DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS

Policy Number: 103.0195
Title: Employee Recognition and Achievement Awards
Effective Date: 6/19/18

PURPOSE: To provide a recognition and awards system that rewards high performance and recognizes the outstanding work of employees. The DOC values and recognizes the outstanding work of its employees through a formal process that is employee driven and provides acknowledgement to individuals, to teams of employees, and for work on specific projects critical to the agency's mission.

APPLICABILITY: Department-wide

DEFINITIONS:
Achievement award – monetary awards as authorized under Minn. Stat. § 43A.18.

Employee recognition award – certificate or plaque presented to an employee to recognize the employee's performance and achievement.

Employee recognition event – a scheduled ceremony or event for the purpose of recognizing the work of DOC employees.

Gifts/non-monetary award – apparel, plaques, certificates, or other non-monetary awards of nominal value presented to employees in recognition of their performance and achievement.

Senior management team (SMT) – is comprised of the Minnesota Commissioner of Corrections, deputy and assistant commissioners, director of policy and legal services, and the agency human resources (HR) director.

PROCEDURES:
A. Annual designation of funding for employee recognition and achievement awards
   1. At the beginning of each fiscal year, the department allocates funds for employee recognition in the operating budget.
      a) The budget covers expenses relating to the purchase of materials and awards, gifts, and refreshments for ceremonies.
      b) Each division contributes equally to the agency employee recognition budget.
      c) Employee recognition committee chair(s) must complete and submit a Request for Approval to Incur Special Expenses (attached) in accordance with Policy 104.460, "Special Expenses." The special expense form is routed through central office financial services for leadership approval and signatures.

   2. Annually, the DOC may allocate a set amount of money each fiscal year for the purpose of issuing monetary achievement awards on a quarterly basis from the operating budget.
      a) All achievement awards are in the form of a lump sum payment unless an applicable labor agreement or compensation plan requires otherwise.

      b) Agency management determines the amounts for achievement awards as part of the agency's annual operating budget. End-of-year allocations for achievement awards are not permitted.

c) Achievement awards must be integrated into the agency's overall performance evaluation process.

3. State agencies, including the Department of Corrections (DOC), must give written notice to the commissioner of Minnesota Management and Budget (MMB) of the decision to offer achievement awards. The documentation submitted to MMB for approval must include the following:
   a) A copy of the proposed agency policy, and an explanation of the procedures used to ensure that all employees, managers, and supervisors are informed of the policy and its purpose;

   b) If any parts of the achievement award process are delegated by the appointing authority to other employees, a list of delegates;

   c) A statement of the agency's commitment to the principles listed in MMB's HR/LR Policy #1420, "Employee Recognition and Achievement Awards;" and

   d) The types of outstanding performance that will be considered in the nomination process. This may include any of the following:
      (1) Team recognition
      A group of employees has delivered outstanding work on a group project. The employees worked well together and overcame challenges and difficulties.
      (2) Project recognition
      An employee has performed outstanding work in the completion or administration of a particular project.
      (3) Individual performance
      An employee has demonstrated sustained outstanding individual job performance.

B. Granting achievement awards
   1. Employees must be notified when achievement awards are open for nomination.

   2. All employees are encouraged to recognize the work of others and submit achievement award nominations, using the Employee Achievement Award Nomination form (attached), as allowed by the employees' collective bargaining agreement. The nomination and any possible award must occur during the same fiscal year.

   3. Nominations may be submitted to HR when nominations are open, using the Employee Achievement Award Nomination form.
      a) Any DOC employee may nominate an individual for an achievement award.

      b) All signatures must be obtained prior to submitting the nomination form to HR.

   4. Nominations received are reviewed by HR to ensure that:
      a) All required information is included on the nomination form;

      b) All signatures have been obtained;

c) A current performance evaluation is on file certifying satisfactory or better performance; and

d) The nominee has not received any discipline (written or higher) within the previous 24 months.

5. An employee may receive only one achievement award per fiscal year.

C. Annual employee recognition awards

1. The DOC-wide employee recognition committee:

a) Is comprised of 17 members including:

(1) One staff member from each correctional facility,
(2) One staff member from central office,
(3) Three staff members from field services (one from each region),
(4) One staff member from MINNCOR,
(5) One clerical support staff member, who is a non-voting member and does not participate in the award winner selection process, and
(6) One representative from HR who serves as a consultant to the committee.

b) The committee includes representation from line staff, support staff, supervisors, and managers.

c) Committee members are limited to serving a maximum three-year term.

d) Committee members must be solicited from the agency. It is the responsibility of the committee chair to notify the appointing authority when a current committee member's tenure is ending and a replacement member is needed. As the composition of the committee must be representative of the workforce, the committee chair may request the appointing authority to seek interest from a particular work group or area. Committee members are approved and appointed by the appointing authority, who may delegate this authority to a division head or appropriate manager-level staff member.

e) The committee determines a schedule for meetings.

