


State of Vermont, Agency of Human Services Department of Corrections	Title: Employee Recognition	Page 1 of 10
Chapter Personnel	#117.01	Supersedes #117.01 <i>Employee Recognition: Honor/Valor</i> , dated 03/13/2000
Attachments, Forms & Companion Documents: 1. Individual Annual Award Nomination Form 2. Correctional Team of the Year Nomination Form		
Local Procedures Required: Yes (See Section 2c and Quality Assurance.) Applicability: All employees. Security Level: "B" – Anyone may have access to this document.		
Approved:  <hr/> Robert D. Hofmann, Commissioner		
<u>January 22, 2008</u> Date Signed	<u>March 3, 2008</u> Date Effective	

PURPOSE

The purpose of this directive is to encourage the formal and informal recognition and reward of Department of Corrections' employees for exemplary performance and to establish guidelines for local and statewide non-monetary awards. Monetary awards are administered separately under the provisions of Agency of Human Services Policy #4.04, *Employee Recognition and Meritorious Increases*, 8/27/07.

POLICY

The State of Vermont encourages the establishment of employee recognition programs to recognize and celebrate excellence in State government by outstanding individuals and groups. Although the Department of Corrections values the routine recognition of positive practices by all staff on a continuing basis, it is the policy of the Department to recognize and reward employees whose contributions, attitudes, achievements, and organizational commitment have been outstanding, as well as those personal efforts that went above and beyond normal expectations. This directive incorporates, by reference, State and Agency of Human Services policies on employee reward and recognition, and their requirements.

AUTHORITY

28 V.S.A. Chapter 3, § 101(5). American Correctional Association Standards for Adult Correctional Institutions, 4th edition, January 2003, Standard #4-4018. State Personnel Policy #7.0 *Performance Management*, 3/1/96. Agency of Human Services Policy #4.04, *Employee Recognition and Meritorious Increases*, 8/27/07.

REFERENCE

Department Policy and Administrative Directive #76.05 *Positive Reinforcement*, 8/02/99 State Personnel Policy #7.1, *Employee Recognition and Merit Bonus Awards*, 3/1/96; Agency of Human Services Four Key Practices.

DEFINITIONS

Administrative Support Services Employees: By State of Vermont Department of Human Resources job classification, individuals in Program Services Clerk, Administrative Assistant A, Administrative Assistant B, and Secretary C jobs.

Awards Approval Committee: A Commissioner-appointed Department of Corrections' employee committee with at least five (5) members, for the purpose of reviewing and selecting candidates for recommendation to the Commissioner, who have been nominated for annual Department of Corrections' awards. (*See Section 3.*)

"De Minimus Fringe Benefit": A benefit that, considering its value and the frequency with which it is provided, is so small as to make accounting for it unreasonable or impractical. This includes such items as flowers, books, occasional tickets for entertainment events, etc.

Meritorious: Deserving reward for excellence.

Support Services Employees: All Department employees not covered in Manager, Supervisor, Correctional Services Specialist, Correctional Officer/CCO/CSTL, and Administrative Support Services job titles. This includes, but is not limited to, individuals in a facility or field site or central office in Vermont Correctional Industries (VCI), education, program services, information technology, volunteer services, etc.

Team: Two (2) or more individuals who have worked together for at least six (6) months on a specific project, special initiative, or activity having a common purpose. Characteristics of teams include shared decision-making, shared accountability, and collective work products. (*From AHS Policy 4.04*)

Work Unit: A work site or unit within the Department of Corrections (e.g., Facility, Probation & Parole Office, Out of State Unit, Vermont Correctional Industries, Information Technology, Security and Supervision, Education, etc.).

Work Unit Supervisor: The Corrections' employee in either the field or Central Office who manages or supervises the employees within a specific work unit (e.g., District Manager, Superintendent, Program Services Executive, Academy Training Coordinator, etc.)

PROCEDURAL GUIDELINES**1. Employee Recognition --General**

- a. The Department of Corrections believes in and aspires to the following best practice regarding the individuals who work for it.
 - i. We value the skills and expertise of our staff, routinely recognize and reward positive practices, and provide opportunities to learn and grow professionally.
 - ii. We have a work environment that thrives on continuous improvement and service delivery, encourages professional growth and the development of promising and best practices, and acknowledges the valuable contributions of staff in improving the lives of Vermonters.

