

Georgia Department of Public Safety Policy Manual

SUBJECT DEPARTMENT AWARDS PROGRAM	POLICY NUMBER 20.01
DISTRIBUTION ALL EMPLOYEES	DATE REVISED 6/29/2010

20.01.1 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish the Department Awards Program of the Georgia Department of Public Safety.

20.01.2 Policy

It is the policy of the Department to show proper recognition to members who have performed meritorious acts or displayed consistent superior performance in the course of carrying out their official duties.

20.01.3 Awards Ceremonies

Awards ceremonies will be conducted at a date, time and location determined by the Commissioner.

20.01.4 Nominations

- A. Nominations for awards shall be submitted to the Commissioner of Public Safety through the nominee's chain of command as soon as possible following a meritorious incident.
- B. Nominations for awards should be thorough and well documented. Where possible, statements from witnesses, medical personnel, and others that can attest to the nominee's actions should be included.
- C. The incident for which the member is nominated must have occurred during the previous 12 months.

20.01.5 Awards

- A. The following awards shall be presented to Department members in accordance with guidelines established in Section 20.01.6:
 1. Valor Award
 2. Lifesaving Award
 3. Purple Heart Award
 4. Commissioner's Commendation
 5. Firearms Proficiency Award

6. Safe Driver's Ribbon
 7. Proficiency Award
 8. Customer Service Award
 9. Commissioner's Citation for Distinguished Service
 10. Military Service Recognition Ribbons
 - a. Military Branch of Service Ribbon
 - b. Combat Theatre of Operations Ribbon
- B. The aforementioned award nominations will be presented to a committee appointed by the Commissioner. The recommendations by the committee will be forwarded to the Commissioner for final approval.
- C. The Public Service Award may be presented to non-department members at the discretion of the Commissioner.

20.01.6 Awards Criteria

A. Valor Award

1. The Valor Award is presented to a Trooper who has displayed courage and fortitude and has performed a duty well beyond that which would reasonably be expected in a tense or emergency situation. In doing so, the circumstances of the event must have placed the Trooper's own life in jeopardy.
2. The Valor Award may be presented to a civilian member of the Department in special circumstances.
3. The Valor Award consists of an engraved plaque and ribbon. A gold star(s) on the ribbon will distinguish a second or third Valor Award.
4. Documentation should clearly indicate the circumstances under which the nominee's life was placed in danger.

B. Lifesaving Award

1. The Lifesaving Award is presented to a department member who saves or prolongs the life of another. Merely calling for assistance is considered an essential function of a Trooper's job and does not, by itself, qualify for this award.
2. The Lifesaving Award consists of an engraved plaque and ribbon. A gold star(s) on the ribbon will distinguish a second or third Lifesaving Award.
3. Medical statements should accompany nominations for the Lifesaving Award that the actions clearly saved or prolonged the victim's life. For incidents that did not involve medical actions, statements from other law enforcement officers and witnesses should be submitted.

C. Purple Heart Award

1. The Purple Heart Award is awarded to any member who has been injured in the line of duty; the injury must have been through no fault of their own and in the competent execution of their official duty. The injuries may take place off duty if

the member is acting in their official capacity as a law enforcement officer and not in such a manner as to disgrace either their oath of office or the Department. The injuries must be of sufficient seriousness as to require hospitalization or comparable medical treatment.

2. The Purple Heart Award consists of a framed certificate and a ribbon. A gold star(s) will distinguish a second or third Purple Heart Award.

D. Commissioner's Commendation

1. Law Enforcement Excellence (Sworn):
 - a. The Commissioner's Commendation is presented when a member displays exceptional alertness, devotion to duty or law enforcement skill and ability while affecting an arrest or performs an act in the line of duty (which is beyond the call of duty), which reflects great credit upon the member and the Department.
2. All employees:
 - a. The Commissioner's Commendation may also be presented when a member is responsible for acts that display ability, skill and devotion through the implementation of programs or support of programs that reflect great credit upon the Department or provide significant benefit to the overall mission of the Department.
 - b. The member exemplifies the Department's Core Values (Trust, Fortitude, Compassion and Professionalism.)
3. The nomination must be in writing and fully document the circumstances surrounding the rationale for the nomination.
4. The Commissioner's Commendation consists of a framed certificate detailing the accomplishment and a ribbon. A gold star(s) will distinguish a second or third Commissioner's Commendation.

E. Firearms Proficiency

1. There is established in the Department of Public Safety a recognition program for proficiency based on the annual highest scores from in-service training for firearms. Administration of the firearms training and the certification of scoring shall be the responsibility of the Training Division.
2. Scoring shall be based on handgun firing only.
3. In the event of a tie, a "shoot-off" will be held among all eligible members on a course and at a time prescribed by the Training Division.
4. Troop Marksmanship Award
 - a. The Troop Marksmanship award is an annual award to the GSP post in each troop or to the M CCD region of the state recording the highest scores for annual firing. Troop Commanders and the Director of M CCD shall determine the post or region in their area of responsibility that has attained the highest scores.
 - b. The award shall consist of an engraved wall plaque. Each year at the Department awards program, the plaque will be presented to the post or M CCD region for display in a public area until the next awards program.

- c. Each Troop Commander and the Director of MCCD shall notify the Deputy Commissioner through the chain of command once recipients have been determined.

