



**Division of State Patrol  
Policy and Procedure**

Number  
**15-8**

Subject <b>DIVISION AWARDS</b>	
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**I. POLICY**

It is the policy of the Division of State Patrol (DSP) to publicly honor those members who, through demonstrated outstanding service or performance, have made a significant contribution to the general public, the Division, the Department and/or the State of Wisconsin. Members of agencies other than the DSP may be recognized with Division Awards in certain circumstances upon the approval of the Superintendent of State Patrol. All Division Awards will be presented at an appropriate ceremony or other venue.

**II. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

There are several levels of awards within this policy. Each award has unique status and criteria. Division members receiving one or more of the awards listed may be considered by the Division/Region as nominees for other available, local, county, state, tribal and national awards. These awards may include but are not limited to; International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) 3M Looking Beyond the License Plate, Wisconsin Law Enforcement Officers Association (WLEOA), Wisconsin Sheriffs and Deputy Sheriffs Association, Badger State Sheriff’s Association (BSSA) Awards and any other available awards pertinent to the circumstances. Award insignia shall be worn on the uniform in accordance with Policy & Procedure 11-19 Uniform Policy.

### III. DIVISION AWARDS AND CRITERIA

The awards shall be in the following order of precedence:

- A. **Medal of Valor** – This award consists of a certificate, medal with ribbon, and bar (red/white/blue) and recognizes actions of service taken by a member of the Division who has demonstrated valor, courage or bravery to a high degree well beyond the normal expectations. To warrant this distinguished award, the act or execution of duty must be performed in the face of great life-threatening danger or personal risk and must be in such a manner as to set the individual apart from his/her peers. For performance to rise to this level, it must be clearly established that the act involved very specific risk to the individual.
- B. **Purple Heart** – This award consists of a certificate, medal with ribbon, and bar (purple/white), which recognizes a member of the Division who, in the line of duty, suffered significant injuries intentionally caused by another, was wounded or lost his/her life. Injuries sustained from non-intentional events may also be evaluated as criteria for award justification. The extent of injury, type of activity being performed and all circumstances surrounding the incident must be considered in determining the appropriateness of this award.
- C. **Meritorious Service** – This award consists of a certificate, medal with ribbon, and bar (green/white/blue). The award recognizes a member of the Division who places himself/herself at great personal risk of injury while exceeding the expectations of his/her duties, but not to the degree required for a Medal of Valor. Results accomplished must be so exceptional as to render them conspicuous among those accomplished by others in similar circumstances.
- D. **Superintendent's Star of Recognition** – This award consists of a certificate, medal with ribbon, and bar (blue/white). The award recognizes a member of the Division in a position of significant and sustained responsibility, who has distinguished himself/herself by service and/or exceptional achievement accomplished in the performance of duty to a degree clearly above that normally expected, which has contributed to the overall mission of the Division in a profound manner.
- E. **Commendable Service** – This award consists of a certificate and bar (white). The award recognizes a member of the Division who performs a highly creditable act of achievement or service deserving merit. To warrant this award, the act or service must be above and beyond the normal job expectation or recognizes accomplishments that uniquely contribute to the efficiency and effectiveness of the Division, its overall mission and enhance the professional image to the public we serve.

