



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
Washington, DC 20240

MAR 14 2016

PERSONNEL BULLETIN NO: 15-04

Subject: Non-Monetary Federal Department of the Interior Customer Service Awards Program

- 1. Purpose:** This Personnel Bulletin (PB) sets forth the policy and procedures for implementation of the non-monetary Department of the Interior (DOI) Federal Customer Service Awards Program. The Customer Service awards given by the Secretary of the Interior are the Individual Customer Service Award and the Initiative Customer Service Award.
- 2. Background:** On March 19, 2015, the Executive Office of the President established and issued guidance for the Federal Customer Service Awards Program to ensure all Federal agency managers work to identify and support improvements in the services provided to citizens and other customers. This awards program supports the government-wide [Customer Service Cross-Agency Priority \(CAP\) Goal](#) and the [April 2011 Executive Order 13571 - Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service](#).
- 3. Authority:** This policy is consistent with the [March 19, 2015, OMB Memorandum](#) providing guidance for implementing the Federal Customer Service Award Program and the Departmental Manual, 370 DM 451: Awards and Recognition Program.
- 4. Policy:** The Department of the Interior will utilize the Federal Customer Service Awards Program to recognize customer service excellence throughout the agency. Each year, the Department of the Interior will highlight the efforts of individuals and initiatives through the President's Customer Service Awards and the Secretary of the Interior's Customer Service Awards.
- 5. Definitions:**
 - a. *Customer:* A customer is the recipient of a service, experience, information, or product from a Federal agency or on behalf of a federal agency. A customer may be an individual or an organization. In general, when used in this guidance, the word "customer" refers to an individual or organization that is not part of the Federal government.
 - b. *DOI Customer Service Community of Practice:* The DOI Customer Service Community of Practice (CoP) is a network of staff across DOI bureaus and offices committed to increasing the Department's efforts to value and

celebrate the every-day work of front-line staff and see their innovations and best practices shared with others. The DOI CX COP resources and awards information is posted on their website at:

<https://sites.google.com/a/nps.gov/customer-service-champs/>.

- c. *Federal Customer Service Awards Program*: The Federal Customer Service Awards Program, formally established by OMB, will recognize the accomplishments made by Federal employees and partners who deliver exceptional service to their customers.
- d. *Individual Customer Service Award*: This Federal Customer Service award recognizes individuals whose specific accomplishments, professionalism, and commitment to customer service make them role models for customer service delivery. The individual's efforts may constitute a single "heroic" act or the results of a sustained commitment to innovative and excellent customer service.
- e. *Initiative Customer Service Award*: This Federal Customer Service award recognizes initiatives that have directly improved services for customers through the application of technology, improvements in operations, or other innovations. Initiatives must demonstrate a tangible improvement for customers, even if benefits are indirect in their impact. This may include improvements to services provided to internal agency customers that clearly result in improvements for external customers. General efforts to improve operations or program effectiveness, while valuable, do not qualify for a customer service award unless their ultimate impact on improving customer service can be clearly identified.
- f. *OMB Customer Service Community of Practice*: The Customer Service Community of Practice (CoP) is a network of staff across Federal agencies committed to increasing the government's ability to deliver high quality and timely services in a manner that is responsive to the needs of the people and organizations with whom they interact. The CoP's objectives include promoting a culture of customer service across the Federal Government and recognizing excellent customer service practices and interactions to incentivize improvement across all programs. CAP Goals for Federal customer service can be found at:
<http://www.performance.gov/node/3400/view?view=public#progress-update>.
- g. *President's Customer Service Awards*: Annually, OMB will review and nominate a limited number of customer service award recipients to the White House for review and final selection. The Secretary of the Interior will recommend two DOI Customer Service Award recipients for the President's Customer Service Award process.

- h. *Secretary of Interior's Award for Customer Service*: The Secretary of the Interior's Customer Service Awards will be selected annually. Nominations will be taken from all internal and external individuals, and organizations that meet the criteria of the Federal Customer Service Awards Program. All nominations must be for the Individual Customer Service Award or the Initiative Customer Service Award.
6. **Responsibility**: The Office of the Secretary will administer the Department of the Interior Federal Customer Service Awards. The DOI bureaus and offices will ensure the program is promoted and supported in their organizations. The Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Capital will oversee the selection and review of nominations for the Secretary of the Interior's Customer Service Awards.

