


FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL POLICY MANUAL

	SUBJECT AGENCY AWARDS	POLICY NUMBER 23.01
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23.01.01 PURPOSE

To establish an awards program for members and non-sworn personnel of the Florida Highway Patrol.

23.01.02 POLICY

It is the policy of the Florida Highway Patrol to recognize the superior accomplishments of its members and non-sworn personnel. This policy shall provide the Patrol with an equitable manner for submitting and processing nominations for the awards. These awards will in no way affect or eliminate other awards currently being presented by the Department. Recipients of these awards may also be eligible to receive other Departmental awards.

23.01.03 DEFINITIONS

- A. **THE CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE AWARD** – An award provided by the Florida Highway Patrol to reward its non-sworn personnel who have performed their duties in a manner which surpasses that which is normally expected and who have made a significant, extraordinary contribution to the Division, the Department or the State of Florida. All non-sworn personnel of the Florida Highway Patrol are eligible for this award. Receipt of other Department or State awards for the same achievement(s) will not preclude nomination or selection for the Civilian Employee Award.

- B. **MEDAL OF VALOR** – The highest award bestowed by the Florida Highway Patrol. It shall be awarded only in exceptional cases where:
 - 1. Hazardous duty was performed by a member who displayed outstanding bravery, gallantry, or courage in the advancement of basic law enforcement purposes by protection of life or property, enforcement of laws, preservation of the public peace, prevention of criminal acts or apprehension of criminals.

 - 2. The act was of such an extraordinary nature that the member was exposed to great peril or personal danger, and acted above and beyond the call of duty. "In the line of duty" is not restricted to "on-duty" work schedules.

- C. **THE PURPLE HEART** – An award presented to members who have been injured or wounded by acts of aggression or assaults upon them while performing basic law enforcement functions of protection of life or property, enforcement of laws, preservation of the public peace, prevention of criminal acts or apprehension of criminals. The act of aggression was carried out by bodily assault, assault with a weapon or firearm or assault with a vehicle. The Purple Heart Award shall be limited to sworn members of the Florida Highway Patrol employed on or after implementation of this policy.
- D. **THE SILVER STAR** – An award recognizing members for acts of heroism or life-saving efforts that do not rise to the level of the Medal of Valor; however, warrant recognition by the Department for exemplary performance of duty. Members must have been exposed to peril or personal danger, and acted above and beyond the normal call of their basic law enforcement duty.
- E. **LIFE SAVING** – An award recognizing sworn and non-sworn members for acts of life-saving efforts that although do not rise to the level of Medal of Valor or the Silver Star, warrant recognition by the Department for exemplary performance of duty. Members do not have to be exposed to peril or personal danger, but have acted above and beyond the normal call of duty to save or attempt to save a life.

23.01.04 PROCEDURES

- A. MEDAL OF VALOR, THE SILVER STAR, THE PURPLE HEART, AND LIFE SAVING
 - 1. The Director shall appoint seven members to serve on the Awards Committee. Members selected to the Committee shall remain on the Committee for two years unless replaced by the Director. The Chairperson of the Committee will be the senior ranking member selected for membership on the Committee. The Committee shall meet at least quarterly to review award nominations. If such meeting is not possible, the chairperson may poll the Committee by telephone to determine each employee's vote. The Awards Committee shall consist of the following:
 - a. One Chief;
 - b. One Major;
 - c. One Captain;
 - d. One Lieutenant;
 - e. One Sergeant;
 - f. One Corporal or Trooper;
 - g. One other member or non-sworn personnel.

Any employee, who is a primary member of the Awards Committee and is nominated for the award, will require a substitute representative to be assigned to the Committee during the period of consideration.

2. Nominations shall be initiated within 90 days of the incident in which the nominee was involved. A member may not make a self-nomination. Members of the Florida Highway Patrol, who die in the line of duty, may be nominated for posthumous awarding with the award being presented to the surviving next of kin.

Any employee or citizen may initiate a nomination for a member to receive the Medal of Valor, the Silver Star, Purple Heart, or Life Saving Award. Nominations initiated by employees shall be made by letter to the nominee's immediate supervisor describing all the details and events of the nominee's actions. Nominations initiated by a citizen shall be made in writing to any Patrol supervisor. The receiving supervisor shall forward the nomination via the chain of command to the Chief of Special Services for review.

3. The Medal of Valor, the Silver Star, Purple Heart, and Life Saving Award shall each consist of a medal to be worn on the uniform for formal occasions, and a commendation bar of corresponding colors, which will be worn on the uniform of the day. The medal or commendation bar shall be worn below the badge on the upper portion of the left pocket flap. (Refer to FHP Policy 6.01.07(F)(8), with picture.)

The medals and commendation bars will be of a design agreed upon by the Florida Highway Patrol Executive Staff and approved by the Director. A second Medal of Valor and/or Silver Star may be issued to a recipient upon authorization of the Director. Subsequent Purple Heart Awards to the same member will be recognized by the issuance of an oak leaf cluster for each subsequent award.

A certificate suitable for framing and a letter outlining the circumstances of the award signed by the Director shall accompany the award.

B. CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE AWARD

1. The Director will appoint five members/non-sworn personnel to serve on the Civilian Employee Award Committee. Members or non-sworn personnel selected for the Committee shall remain on the Committee for two years unless replaced by the Director. The Committee will meet during the month of January to review the recommendations submitted through December 31 of the previous year. The Chairperson of the Committee will be the senior ranking member selected for membership in the Committee. The Award Committee shall consist of the following:
 - a. One Chief;
 - b. One Major from either GHQ or the field;
 - c. One member from GHQ;
 - d. One non-sworn personnel from the field;
 - e. One other member or non-sworn personnel.