- F. **Lifesaving** – This award consists of a certificate and bar (red/white). This award recognizes a member of the Division who performs lifesaving actions resulting in saving a life. This award is limited to incidents in which the death of the person involved was imminent if not for the actions of the employee. The simple application or offering of an automated external defibrillator (AED), opioid antagonist or epinephrine may be insufficient criteria in and of itself.
- G. **Lifesaving Effort** – This award consists of a certificate only. This award recognizes a member of the Division who provides significant or prolonged lifesaving efforts to a victim or victims but whose actions do not yield lifesaving results. The simple application or offering of an AED, opioid antagonist or epinephrine may be insufficient criteria in and of itself.
- H. **Innovation and Excellence** – This award consists of a certificate only. This award recognizes an employee who creates or has a key leadership role in the creation of, a significant process or project that generates important efficiencies that improve policies, practices, and/or procedures. Consideration for this award should focus on rapid identification and adoption of innovative best practices, modernization of IT tools and data systems, and creation of innovation that prioritizes continuous process improvement.
- I. **Unit Citation** – This award consists of a certificate and bar (red). This award recognizes all members of a work unit who have collectively exhibited a significant degree of team effort that directly resulted in outstanding service or successful achievement of a Division goal. This award is not intended to recognize individual actions but rather to acknowledge the combined efforts of the group. All personnel who were formally assigned to the unit and participated in any actual action or events for which the unit is recognized will be eligible to receive the award.
- J. **Superintendent's Commendation** – This award consists of a certificate only. The award recognizes employees who have achieved a superior level of proficiency in law enforcement. Consideration for this award may include efforts made in the categories of speed, operating while intoxicated (OWI), and seatbelt laws among others and may also include efforts made in criminal interdiction and traffic safety education activities. Such efforts must be sustained and compelling to a degree that is exceptional in comparison to the employee's peers within the agency and having a profound positive impact on achievement of identified agency strategic goals and initiatives and/or that of partner agencies.
- K. **Trooper of the Year** – This award consists of a certificate and plaque. Any sworn non-supervisory trooper is eligible to be nominated for the Wisconsin State Patrol Trooper of the Year Award. Award candidates shall display outstanding work performance, initiative, leadership, effective interpersonal relations and must project a positive image of the Wisconsin State Patrol, both on and off duty. Additional consideration should include membership and/or participation in civic organizations, community involvement or volunteerism, and/or innovation that resulted in a significant improvement to State Patrol operations.

- L. **Inspector of the Year** – This award consists of a certificate and plaque. Any sworn non-supervisory inspector is eligible to be nominated for the Wisconsin State Patrol Inspector of the Year Award. Award candidates shall display outstanding work performance, initiative, leadership, effective interpersonal relations and must display a positive image of the Wisconsin State Patrol, both on and off duty. Additional consideration should include membership and/or participation in civic organizations, community involvement or volunteerism, and/or innovation that resulted in a significant improvement to State Patrol operations.
- M. **Dispatcher of the Year** – This award consists of a certificate and plaque. Any DSP non-supervisory law enforcement dispatcher is eligible to be nominated for the Wisconsin State Patrol Dispatcher of the Year Award. Award candidates shall display outstanding work performance, initiative, leadership, effective interpersonal relations and must display a positive image of the Wisconsin State Patrol, both on and off duty. Additional consideration should include membership and/or participation in civic organizations, community involvement or volunteerism, and/or innovation that resulted in a significant improvement to State Patrol operations.
- N. **Civilian Employee of the Year** – This award consists of a certificate and plaque. Any non-sworn, non-supervisory DSP employee is eligible to be nominated for the Wisconsin State Patrol Civilian Employee of the Year Award. Award candidates shall display outstanding work performance, initiative, leadership, effective interpersonal relations and must display a positive image of the Wisconsin State Patrol, both on and off duty. Additional consideration should include membership and/or participation in civic organizations, community involvement or volunteerism, and/or innovation that resulted in a significant improvement to State Patrol operations.
- O. **Certificate of Achievement** – This award consists of a certificate only. The award recognizes a member of the Division for professional service or achievement. Professional achievement must clearly exceed that which is expected and be an important contribution or benefit to the successful mission of the Division. The award is based on sustained performance or specific accomplishment of a superlative nature and shall be of such merit to warrant more tangible recognition than is possible by an evaluation, performance report or letter of recognition, but to a lesser degree than is warranted by a Commendable Service award. **Bureau Directors, Region Commanders, the Academy Commander, and Section Chiefs have final authority at their respective level to grant this award but must then notify higher chain-of-command and the Division Awards Committee for recordkeeping purposes.**

#### IV. DIVISION AWARDS COMMITTEE

A nine-member committee comprised of a captain, lieutenant, sergeant, trooper, inspector, law enforcement dispatcher (LED), Bureau of Transportation Safety and Technical Services (BOTS) representative, Bureau of Network Engineering and Data Infrastructure (BNEDI) representative, and one other non-sworn employee. The committee shall review all Division-level award nominations submitted to the Office of the Superintendent and make recommendations of approval/denial and the respective award by majority vote.

