

## Department of the Interior Departmental Manual

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**Effective Date:** 5/6/09

**Series:** Personnel Management

**Part 370:** Departmental Personnel Program

**Chapter 451:** Awards and Recognition Program

**Subchapter 4:** Monetary Awards

**Originating Office:** Office of Human Resources

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### 370 DM 451.4

4.1 **General.** Monetary awards are cash awards that may be granted to recognize an individual or team of employees of the Department. An employee can be recognized for the same accomplishment by granting two different types of awards provided that the combined value of both awards is commensurate with the accomplishment. Monetary awards may be given for:

- A. Achieving organizational results.
- B. Providing quality customer service.
- C. Displaying exemplary behavior, dedication, innovation, and/or team cooperation.
- D. Fostering partnerships.
- E. Promoting diversity.
- F. Ensuring safety in the workplace.

4.2 **Scope.** This policy covers all employees of the Department. Volunteers, contract employees, and partners are not eligible for monetary awards unless a different authority states otherwise.

4.3 **Monetary Performance-Based Awards.** Monetary performance-based awards (Performance Awards and Quality Step Increases) are covered in 370 DM 451.1. The other types of monetary awards are: Special Thanks for Achieving Results Awards (STAR), Productivity Improvement Awards, and Invention/Patent Awards. On-the-Spot Awards may no longer be issued but STAR Awards of amounts consistent with the criteria in Appendix A to this chapter can be issued. The scale of awards based on intangible benefits and the scale of award amounts based on tangible benefits to the government can be found in Appendices A and B to this chapter. All monetary awards are processed using gross, not net, dollar amounts.

A. Special Thanks for Achieving Results Award. A STAR Award is used to recognize noteworthy accomplishments that are limited to a one-time occurrence or for exceptional

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accomplishments over a period of months. It should not be issued in relation to an employee's annual performance appraisal. Accomplishments may be either within or outside the scope of an employee's normal duties. Examples of situations for which it would be appropriate to give an employee a STAR Award are those in which employees: produce exceptionally high quality work under tight deadlines; perform added or emergency assignments in addition to their regular duties; or exercise extraordinary initiative or creativity in addressing a critical need or difficult problem.

B. Productivity Improvement Award. Productivity Improvement Awards are recognition for process improvement, cost-saving suggestions, streamlining, or the elimination of non-value added processes. The award shares some portion of actual savings resulting from cost reduction or productivity gains with the employee(s) who recommends or achieves the savings. Suggested guidelines to use, when deciding on the award amount, are provided in Appendices A and B to this chapter.

C. Invention/Patent Award. The Department encourages the use of monetary awards to reward employees for their inventions. An automatic \$500 (gross) compensation is awarded upon the actual filing of a patent application at the Patent Office by the Office of the Solicitor. An additional \$800 (gross) will be awarded if the patent is granted. Further recognition based on the benefit of the contribution may be granted through the use of an additional cash award. The awardee's organization is responsible for payment of the award amount. Suggested guidelines to use to award employees are provided in Appendix B to this chapter.

#### 4.4 **STAR Awards.**

A. An employee may be recommended for a STAR award by another Federal employee who is aware of an achievement he/she believes deserves recognition. Form DI-451, Award Certification, is used to recommend a STAR award and must be submitted to the proposed recipient's supervisor for concurrence. Supervisors concur and/or transmit award nominations to the approving official for the amount recommended. If an award recognizes team achievements and members are to receive different award amounts, the justification must describe each individual team member's contribution. There is no limit to the number of STAR awards an employee may receive, but managers should administer the program fairly to ensure consistent and equitable opportunity for employee recognition.

B. When another bureau within the Department of the Interior or another agency wishes to recognize an individual through a monetary award, the outside bureau or agency will prepare the award documentation and contact the award recipient's servicing personnel office for guidance on how to process the award. The award must be submitted for approval within 6 months following the contribution.

#### 4.5 **Approval Authority for Monetary Awards.**

A. Assistant Secretaries, the Solicitor, and the Inspector General have approval authority for individual awards from \$5,001 to \$10,000. However, when a performance-based cash award that is based on a percentage of pay instead of a set dollar amount is over \$5,000,

approval by an Assistant Secretary, the Solicitor, or the Inspector General is not required. All awards in excess of \$10,000 must be submitted by bureau/office heads through the appropriate Assistant Secretary, the Director of Human Resources, and the Assistant Secretary - Policy, Management and Budget, to the Office of Personnel Management for approval or further processing.