Any employee, who is a primary member of the Award Committee and is nominated for the award, will require a substitute representative to be assigned to the Committee during the period of consideration.

2. The Award Committee will assess the following:
 - a. Achievements, which resulted from the nominee's innovation and/or creativity, surpassing that normally exhibited by an employee in that position.
 - b. Achievements in spite of an organizational change, a reduction in work force or a physically challenging work environment.
 - c. Achievements, which have resulted in, improved service or response to customers both within the Department and externally.
 - d. Adoption of a suggestion(s), which results in significant savings in time or materials for the Division.
 - e. Participation in an activity outside of the scope of normal employment that reflects favorably on the Division. The act may be as the primary participant or in the assisting capacity.
3. Nominations will be made by the Troop Commanders and GHQ personnel or civilian supervisors equivalent or senior in rank to a Troop Commander. Nominations will be forwarded through the chain of command to the Chief of Special Services for review.

Nominations will be submitted on the Civilian Employee Award Form (Addendum 23.01-1), with supporting documentation when necessary. The employee's accomplishments must have occurred during the calendar year from January 1 through December 31 and must arrive in GHQ no later than the following January 15, for consideration.

4. The award will consist of a plaque and a letter of commendation signed by the Director citing the superior accomplishments of the recipient of the award.
 - a. Some accomplishments may warrant cash or other tangible award donated by an individual or business entity outside of this Department, contingent upon the availability of such an award.
 - b. The recipient of a monetary, in-kind, or other tangible award valued at \$100 or more, who is required to file financial disclosures under §112.3145, or who constitutes a procurement employee (participates in services or commodity procurement exceeding \$1000 per year) must comply with §112.3148, regarding acceptance and disclosure. In addition, any employee-recipient must report any award valued at \$25 or more to the Executive Director, as required by DHSMV Policy #3.08, within five working days of receipt.

C. REVIEW OF NOMINATIONS

Upon receiving nominations, the Chief of Special Services may require further information from the submitting troop concerning the circumstances surrounding the nomination. If additional information is required, it will be presented along with the original nomination to the appropriate Awards Committee for review. If no further information is required, the nomination shall be forwarded to the appropriate Awards Committee for review and consideration. After reviewing each nomination, the respective Committee shall:

1. In the nominations for the Medal of Valor, the Silver Star, Purple Heart, or Life Saving Award, either approve or disapprove the nomination by a simple majority vote in secret ballot. The Committee may recommend that the action taken by the member be recognized by the awarding of a Medal of Valor, the Silver Star, the Purple Heart, Life Saving Award, or by some other award.
2. In the nominations for the Civilian Employee Award, select the employee who is, in its opinion, the most deserving of the award based upon a simple majority vote.

In the event a Committee member cannot be present at a scheduled meeting, the Chairperson of the Awards Committee shall poll the absent member via telephone for his or her vote. The final recommendations of the Awards Committee shall be submitted in writing to the Director by the Committee Chairperson.

D. ACTIONS OF THE DIRECTOR

The Director, upon receiving the Committee's recommendation, will either:

1. Approve the recommendation, in which case the recommendation will be forwarded to the Chief of Special Services for disposition.
2. Disapprove the recommendation.
3. Direct the board to obtain additional information and resubmit for further consideration.

E. ISSUANCE OF THE AWARDS

Upon the issuance of an award, the honored employee shall receive a letter from the Director outlining the circumstances of the award. A copy of the letter from the Director shall be made a permanent part of the employee's personnel file. A copy of the letter shall be forwarded to the Troop Commander where the employee is assigned. Copies of the letter shall be posted on the personnel bulletin boards in every Florida Highway Patrol station for 30 days following the issuance of the award. The award(s) and commendations will also be posted on the FHP Internet website. The employee receiving the award shall be formally recognized at an official Patrol function by having the award presented by the Director or a Florida Highway Patrol Executive Staff member designated by the Director.

F. PRESS RELEASE

A press release may be prepared and circulated to the news media outlining the manner in which the recipient earned the award. A copy of this press release may be sent to the employee's hometown newspaper. A copy of the press release shall become a permanent part of the employee's personnel file.

G. COUNTY, STATE, AND/OR NATIONAL RECOGNITION

When appropriate, the Patrol may submit the name of an individual who has been awarded the Medal of Valor, the Silver Star, Purple Heart, or Life Saving Award to any official group seeking to recognize meritorious service. A copy of any such submission, and subsequent awards, shall become a permanent part of the employee's personnel file.

Those members who are selected Officer of the Year by SLECA (State Law Enforcement Chief's Association) shall be permitted to wear such award on their uniforms. The placement of the SLECA award on the uniform shall be the same as that for the Medal of Valor, the Silver Star, Purple Heart, or Life Saving Award. For multiple awards, the commendation bars shall be worn in the following order from left to right (Refer to FHP Policy 6.01.07(F)(8), with picture):

1. Medal of Valor;
2. SLECA Officer of the Year;
3. The Silver Star;
4. Purple Heart Award;
5. Life Saving Award

All other awards received by members shall require the written approval of the Director prior to being worn on the uniform.



FLORIDA HIGHWAY PATROL CIVILIAN EMPLOYEE AWARD NOMINATION

I am nominating _____
of _____
(Office Address)
for the Civilian Employee Award.

This award is for (what, when, where, and how):

Submitted by: _____
(Print Name)

(Office Location)

(City) (Work Phone Number)

(Use a blank sheet of bond paper for continuation, if necessary)

ADDENDUM 23.01-1