2. The committee is responsible for establishing recognition categories, reviewing nominations, and making final recommendations of award winners to the senior management team (SMT).

3. The committee is responsible for announcing annual recognition categories each fiscal year and the criteria established for each.

a) The categories and criteria are announced agency-wide.
b) Award categories may include:

1) Exemplary citizenship/lifesaving or heroic act;
2) Security;
3) "Above and beyond the call of duty;"
4) Leadership;
5) Volunteer (in the community or job-related or both);
6) Creativity/innovation;
7) Safety;

8) Cost savings and efficiency;
9) Outstanding individual performance;
10) Team recognition;
11) Project recognition; and
12) Other (explanation/description to be determined by the committee).

4. Nominations may be submitted to the employee recognition committee, using the DOC Recognition Award Nomination form on-line, located at the Employee Recognition and Awards iShare site

5. Any DOC employee may nominate an individual for a recognition award.
   a) All employees are encouraged to recognize the work of others and submit recognition nominations to the employee recognition committee.
   b) All information on the form must be completed prior to submitting the nomination form to the committee.

6. The HR representative on the committee reviews the employee record to ensure the nominee meets established criteria or other requirements as established by the committee with respect to performance reviews or discipline. Minimum criteria to receive a nomination recognition include
   a) Satisfactory or better performance in the most recent performance appraisal period; and
   b) No work suspension in the previous 24 months.

7. Gifts or non-monetary awards must conform to limits noted in Minn. Stat. §15A.0815, collective bargaining agreements and other compensation plans, and Policy 104.460, "Special Expenses."

8. All recognition nominations are acknowledged close to the time of high performance at the local level (e.g. facility, central office, or field services office) and in person as determined by the appointing authority and shared management, where these relationships exist.

9. Staff must sign a Photography/Video/Information Release Authorization form (link attached) authorizing photographs to be taken at nomination and award recognition events and used for internal publication in the DOC *Hotline* and/or postings on iShare as outlined in Policy 101.010, "Information Program and Dissemination," and Policy 101.310, "Media Contacts."

10. Award winners are selected and presented annually at a ceremony at DOC Central Office during the 1st quarter of each fiscal year. All awards are announced electronically, DOC-wide and presented in person by the commissioner/designee, unless an employee declines the personal recognition.
    a) Other presenters may include the nominator(s), supervisor(s), and/or manager(s).
    b) Committee chair(s) work(s) with the communications unit on announcements.

11. Family and/or community members may be invited to attend the awards ceremony at DOC Central Office, held annually during the 1st quarter of each fiscal year.

12. The awards committee must notify the award recipient, his/her immediate supervisor, and the appointing authority of the award.

13. Award winners must be approved to attend the award ceremony during work hours and/or their schedules must be adjusted to allow attendance.

14. Nomination certificates and letters must be filed in the employee's supervisory file. HR staff must ensure award winner certificates and letters are filed in the employee's personnel file.

D. Changes to policy
In accordance with MMB HR/LR Policy #1420, any changes to this policy must be approved by MMB prior to implementation.

INTERNAL CONTROLS:

A. The DOC employee recognition committee maintains meeting minutes and records recommendations.

B. HR maintains meeting documentation of achievement award nominees, recommendations, and final decisions.

C. Approved achievement and recognition awards are documented in an employees' personnel file.

ACA STANDARDS: None

REFERENCES:
Applicable Labor agreements and compensation plans
MMB Administrative Procedure 4.4
Minn. Stat. §§ 15A.0815, and 43A.18
Minnesota Management and Budget, HR/LR Policy #1420, "Employee Recognition and Achievement Awards"
Policy 101.010, "Information Program and Dissemination"
Policy 101.310, "Media Contacts"
Policy 104.460, "Special Expenses"

REPLACES: Policy 103.0195, "Employee Recognition and Achievement Awards," 10/20/15. All facility policies, memos, or other communications whether verbal, written, or transmitted by electronic means regarding this topic.

ATTACHMENTS:
Employee Recognition Award Nomination form (online at Employee Recognition and Awards iShare site)
Employee Achievement Award Nomination form (103.0195B)
Request for Approval to Incur Special Expenses (104.460A)
Photography/Video/Information Release (on iShare)

APPROVALS:
Deputy Commissioner, Facility Services
Deputy Commissioner, Community Services
Assistant Commissioner, Facility Services
Assistant Commissioner, Operations Support