- A. The Superintendent shall appoint members of this Committee. Every effort will be made to have at least one committee member representative from each of the five Regions, the Wisconsin State Patrol Academy, BOTS, BNEDI, and DSP Central Headquarters.
- B. Membership will typically be for three years or longer at the discretion of the Superintendent.
- C. Members are authorized to make a full and complete investigation of the facts to substantiate the details set forth in the nomination.
- D. The Committee will be scheduled to meet on a semi-annual basis with additional meetings as needed.
- E. No person who nominates an employee or is nominated for an award shall vote on the recommendation as a member of the Division Awards Committee.
- F. Nominations shall not be for specific awards as it is the role of the Committee to recommend the award to be given based upon the nomination.
- G. Nominations may be accepted for revised awards to previous recipients who may now meet requirements based upon new, reliable, and compelling information that was previously unknown at the time of the previous award.
- H. Whenever possible, award nominations should be submitted within 12 months of the incident or period of performance which they are based upon.

#### V. LENGTH OF SERVICE RECOGNITION

Division members with 25 years or more (in five-year increments) of state service will be recognized by the Division. At the beginning of the calendar year, the Division of Business Management, Bureau of Human Resource Services, will provide the Superintendent's Office with a list of all Division members who have 25 years or more (five-year increments) of state service during the calendar year. Those employees will be recognized during an annual ceremony and will receive a certificate and pin.

**VI. AWARD NOMINATION SUBMISSION**

Any Division member, upon observation or awareness of an instance in which another Division member performed in a manner deserving of special recognition, may report the information to the potential nominee's immediate supervisor for consideration of an award. Furthermore, Division supervisors at every level are responsible for continual awareness of opportunities to recognize the outstanding performance of subordinates and are expected to consider and submit award nominations when appropriate. Timely submission is essential to a successful awards program. Every effort should be made to submit award nominations as soon as practicable after the events they are based upon.

**A. Immediate Supervisor**

1. Investigate, review and evaluate the reported incident or period of performance.
2. Compile all pertinent information and assemble a Division Award Nomination packet (refer to Section VII of this policy).
3. Submit the completed packet using the eSP4477 on the Division's online application.

**B. Commander/Section Chief**

1. Review the packet materials to ensure completeness and edit the award nomination as appropriate.
2. Approve or deny the nomination using the Division's online application.

**C. Bureau Director**

1. Review, comment, evaluate, and/or edit the nomination as deemed necessary.
2. Approve or deny the nomination using the Division's online application.

**D. Division Awards Committee Chairperson**

1. Ensure each Division Award Nomination packet is accurate and complete before acceptance by the Committee.
2. Conduct a Committee vote of award recommendation on all accepted nominations.
3. Record the Committee recommendations online through the Division's online application and notify the Office of the Superintendent once complete.
4. Ensure proper recordkeeping through the Division Awards database.
5. Coordinate with the Executive Assistant regarding ceremonial logistics and finalization of awards.

- E. Superintendent/Colonel
  - 1. Evaluate the committee's recommendation and approve, deny or return for additional information and/or justification.
  - 2. If the committee's recommendation is approved, forward the Division Award Nomination Packet to the Division Executive Staff Assistant.
  - 3. If the committee's recommendation is denied, return through channels to the Division Awards Chairperson with written comments outlining reasons for any disapproval.
  
- F. Division Executive Staff Assistant
  - 1. Forward the nomination to the Bureau of Human Resource Services for inclusion in the employee's personnel file.
  - 2. Ensure all associated medals and uniform insignia are procured and that certificates are completed appropriately.
  - 3. Coordinate with OPA, Secretary's Office, and Superintendent's Office regarding ceremonial logistics.

## VII. DIVISION AWARD NOMINATION PACKET

A complete Division Award Nomination Packet shall include the following:

- A. All pertinent written statements, supplemental documents, recordings, photographs, and, if based on an incident, the incident report, and any other materials deemed necessary to strongly support nomination.
  
- B. A completed Division Award Nomination (eSP4477) online form. The event description should be a "summary of action." Since each award nomination is evaluated on the justification, the event description/summary of action is critical. Avoid generalities and excessive use of superlatives. Present an objective summary, giving specific examples of the performance and the manner in which it was accomplished, together with the results and benefits derived. The amount of detail depends upon the circumstances and the nature of the award for which nomination is made; in general, a single page or less will be sufficient.
  
- C. When submitting a nomination for the Employee-of-the-Year award, the [Employee-of-the-Year Nominee Information Form](#) must be completed and attached.

**VIII. AWARD CITATION AND RECOGNITION GUIDELINES**

- A. Proposed wording for both the award certificate and corresponding narrative, condensed from the summary of action on the eSP4477 will be drafted by members of the Division Awards Committee at the direction of the Office of the Superintendent. Although a citation is laudatory and formalized, it must be factual.