5. Individual Firearms Proficiency Awards

- a. Each sworn member of the Department whose annual score is 90 or higher shall be eligible for the Individual Marksmanship Award recognition. Department members who score 96 to 100 will be classified as Expert and members with a score of 90 to 95.9 will be classified as Sharpshooter. Each qualifying member will receive a certificate denoting the achievement and proper classification.
- b. Members with the highest overall score in each of the GSP posts and Motor Carrier Compliance regional offices will be recognized on an engraved plaque that permits the addition of names annually and will be prominently displayed at the respective post or office. The member from Troop J, Specialized Collision Reconstruction Team, Aviation, DPS Headquarters, and Capitol Police offices will be recognized with a similar plaque at each division or unit headquarters.
- c. The overall highest score among all Department members will receive the DPS Top Gun award which shall consist of an engraved plaque.
- d. The winners of the post/region/specialty awards will be announced at the annual awards ceremony. The presentation of the Top Gun award will be made by the Commissioner at the annual awards program.

F. Safe Driver Ribbon

1. The Safe Driver Ribbon is awarded in five-year increments to sworn personnel who have operated a departmental vehicle safely and not been at fault in a traffic crash during the specified time period.
2. Safe Driver Ribbons are awarded in 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30-year increments. Once a specific Safe Driver Ribbon has been awarded, the member shall not lose the right to wear the ribbon if at fault in a subsequent departmental vehicle crash. However, the member shall lose all years accrued toward the next highest Safe Driver Ribbon and must begin to accrue years again for the next highest ribbon.
3. No nomination should be made until the member has actually accrued the number of years without being at fault in a traffic crash.
4. The Safe Driver Award is a ribbon. All 5, 10, and 15-year Safe Driver Award Ribbons will be sent to Post Commanders for presentation. Recognition for 20, 25, and 30-year Safe Driver Awards will be made at the Awards Ceremony.
5. For the purposes of this award, the time begins to accrue when the member is issued a departmental vehicle.

G. Proficiency Award

1. The Proficiency Award recognizes any employee who displays outstanding performance and efficiency in all job tasks and related duties for the calendar year.

2. The Proficiency Award is the opportunity to recognize employees who might otherwise never receive any recognition, therefore Division Directors should avoid, if at all possible, nominating supervisors in their divisions.
3. The Proficiency Award is a framed certificate.

H. Public Service Award

1. The Public Service Award is presented to any group or organization that has contributed significantly to traffic safety or law enforcement in general.
2. Once each year, any member of the Department may place in nomination the name of a candidate for this award. The nomination must be in writing and fully document the circumstances surrounding the rationale for the nomination.
3. The Public Service Award is a framed certificate.

I. Customer Service Award

1. The Customer Service Award is awarded for outstanding customer service performance that reflects the customer service attributes. It will be awarded to an individual or team who have shown a high level of commitment and performance to service to the citizens and customers of the State of Georgia over the last year in all of the customer service attributes (Helpful, Accessible, Responsive, Courteous and Knowledgeable).
2. Once each year, members can be nominated for the Customer Service Award by peers, leadership or customers for acts of outstanding customer service. The nomination must be in writing and fully document the circumstances surrounding the rationale for the nomination.
3. The award shall consist of a framed certificate.

J. Commissioner's Citation for Distinguished Service

1. The Commissioner's Citation for Distinguished Service is presented to a non-departmental individual who has rendered outstanding service or assistance to a sworn member of the Department while that member was performing a law enforcement duty. The nominee must have contributed substantially toward the sworn member being able to complete their law enforcement duty successfully, or have taken actions above and beyond what would normally be expected of an individual in similar conditions.
2. The award is presented to an individual who may or may not be associated with a public safety organization.
3. Nominations for the award may be made by any Department member who has knowledge of the incident. Nominations should fully document the actions of the individual and include statements from witnesses, the individual, and any other available information related to the incident.
4. Presentation of the award by the Commissioner may be made at an appropriate local ceremony or at the Department awards ceremony.
5. The award shall consist of an engraved plaque. A certificate describing the incident and recipient's actions shall also be presented.

K. Military Service Recognition Ribbons

1. Military Branch of Service Ribbon
2. Combat Theatre of Operations Ribbon

20.01.7 Wearing of the Ribbons

A. Precedence of Ribbons

The Valor Ribbon is the highest ribbon awarded by the Department. Ribbons authorized for issue, in descending precedence, are Lifesaving, Purple Heart, Commissioner's Commendation, Safe Driver and Military Service Recognition Ribbons.

B. Placement of the Ribbons on Uniform

1. The ribbons shall be worn above the right shirt pocket and placed above the nameplate so that the bottom edge of the ribbon is even with the uppermost edge of the pocket flap.
2. The placement of the ribbons shall be from left to right when facing the shirt. The ribbons shall be placed in order of precedence with the highest precedence on the extreme left followed by the second and third highest precedence ribbon awarded.
3. When wearing one ribbon, it shall be centered above the buttonhole of the pocket. When wearing two ribbons, they shall meet at their edges and the point when they join shall be centered above the buttonhole of the pocket. When wearing three ribbons, the center ribbon shall be centered above the buttonhole of the pocket and the center ribbon shall meet the edges of the ribbons to its left and right.
4. A maximum of three ribbons shall be worn on the uniform shirt; regardless of the number a member has been awarded. The ribbons shall be the highest precedence awarded to the member.

20.01.8 Awards Preparation

- A. The Public Information Office is responsible for the planning and preparing for the awards ceremonies. Public Information will prepare for the ceremonies from the awards nominations submitted and approved by the Commissioner. Requests for replacement ribbons should be directed to Public Information.
- B. Public Information is also responsible for notifying the Division of Human Resources of the award recipients and the awards they received. Personnel shall include the information in the members' 201 files.