- b. The Department has an employee recognition program to encourage and reward employees for exceptional effort that includes regular local awards given by work unit supervisors, and statewide awards which are given annually by the Commissioner.
- c. The Commissioner will present annual awards to nominated and selected staff. All Department of Corrections' annual, statewide employee recognition awards will be presented at the Department's Annual Awards Ceremony which will normally be conducted near the time of Public Service Recognition Week.
- d. Performance Management
 - i. Supervisors will complete annual performance evaluations for all classified employees within the time frames consistent with State Department of Human Resources policy.
 - ii. Each Department Executive will assess, as part of the annual performance evaluation, how well a manager in their chain of command rewards and/or recognizes exemplary performance among employees supervised by that manager.
 - iii. Each manager in the Department will be responsible to present a clear plan to recognize exemplary performance.

2. Local Awards

Local work unit supervisors have the opportunity and responsibility to recognize and reward staff under their supervision in a variety of ways with local awards. They will develop local procedures to facilitate this reward and recognition program. The following awards may be given; although not mandatory, they are encouraged for deserving employees.

- a. Time-Off Awards
 - i. Agency of Human Services *Policy #4.04* (8/22/07) allows managers to award employees time off from work in increments of one (1) hour up to eight (8) hours at the manager's discretion.
 - ii. If a manager wishes to award time off more than once (1 time) a year or for more than eight (8) hours for an individual employee, the manager must follow the procedures outlined in *AHS Policy #4.04*.
 - iii. The employee's supervisor must ensure that the employee's time report is properly completed when awarding time off for meritorious behavior.
 - iv. There may be more than one (1) employee per year who receives this award from each site.
- b. Non-Cash Awards
 - i. Managers may purchase non-cash awards, such as plaques, token gifts, designated parking spots, etc., in an amount not to exceed Agency of Human Services guidelines for payment. (See *AHS Policy #4.04*.)
 - ii. Managers may not purchase gift certificates for a cash amount from a business, or savings bonds as a non-cash award.
 - iii. Under no circumstances is a manager to accept a gift from a private sector which is to be given to any employee. This includes gift certificates.
 - iv. There may be more than one (1) employee per year who receives this award from each site.
 - v. Provided that any of the above non-cash awards qualify as a "*de minimus* fringe benefit", they do not need to be counted as taxable income.

- c. (Quarterly Awards) *Employee of the Quarter*
- i. At the end of every quarter of the calendar year, each unit/work site of at least 20 staff (e.g., facility, P&P office, central office, etc.) may nominate and select an exemplary employee of the quarter who has exhibited:
 - Exceptional performance on a special project or over a sustained period that exceeds the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by the position; or
 - Meritorious acts or service in the public interest in connection with the employee's state service; or
 - Exceptional or heroic actions in the community which exemplify the high quality of Department staff; or
 - Other specified criteria that the unit develops.
 - ii. Managers of work units with less than 20 employees (e.g., smaller P&P offices, Victim Services Unit, etc.) will develop time-specific award programs consistent with the plan developed through their annual performance evaluation, that may differ from other work units.
 - iii. Any employee receiving an award should have no disciplinary action during the past calendar year.
 - iv. Any individual may nominate an eligible employee.
 - v. The employee's immediate supervisor must endorse the nomination.
 - vi. The work unit supervisor for the unit/site will appoint a three (3) member panel to select the Employee of the Quarter from the field of nominations.

3. Awards Approval Committee – Annual Statewide Awards

- a. The Commissioner will appoint a Department of Corrections' employee Awards Approval Committee with at least five (5) members, for the purpose of selecting and recommending candidates nominated for annual statewide Department awards.
- b. Members will include an employee from the Human Resource Development Unit (HRD) and represent other units/work sites and job classes (e.g., facility, Vermont Correctional Industries, Out of State Unit, Academy staff, etc.). They will be recommended to the Commissioner by the Executive Management Team (EMT) for specific terms.
- c. Staff may express an interest in being a member of the committee or be recruited by the Executive Management Team.
- d. The committee may submit as many candidates for each statewide award as they feel should be recommended to the Executive Management Team.
- e. The committee will meet at least twice (2x) yearly.
- f. If a member or family member of the Awards Approval Committee is nominated for a Department award, they will not participate in the selection process for that particular award.

4. Annual Statewide Department Awards

There are several categories of statewide awards. The first two are for specific acts of bravery, heroism, or action in life-threatening situations. The third is for exemplary work in the community, as well as on the job. They each have specific criteria for nomination. Following that are individual

awards for exemplary performance by job role, with similar criteria for all categories. The final award is for a correctional team.

