



Division 01 Administration and Organization

Chapter 06 – Commendation Awards

January 2009

POLICY

This General Order shall establish a procedure to recognize valorous and/or meritorious service by career and volunteer members of the Prince George's County Fire Department.

DEFINITIONS

N/A

PROCEDURES

1. Reporting and Nominating

All rescue or other incidents of outstanding or conspicuous service shall be reported in writing to the Fire Chief via the chain-of-command. Attached is an Award Nomination Form that shall be used for all award submission for this Department. All personnel (career and volunteer) will use the same nomination form for recommending recognition of outstanding or conspicuous service. This nomination shall include all pertinent facts surrounding the incident (i.e. name or names of those involved, time, place, and deeds performed). This nomination form shall be reviewed and verified prior to submission to the Fire Chief. This review shall be conducted at mid-supervisory level. Receipt of this letter will be acknowledged.

2. Awards and Commendations Committee

The Fire Chief, upon receipt of such nomination, will refer appropriate cases to the Awards and Commendations Committee. The committee shall consist of:

- A chairperson appointed by the Fire Chief
- A representative from each division/office within the Department, which may include either a uniform or civilian member
- The current President of the Prince George's County Volunteer Fire and Rescue Association or their designee
- The current Chairperson of the Volunteer Chiefs Council or their designee
- The current President of Local 1619, International Association of Fire Fighters or their designee

The Awards and Commendations Committee shall convene annually, prior to the awards banquet, to consider each case referred to them by the Fire Chief. The chairperson shall be responsible for seeing that the committee conducts a prompt and objective review of all cases and the submission of recommendations to the Fire Chief one month prior to each awards banquet.

3. Awards

The Fire/EMS Department Awards and Commendations Committee shall recommend that each individual act be assigned one of the following awards:

- Class I – The Gold Medal of Valor – for cases involving extreme personal risk and the highest degree of judgment, zeal, and ingenuity
- Class II – The Silver medal of Valor – for cases involving great (but not extreme) personal risk, and/or great judgment, zeal, or ingenuity



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- Class III – The Bronze Medal of Valor – for cases involving unusual personal risk and/or unusual judgment, zeal, or ingenuity
- Class IV – Certificate of Merit – for cases involving personal risk or unusual duties of a Department member or citizen, and/or a degree of judgment, zeal, or ingenuity not normally required of a Department member or citizen. (A Certificate of Merit indicating the degree of the award given shall accompany all Medals of Valor)
- Class V – Letter of Commendation – will be used for any valorous acts not receiving Class I through Class IV awards, while the Letter of Recognition will be used for nonemergency actions that do not receive Class I through Class IV awards
- Unit Citations – The Awards and Commendations Committee may recommend that the entire crew assigned to a station or unit be honored as a group for valorous or meritorious action. Upon approval of the Fire Chief, any crew or unit so designated will be presented a plaque, suitably inscribed, to be displayed at the station or office of the unit. Each individual of the honored unit will receive a Certificate of Merit, Unit Citation, and Distinguished Service Ribbon.

Recipients of Class I, II, or III valor awards shall be officially recognized at an awards banquet. Persons receiving other classes of awards shall receive their awards from the Fire Chief at an appropriate ceremony. Moreover, recipients of either Class I, II, or III awards will receive a Valor Medal of Heraldry with the seal of Prince George's County centered in a Sunburst, suitably inscribed, attached to a ribbon 30 inches in length and 2 inches wide.

The Valor Medals of Heraldry are designated as follows:

- Class I – Gold Medal of Valor with red, white, and blue ribbon.
- Class II – Silver Medal of Valor with blue and white ribbon.
- Class III – Bronze Medal of Valor with blue ribbon.

The Valor Medal of Heraldry is to be worn around the neck as a part of the full dress uniform for ceremonial occasion as directed by the Fire Chief. No more than one Valor Medal of Heraldry shall be worn at a time; only the highest level of the award should be worn.

Recipients of Valor Medals of Heraldry and Unit Citations shall receive a Distinguished Service Ribbon. The Distinguished Service Ribbon shall be $\frac{3}{8}$ " in length and 1 and $\frac{3}{8}$ " wide. Ribbons shall be designated as follows:

- Class I – Red, white, and blue ribbon with gold star centered
- Class II – Blue and white ribbon with silver star centered
- Class III – Blue ribbon with bronze star centered
- Unit Citation - Bronze and white ribbon for a non-emergency operational award
- Unit Citation –Bronze and white ribbon with a gold star centered for an emergency operation award

The Distinguished Service Ribbons shall be part of the dress uniform and will be optional for the work uniform, as specified by the provisions of General Order 10-02.

Monthly Awards

There will be two types of monthly awards presented by the Fire Chief:



- The Monthly Emergency Services Award will be presented to Fire/EMS Department members for acts of valor or personal risk during emergency operations.
- The Monthly Fire Chief's Award will be presented to Fire/EMS Department members for meritorious activities not involving valorous actions.

- Emergency Services Award Certificate

Furthermore, recipients may be eligible for an Award of Annual Leave as specified by the Personnel Law.

Fire Chief's Special Achievement Award

In addition to the Monthly Fire Chief's Awards, an Annual Fire Chief's Special Achievement Award will be presented at the Annual Awards Banquet, or at an appropriate ceremony as designated by the Fire Chief. This award recipient will be personally selected by the Fire Chief and may be for either acts of valor or meritorious service.

The purpose of monthly awards is to allow the Fire Chief to recognize Fire/EMS Department personnel for performance of "duty in the highest traditions of the fire service." The monthly nature of these awards will permit recognition of acts of valor or meritorious activities in a timely manner.

Distinguished Service Award

The purpose of this award is to allow the Fire Chief to recognize companies, crews, or individuals who perform meritorious actions that are not covered by preceding sections of this General Order, and do not fall within the purview of the Awards and Commendations Committee.

Nominations for the monthly awards shall be made to the Fire Chief via the chain-of-command, using the attached Departmental Award Nomination Form. Nominations may be made for actions performed in either personal risk or non-personal risk situations, as described above. Moreover, nominations shall be submitted no later than seven days after the end of each calendar month, and shall be accompanied with the appropriate details of the incident or activity.

When the Fire Chief becomes aware of actions by companies, crews, or individuals that enhance the quality of service that the Fire Department delivers to the public, a Distinguished Service Award may be presented recognizing the meritorious action(s).

Copies of all nominations shall be forwarded to the Chairperson of the Awards and Commendations Committee for consideration. Nomination, consideration, or receipt of a monthly award shall not affect an individual's eligibility for one of the awards above.

Nominations for this award shall be forwarded, through the appropriate Division Commander, to the Fire Chief. Specifics of the action shall be included in the letter of nomination highlighting the contribution to the Fire/EMS Department and how the service delivered to the citizens of Prince George's County is enhanced.

Recipients of Monthly Service Awards shall receive the following:

- Monthly Fire Chief's Award
 - Letter of Recognition
 - Fire Chief's Award Certificate
- Monthly Emergency Services Award:
 - Letter of Commendation



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When the Fire Chief feels that the action warrants a Distinguished Service Award, the company, crew, or individual who merits this award shall receive recognition as deemed appropriate by the Fire Chief.

REFERENCES

N/A

FORMS/ATTACHMENTS

Prince George's County Fire Department
Commendation Award Nomination

