opportunities and has served the New Paltz community during his/her period of service in an honorable fashion-

- q.  **Academy Graduation Citation** – Awarded for completion of the Basic Police Academy.

- r.  **FBI National Academy** - Awarded and worn by those officers who have graduated from the National Academy conducted by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

- r. **Meritorious Citizenship – Heroism** – Awarded to a civilian who performed an act of heroism or exceptional bravery, at great personal risk, in the service of others in the New Paltz Community.

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The department may issue a Firearms Award for overall “Top Gun”. This award shall be given annually to the member with the best overall cumulative firearms performance during the spring and fall range cycles. Scoring will be based upon all aspects of training curriculum.

Copies of awards, to include letters of commendation and certificates of appreciation, shall be placed in the recipient’s personnel file.

5. Recommendations for Awards

- a. Any individual having personal knowledge of an act of distinguished service believed to warrant an award may submit a recommendation to any Supervisor, the Lieutenant or the Chief of Police. The person(s) who receive the award recommendation will present it to the awards committee.
- b. Recommendations may be submitted in Memorandum or letter form clearly reporting facts concerning the outstanding performance of duty. Statements of eyewitnesses, excerpts of official records, photographs and the like, if available, shall be attached to support or amplify stated facts.
- c. Supporting Documentation - The recommendation should be accompanied by such supporting documentation as is deemed desirable by the person or persons initiating the recommendation. This documentation may include such items as witness statements, photographs, pertinent departmental incident reports, medical reports, reports from other law enforcement agencies, statements from civilians familiar with the incident, newspaper articles, and any other evidence that will assist the Awards Committee in determining the merits of the recommendation.
- d. Recommendation shall be forwarded to the Lieutenant who will present at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Awards Committee.
- e. Any member of the department who is given significant assistance by a citizen, or any member of the department who is aware that such assistance has been given to another employee, may nominate that citizen for a Commendation. Such nominations shall be prepared and forwarded in the manner prescribed for recommendations of departmental personnel.
- f. Letters from citizens commending a departmental employee shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police or designee. If he/she concludes that an award to the employee may be justified, he/she shall prepare and forward a recommendation to the Awards Committee in accordance with the procedures set forth in this policy.


6. Notification of Award

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- a. Personnel for whom departmental awards have been approved shall be notified immediately of the award through the chain of command. At his discretion, the notifications may be made directly by the Chief of Police or his or her designee.
- b. Notices of all departmental awards shall be posted on departmental bulletin boards and noted in appropriate departmental documents and publications.
- c. All departmental awards shall be made a matter of record in the employee's personnel file. A photocopy of the certificate of award shall be included in the file. All awards shall be considered in connection with future personnel decisions, such as promotion or assignment to a particular duty or location.
- d. Where appropriate, press releases regarding departmental awards should be made available to local media representatives.
- e. A copy of the citizen's letter of commendation shall be forwarded to the employee, another copy shall be placed in the employee's personnel file, and further copies shall be posted on departmental bulletin boards or otherwise disseminated within the department.
- f. Citizens who have received departmental commendations for assistance to the department should be notified in a similar manner.

7. Presentations of Awards

- a. Presentation of all departmental awards other than Letters of Commendation shall be made at a ceremony deemed appropriate by the Chief of Police. Letters of Commendation as well as recognition of promotions, retirements, appointment to specialized units and milestones will also be presented.
- b. During awards ceremonies, presentations of awards shall be made whenever possible by the Chief of Police or another high-ranking departmental executive as designated by the Chief.
- c. All personnel not otherwise engaged in duty assignments shall be encouraged to attend the presentation.
- d. Members of the recipient's family shall be invited to attend the ceremony.
- e. Posthumous awards shall be received by the next of kin. "Next of kin" normally is construed to mean one of the following:
 - i. Widow or widower
 - ii. Eldest son or daughter
 - iii. Parent
 - iv. Eldest brother or sister
 - v. This order of preference may be modified as circumstances dictate in individual cases.
 - vi. Posthumous awards may be presented at the memorial or funeral service for that individual or at such other time as is deemed appropriate by the next of kin.

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f. Commendations to civilians may be presented at a formal ceremony at the discretion of the Chief of Police, but only with the prior approval of the citizen concerned

8. Military Decorations and Military Service Ribbons


Member must receive approval from the Chief of Police before wearing any medal, service bar or ribbon denoting a decoration or participation in any war, battle, theater of operation, engagement or any Federal or State decoration and after presenting proper proof.

- a. Such approved decorations or military service ribbons may be worn on the uniform blouse or uniform shirt.
- b. They shall not be worn on the uniform jacket, winter coat or raincoat.
- c. They shall be worn on the left breast pocket in the order prescribed by military regulations, with the lower edge resting on the top seam of the pocket flap, in 1 or more lines.
- d. Department decorations or ribbons shall be given precedence when worn with those of military origin.

8. Special Assignment Identification

This identification is to provide for public recognition by tangible evidence of the attainment of a high degree of skill, proficiency and excellence in the performance of specified duties or the successful completion of prescribed courses of training. Such identification shall differ in design for each specialist category and such identification will cease to be worn when a Member entitled thereto is no longer performing such specialized duties, or fails to maintain his/her qualification as a specialist.

- a. Firearms Instructor Bar - This bar will be issued to a Member certified as a Firearms Instructor and assigned those duties with the department. This bar shall be worn on the uniform shirt or blouse only, centered horizontally on the flap of the left breast pocket, with the upper edge one-half inch below the top seam of the pocket flap.
- b. Field Training Officer - This bar will be issued to a Member certified as Field Training Officer (FTO), who has successfully completed FTO training and is participating in the field training of Probationary Members. The FTO insignia will be worn on the uniform shirt or blouse only, directly below the name plate.

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- c. Emergency Response Team - This insignia will be worn by a Member assigned to the Ulster County Emergency Team. The ERT insignia will be worn on the uniform shirt or blouse only, directly above the name plate.
- d. Motor Unit – This insignia will be worn by a Member who has completed the requisite training and certification to ride the department motorcycle.
- e. Other Specialty Insignias - Other specialty insignias may be worn by Members, upon approval of the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police will also approve the manner of wearing.