- Statewide awards may include individual and team awards in the following categories.
- Not all categories need to be nominated or awarded each year.
- The immediate supervisor of the individual nominated for an award (or Central Executive in the case of Managers), must review and endorse the nomination before it is submitted to the Awards Approval Committee. (See *Attachments 1* and *2*.)
- Nomination: Any individual may nominate a candidate who meets the eligibility requirements, using *Attachment 1*. Team awards will use *Attachment 2*. Each nomination will be described by the criteria set forth for each award category and submitted to the Awards Approval Committee by March 1.
- Selection: The Awards Approval Committee will review all nominations and make recommendations to the Executive Management Team and Commissioner. The Commissioner will make final selections by April 1.
- The Commissioner may waive any criteria listed below in awarding an individual or team a statewide award.

a. *Medal of Valor (Heroism/Bravery)*

The *Medal of Valor Award* will recognize a person(s) in Corrections who, during the previous calendar year, performed an act of extraordinary bravery and exceptional valor involving imminent personal threat to life with knowledge of the risk, above and beyond the call of duty. This includes actions performed during the person's Department work or in the community. More than one Medal of Valor award could be presented each year.

- Criteria: A candidate will be considered based upon an incident when the employee acted above and beyond normal job responsibilities in order to save another individual's life, knowing that the heroic action had a high probability of resulting in the loss of the employee's own life. The magnitude or outcome of the incident in and of itself will have no bearing on the nomination. The nomination will be based on the action of the individual being nominated and not the action of a group.
- Eligibility: Any individual who was an employee of the Department of Corrections at the time the action was taken will be eligible.

b. *Preservation of Life Award*

The *Preservation of Life Award* will recognize any Department employee who takes spontaneous and immediate action in response to a life-threatening illness or injury to a staff member, offender/inmate, volunteer, contractor, or member of the public. More than one Preservation of Life Award could be presented each year.

- Criteria: A candidate will be considered based upon an incident or event when the employee takes spontaneous and immediate action in response to a life-threatening illness or injury which would otherwise have resulted in the immediate death of a staff member, offender/ inmate, volunteer, contractor, or member of the public.
- Eligibility: Any individual who was an employee of the Department of Corrections at the time the action was taken will be eligible.

c. *Community Service Award*

The *Community Service Award* will recognize a non-managerial Department employee who has demonstrated consistent, positive performance and professionalism on the job, as well as demonstrated a commitment to their community(ies).

- Criteria: Candidates will be considered as follows:
 - (1) Ability to maintain positive relations with staff, public, and offenders/inmates in custody or under supervision;
 - (2) Demonstrated leadership and excellence in their Department role;
 - (3) Exceptional, extensive involvement and leadership in a community project or group;
 - (4) Has fostered or contributed to a valuable and successful program in the area of community affairs; and/or
 - (5) Has acted to substantially improve Department/community relations when not involved in a Department employee capacity.

- Eligibility: Any current employee of the Department who is full time, non-managerial, and who has been employed by the Department for a minimum of one (1) year will be eligible.

AWARDS BY JOB ROLE

d. *Manager of the Year* (*Manager* defined by the State of Vermont Department of Human Resources job classification)

The *Manager of the Year Award* will recognize a manager who has demonstrated exceptional leadership and managerial performance.

- Criteria: A candidate will be considered as follows:
 - Consistently promoted a positive workplace environment and modeled positive attitudes;
 - Demonstrated effective interaction with other staff, contractors, volunteers, offenders/inmates, and the public;
 - Demonstrated a commitment to their own professional development;
 - Demonstrated a commitment to the development of staff;
 - Promoted the value of assisting offenders/inmates to become productive members of the community;
 - Promoted the value of addressing the concerns of victims of offenders' criminal behavior;
 - Promoted and demonstrated commitment to correctional best practice and key practices of human services.
- Eligibility: Any current employee of the Department who has held a managerial position for at least one (1) year will be eligible for nomination.

e. *Supervisor(s) of the Year* (*Supervisor* defined by the State of Vermont Department of Human Resources job classification)

The *Supervisor of the Year Award* will recognize up to two (2) supervisors to include the field, facility, and all other work unit sites based on the same criteria as for Manager of the Year above in 4.f.

- Eligibility: Any current employee of the Department who has held a supervisory position for at least one (1) year will be eligible for nomination.

f. *Correctional Officer/CCO/CSTL/(s) of the Year – (Facility and Field)*

The *Correctional Officer of the Year Awards* will recognize up to seven (7) Correctional Officers/Community Correctional Officers/Community Service Team Leaders (full time classified employees) whose performance has been outstanding in supporting the security and safety of the facility/community. Further criteria for consideration of this award follow.

- Criteria: A candidate will be considered as follows:
 - Demonstrated leadership in the performance of duties;
 - Consistently contributed toward the creation of a positive workplace environment and attitudes;
 - Demonstrated effective interaction with other staff, contractors, volunteers, offenders, and the public;
 - Demonstrated valuing of and commitment to assisting offenders to become productive members of the community;
 - Demonstrated valuing of and commitment to supporting victims of offenders' criminal behavior;
 - Demonstrated commitment to key human services practices.