The following information shall be used as a guideline when completing certificates and narratives:

1. Opening sentence. The body of the citation begins with a standard phrase describing the degree of meritorious or heroic service as specified for each award, duty assignment of the recipient, and date of incident or inclusive dates of service on which the nomination is based. The following opening phrases for specific awards are exclusive to that level of award, and not used in others:

Medal of Valor: "Given in recognition for exceptional heroism in the performance of duty on \_\_\_\_\_ (month, day, year) ..."

Purple Heart: "Given in recognition for wounds/injuries received while in the performance of duty on \_\_\_\_\_ (month, day, year) ..." In case of fatality, add "resulting in his/her death..."

Meritorious Service: "Given in recognition for exceptionally meritorious service in the performance of duty on \_\_\_\_\_ (month, day, year) ..."

Superintendent's Star of Recognition: "Given in recognition for service in the performance of duty on \_\_\_\_\_ (month, day, year) ..."

Commendable Service: "Given in recognition for service in the performance of duty on \_\_\_\_\_ (month, day, year) ..."

Lifesaving: "In recognition of his/her actions on \_\_\_\_\_ (month, day, year) to successfully preserve life by professional, decisive, and compassionate performance of duty..."

Lifesaving Effort: "In recognition of his/her actions on \_\_\_\_\_ (month, day, year) to administer lifesaving efforts by professional, decisive, and compassionate performance of duty..."

Unit Citation: "The Wisconsin State Patrol \_\_\_\_\_ Unit has distinguished itself by exceptionally meritorious achievement from \_\_\_\_\_ (date) to \_\_\_\_\_ (date)..."

Certificate of Achievement: "Given in recognition for superior performance of his/her duties on \_\_\_\_\_ (month, day, year) ..."



2. Statement of Heroic/Meritorious Achievement or Service: The second part of the citation identifies the recipient by name and, when appropriate, describes specified duty assignments, his/her accomplishments and the outstanding personal attributes displayed. The description of the recipient’s achievements must show clearly that they were sufficient to justify the level of award. The value of results of achievement may also be included. If not included on the award certificate, this information will be recognized on an accompanying award narrative and presented during the annual ceremony.
  
3. Commendatory Remarks: The third part of the citation states the ultimate result/impact of the action or service implied in the second part. This part of the citation does not apply to the Lifesaving Award since it has brief standardized verbiage. Examples:

Medal of Valor: “His/Her brave actions and considerable self-sacrifice reflect the highest credit upon himself/herself and uphold the highest ideals of the Wisconsin State Patrol and the law enforcement profession.”

Meritorious Service: “His/Her brave actions and self-sacrifice reflect great credit upon himself/herself and uphold the highest ideals of the Wisconsin State Patrol and the law enforcement profession.”

Purple Heart: No ending commendatory remarks are included in non-fatalities. However, in case of a fatality state, “He/She made the ultimate sacrifice in service to the law enforcement profession and the citizens of the State of Wisconsin.”

Superintendent’s Star of Recognition: “His/Her actions reflect credit upon himself/herself and uphold the highest ideals of the Wisconsin State Patrol and the law enforcement profession.”

Commendable Service: “His/Her actions reflect credit upon himself/herself and uphold the highest ideals of the Wisconsin State Patrol and the law enforcement profession.”

Certificate of Achievement: “His/Her actions reflect credit upon himself/herself and uphold the highest ideals of the Wisconsin State Patrol and the law enforcement profession.”

Unit Citation: “By their exemplary performance of duty, the members of the Wisconsin State Patrol (name specific unit) have brought great credit upon themselves, the agency, and the law enforcement profession.” The Unit Citation nomination must also include an accurate and verifiable list of all unit members by name as recipients in an official memorandum of eligibility signed by the Superintendent.

4. Citation Format. Citations shall be prepared and submitted in a standard Word document in bold upper-case Calibri font, without the use of acronyms. The recipient name is centered in size 20 as FULL TITLE, FIRST, MI, LAST. The citation body is size 12, centered, left and right justified, no more than 15 lines with no spaces. All drafts of citations will be forwarded to the Division Executive Staff Assistant for preparation of the final certificate document.

**IX. REFERENCES**

DSP Policy & Procedure 11-19, Uniform Policy  
eSP4477, Electronic Special Award Nomination Form  
[Employee-of-the-Year Nominee Information Form](#)