B. Bureau and office heads may approve group awards up to \$10,000 if no group member receives more than \$5,000. They may also approve individual awards up to \$5,000, QSIs, and Performance Based Cash Awards; however, bureau/office heads are encouraged to delegate approval authority for these awards to the lowest practical level.

C. The Department's Executive Resources Board must approve all monetary awards for SES including non-career and limited term employees. The White House Liaison Office should be consulted on all awards for Schedule C employees.

#### 4.6 **Historic Preservation Award.**

A. The Secretary of the Department of the Interior is required in 16 U.S.C. 470h-2(h) to establish an annual preservation awards program.

B. Any officer or employee of a Federal agency, State, tribal, or local government, including elected officials, can nominate a person representing a deserving office/program. Any Federal agency, State, tribal, or local government may nominate a deserving person from an office/program of another agency or government entity.

C. Award Criteria. Officers and employees nominated for the award must have demonstrated that they have developed and/or carried out a program that meets the Secretary of the Interior's historic preservation standards applicable to their level of Government in an exemplary and outstanding manner, as follows:

(1) Federal Historic Preservation Offices. Special achievement in fulfilling the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Federal Historic Preservation Programs.

(2) Tribal Historic Preservation Offices. Special achievement in fulfilling the National Historic Preservation Act and 36CFR Part 61, Procedures for State Tribal and Local Government Historic Preservation Programs.

(3) State Historic Preservation Offices. Special achievement in fulfilling the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 61, Procedures for State, Tribal and Local Government Historic Preservation Programs.

(4) Certified Local Governments. Special achievement in fulfilling the National Historic Preservation Act and 36 CFR Part 61

D. **Award Recognition.** The recipients of the Historic Preservation Awards will be honored at an annual ceremony by the Secretary of the Interior with an appropriate certificate of

commendation. The Secretary may make a monetary award in an amount not to exceed \$1,000 and provide citations, in accordance with NHPA, Section 110(h).

**Appendix A****SCALE OF AWARDS BASED ON INTANGIBLE BENEFITS**

	<b>EXTENT OF APPLICATION</b>		
	<b>Local</b>	<b>Bureau</b>	<b>Department-wide</b>
	Example Effects:	Example Effects:	Example Effects:
<b>Value of Benefit</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• one or more field facilities or Central Office organizational elements or staff office, or</li> <li>• a minor change or correction of a DOI form, policy, or procedure, or</li> <li>• optional use of an idea or procedure, or</li> <li>• minor change in the area of technology or automation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an entire network, region, or</li> <li>• all Central Office organizations, or</li> <li>• ideas approved for optional use in the Department or an administration, or</li> <li>• important area of technology or automation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• more than one region, or bureau</li> <li>• has impact DOI wide or beyond.</li> </ul>
<b>Moderate.</b> Change or contribution to an operating principle, practice, procedure or program of limited impact or use.	<b>Up to \$500</b>	<b>Up to \$1,500</b>	<b>Up to \$3,000</b>
<b>Substantial.</b> Significant or important change, contribution to, or modification of an operating principle, practice, procedure, program, or service to the public.	<b>Up to \$1,500</b>	<b>Up to \$3,000</b>	<b>Up to \$5,000</b>
<b>Exceptional.</b> Complete revision or initiation of a major policy, practice, or procedure that has significant impact on DOI's mission. Major improvement in the quality of a critical product, activity, program or service to the public.	<b>Up to \$3,000</b>	<b>Up to \$5,000</b>	<b>Up to \$10,000</b>  Awards more than \$10,000 require OPM approval. Awards more than \$25,000 require Presidential approval after OPM review.

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**Appendix B****SCALE OF AWARD AMOUNTS BASED ON  
TANGIBLE BENEFITS TO THE GOVERNMENT**

<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Awards</b>
Estimated First-Year Benefits	Amount of Award to Employee
Up to \$100,000 in benefits	10% of benefits
\$100,001 and above in benefits	\$10,000 plus 1% of benefits above \$100,001, up to \$25,000 with the approval of the Office of Personnel Management
	Presidential approval is required for all awards of more than \$25,000