Additional Responsibilities:

- a. DOI bureaus and offices will provide review and concurrence of nominations and will consult with unions as appropriate.
 - b. DOI bureaus and Human Resource Offices will review and check nominees for derogatory information.
 - c. All awards will be non-monetary awards.
 - d. Award recipients may be highlighted through agency public events, forums, blog posts, and discussion through official agency social media.
 - e. All nominations for the Secretary of Interior's Customer Service Awards will be submitted at: <https://sites.google.com/a/nps.gov/customer-service-champs/about-1>
7. **Eligibility for Individual Customer Service Awards**: All DOI employees in good standing are eligible for the Individual Customer Service Award. Bureaus/offices have the discretion to present awards to individuals working on contracts, or to non-federal partners providing services directly on behalf of the Federal government within existing laws and regulations including the Federal Acquisition Regulations and the Departmental Manual Chapter 370 DM 451: Awards and Recognition.

8. **Criteria for Individual Customer Service Awards**:

Individual Customer Service Award recipients should have direct engagement with the agency's customers or demonstrate a direct beneficial impact on customers as a result of their work.

Award recipients should also demonstrate a strong commitment to public service in their work, be well regarded in terms of their general integrity, and display values appropriate as a role model.

In general, award recipients should have demonstrated an understanding of customer needs and taken action to address needs that go above and beyond

existing practices. This could be through a single "heroic" act or the results of a sustained commitment to innovative and excellent customer service. The review panel appointed by the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Capital will place an emphasis on:

- a. The number of customers impacted and/or the significance of services to customers;
- b. The awardee's persistence in overcoming obstacles to providing excellent services;
- c. The utilization of principles and practices of providing excellent customer service;
- d. The extent to which the individual or initiative exemplifies excellence in public service; and
- e. Diversity across mission areas, geography, and offices of award recipients.

- 9. Eligibility for Initiative Customer Service Awards:** Customer Service Award initiatives are often the result of the contributions of many, but are driven by a limited number of dedicated individuals. To recognize this, the Initiative Award should be presented to a limited number (in general, less than five) of named recipients whose individual contributions are recognized as the most significant to the initiative's success.

In addition, the Initiative Award can recognize the contributions of a broader set of teams and organizations that supported the initiative and contributed to its success. The named recipients should be those whose day-to-day work was most critical to the initiative, not necessarily the head of the office or organization. For example,

Award presented to: Shania Rogers and Avon Lopez

With contributions from: The Program Management Office and Office of Innovative Technologies

- 10. Criteria for Initiative Customer Service Awards:** The Initiative Award will recognize innovations and sustained improvements in customer service that enable Bureaus and Offices to meet the needs of their customers more effectively, leading to increased satisfaction. Initiatives must demonstrate a direct and tangible improvement for the customers of bureaus or offices, not simply improvements in the general level of support provided to agency business units or employees.

Examples include:

- Process improvements at a customer service center that have directly led to improvements in meeting customer needs.
- The innovative use of online technologies and social media to exceed the expectations of customers.

- The implementation of an agency-wide strategy that has measurably improved the experiences of the agency's customers.

The review panel will place emphasis on:

- a. The number of customers impacted and/or the significance of the services to those customers;
- b. The awardee's persistence in overcoming obstacles to providing excellent services;
- c. The utilization of principles and practices of providing excellent customer service;
- d. The extent to which the individual or initiative exemplifies excellence in public service; and
- e. Diversity across mission areas, geography, and agencies of award recipients.

11. Federal Customer Service Award Process: The awards process will include the following steps:

Process	Action
DOI issues guidance and the call for nominations to bureaus and offices.	Bureaus and offices identify and compile the Secretary of the Interior's Customer Service Awards. Where appropriate, bureaus and offices will consult with unions.
Nomination period.	OS will collect nominations through a short nomination form.
Departmental panel will review nominations and recommend a limited number for the Secretary of the Interior's Customer Service Awards.	Nominees will be reviewed for eligibility, impact of actions, and good standing (EEO, IG, disciplinary, ethics, and tax delinquency issues).
Notification.	OS will notify bureaus and offices of award decisions.
OS plans to execute the DOI Customer Service Awards Ceremony.	The Secretary of the Interior presents the DOI Customer Service Awards.
The Secretary of the Interior nominates two DOI award recipients for the President's Customer Service Award.	OS forwards nominations to OMB for review.
OMB reviews nominations and recommends a limited number of nominees for the President's Customer Service Awards.	The White House selects and announces the President's Award recipients.

Bureaus and offices incorporate the Customer Service Awards Program into existing programs and events.	Bureaus and offices are encouraged to recognize, celebrate, and highlight customer service best practices and award recipients via all media and forums.
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12. Additional Resources:

OMB Customer Service CAP goal progress:

<http://www.performance.gov/node/3400/view?view=public#progress-update>

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2011/04/27/executive-order-streamlining-service-delivery-and-improving-customer-ser>



Raymond A. Limon
Director, Office of Human Resources