Eligibility: Any Correctional Officer, Community Correctional Officer, or Community Service Team Leader in a facility or in the field who has been in their job role for at least one (1) year will be eligible.

g. *Correctional Services Specialist(s) (CSS) of the Year*

- The *Correctional Services Specialist of the Year Awards* will recognize up to three (3) Correctional Services Specialists (facility and field) whose performance has been outstanding based on the list of criteria in Section 4. f. for COs/ CCOs/ CSTLs above.
- Eligibility: Any CSS in a facility or in the field who has been in their job role for at least one (1) year will be eligible.

h. *Administrative Support Services Employee of the Year* (see *Definitions*.)

- The *Administrative Support Services Employee of the Year Award* will recognize an employee in an administrative support services role whose performance has been outstanding based on the criteria in Section 4. f.
- Eligibility: Any administrative support services employee in a facility, field office, or central office who has been in their job role for at least one (1) year will be eligible.

i. *Support Services Employee(s) of the Year* (see *Definitions*)

- The *Support Services Employee(s) of the Year Award* will recognize up to two (2) Department employees in this category whose performance has been outstanding based on the criteria in Section 4. f. This includes employees not covered in Manager, Supervisor, Correctional Services Specialist, Correctional Officer/CCO/CSTL, and Administrative Support Services job titles, including, but not limited, to individuals in the field or central office in Vermont Correctional Industries, education, program services, information technology, volunteer services, etc.
- Eligibility: Any employee who has been in their job role for at least one (1) year will be eligible.

TEAM AWARD

j. *Corrections Team of the Year* (see *Definitions*)

The *Corrections Team of the Year Award* distinguishes two (2) or more individuals within a working group who exhibited an extraordinary level of teamwork and exceptional effort that reflect the values and objectives of the Department, based on the following criteria.

- Criteria:
 - Promoted teamwork and cooperation that exhibited exceptional service;
 - Demonstrated shared decision-making;
 - Demonstrated shared accountability;
 - Produced collective work products;
 - Demonstrated results-oriented collaboration.
- Eligibility: Any group of individuals who have been working together for at least six (6) months on a specific project, special initiative, or activity having a common purpose, and who have been in their job role for at least one (1) year will be eligible. They do not necessarily all have to be from the same work site.
- Nomination: Any individual may nominate a team which meets the eligibility requirements by using *Attachment 2, Correctional Team of the Year Nomination Form*. Each nomination will be described according to the criteria set forth above, reviewed by the work site supervisor and forwarded to the Awards Approval Committee by March 1.

TRAINING

The Human Resource Development Unit will develop a training targeted for managers and supervisors.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

1. The Department Executive Management Team is responsible for the fair and equitable application of this directive.
2. Each Executive will ensure that supervisors complete annual performance evaluations for all classified employees on their appropriate anniversary date.
3. Each Executive will include in each manager's annual performance evaluation a review of:
 - a. the timeliness and appropriateness of performance evaluations, and
 - b. how that manager rewards and/or recognizes exemplary performance.

ATTACHMENT 1 – SAMPLE

INDIVIDUAL ANNUAL AWARD NOMINATION FORM

AWARD (Check one category. Please use a separate form if making more than one nomination.)

___ Medal of Valor

___ Preservation of Life

___ Correctional Officer(s)/Community Correctional Officer(s)/Community Service Team Leader(s) of the Year

___ Correctional Services Specialist(s) of the Year

___ Administrative Support Services Employee of the Year

___ Support Services Employee(s) of the Year

___ Community Service Award

___ Supervisor(s) of the Year

___ Manager of the Year

Nominee Information:

Employee Name: _____ Title: _____

Work Unit/Site: _____ Hire Date: _____

I am making this nomination based on: *(Please address all criteria provided in this directive for the award category.)*

(Attach additional sheets if necessary.)

Person making the nomination: _____

Title: _____ Unit/Site: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Site/Unit Supervisor/Executive Review & Signature: _____

Date Reviewed: _____

CORRECTIONAL TEAM OF THE YEAR NOMINATION FORM

1. Employee Name: _____ Title & Hire Date: _____

2. Employee Name: _____ Title & Hire Date: _____

3. Employee Name: _____ Title & Hire Date: _____

4. Employee Name: _____ Title & Hire Date: _____

5. Employee Name: _____ Title & Hire Date: _____

6. Employee Name: _____ Title & Hire Date: _____

(Add more lines if needed for more team members.)

Work Unit/Site(s): _____

I am making this nomination based on: *(Please address all criteria provided in this directive for the award category.)*

(Attach additional sheets if necessary)

Person making nomination:

Title: _____ Unit/Site: _____

Date Submitted: _____

Site/Unit Supervisor/Executive Review and Signature: _____

Date Reviewed: _____