

RENO POLICE DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER

This directive is for internal use only and does not enlarge this department's, governmental entity's and/or any of this department's employees' civil or criminal liability in any way. It is not to be construed as the creation of a particular standard of safety or care in an evidentiary sense, with respect to any complaint, demand for settlement, or any other form of grievance or litigation. Violations of this directive, if substantiated, can only form the basis for intra-departmental administrative sanctions.

Chief of Police: Steven Pitts /s/		
Approving Deputy Chief: Tom Robinson		
General Order No: E-120-04	Issued: September 16, 2004	Supersedes: 4/749.000
	Reissued: June 10, 2009	Revised: October 06, 2014
General Order Title: COMMENDATION AWARDS		

POLICY

Employees of the Reno Police Department often perform their duties in a manner that exceeds expected high standards of professionalism. Commendation awards are presented to employees on those occasions, to give them full public recognition of the honor they bring to themselves, the Department, and the community.

DEPARTMENTAL AWARDS

THE POLICE MEDAL OF HONOR

This is the highest commendation. It is awarded for an act that involves extreme risk to the employee's life, voluntarily taken with knowledge of the imminent threat of personal safety, who distinguishes themselves conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty.

There must be no margin of doubt or possibility of error in awarding this honor. To justify this award, the act must be clearly rendered conspicuous above their comrades by an act so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes their gallantry beyond the call of duty from lesser forms of bravery; and it must be the type of deed which if not done would not subject the individual to any justified criticism

THE POLICE MEDAL OF VALOR

This is the second highest commendation. It is awarded for an act that involves a significant risk to life of an employee, with a demonstration of courage that goes beyond behavior normally required of individuals in the law enforcement profession, and sets the individual apart from his or her fellow officers. Although the employee displayed extraordinary heroism, the act does not justify the Medal of Honor.

THE POLICE CROSS

This is awarded posthumously when an employee has lost his or her life in the performance of his or her duties under honorable circumstances.

THE MEDAL OF MERITORIOUS SERVICE

This is awarded to an employee for meritorious service in a duty of great responsibility, involving operational risk to the employee. It may also be awarded to an employee for an act which results in the saving of a life or attempted saving of a life, during which extraordinary efforts were used and personal risk to the employee was involved.

THE PURPLE HEART

This is awarded to an employee who sustains injuries of a significant nature during the scope of their employment. This could be from an altercation with a suspect or from an encounter with an individual whose use of a dangerous or deadly weapon has inflicted said injuries.

THE LIFESAVING AWARD

This is awarded to an employee who saves someone's life under circumstances in which the employee was not in danger while doing so.

DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL

The purpose of the Distinguished Service Medal is to inspire Espirit de Corps; to recognize and encourage positive actions; and to recognize accomplishments over one's career.

Criteria for Nomination

1. Nominees can qualify under one of three categories:
 - a. Nominee(s) who have served a minimum of twenty (20) continuous years of exemplary service with the Reno Police Department;
 - b. Nominee(s) who have served a minimum ten (10) continuous years of exemplary service with the Reno Police Department and retires under honorable service;
 - c. Or to represent a medal presented by another governmental agency for action taken in law enforcement capacity while employed by RPD, but that does not fall into the criteria of a departmental medal; and does not arise from the same event that another Reno Police medal was awarded.
2. Nominees shall be deemed by their peer(s) and supervisor(s) to demonstrate departmental values and possess an outstanding work ethic. The Nominee will possess a professional demeanor and outstanding job knowledge in the law enforcement profession. The Nominee's peer(s) and supervisor(s) will document such action(s) in

memorandum form. These officer(s) and supervisor(s) may be called before the board to give testimony to their submitted documentation.

3. Any disciplinary action incurred by the nominee should be considered by the Awards and Commendations Board before recommendation for approval.
4. In most cases, the Nominee's direct supervisor(s) or peer(s) shall make the recommendation for the DSM, and the Awards and Commendations Board shall review all documentation and submit their recommendation to the Chief of Police for approval.

CHIEF'S COMMENDATION MEDAL

Employee

This is awarded to an employee, regardless of rank, for exceptional meritorious performance while conducting an administrative or operational assignment.

Citizen

This is awarded to citizens, whose actions exemplify excellence in performance of civic responsibilities, showing unselfish devotion to the community, and/or bringing honor to themselves and recognition to the City through those actions.

The Chief of Police may issue this award without the approval of the Awards and Commendations Board.

POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR

This award is issued annually to the selected officer by the voting members of the R.P.P.A. For a period of one year, the chosen officer will serve as the Department's nominee for all local and national recognition awards that are associated with an Officer of the Year.

CHIEF'S CERTIFICATE OF COMMENDATION

This is awarded to an employee or citizens under any of the following circumstances:

- An employee of any rank for superior performance of duties or exemplary behavior that are either administrative or operational in nature;
- An employee of another agency that qualifies under any of the above mentioned conditions, if earned while aiding, assisting, or working with any employee of the Reno Police Department;
- Any distinct work group of employees when the actions of the group as a whole meet the qualifications; or
- Citizens whose actions exemplify excellence in performance of civic responsibilities, showing unselfish devotion to their fellow humans and community, and/or bringing honor to themselves and recognition to the City through their actions.

The Chief of Police may issue this award without the approval of the Awards and Commendations Board.

CHIEF'S MEMORANDUM

This is issued to an employee or citizen whose actions or outstanding police work has brought credit to the Department. This award may also be issued by a Deputy Chief.

DEPARTMENTAL CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is presented to an employee upon their retirement. An interoffice memorandum to the Chief of Police shall be generated by the retiring employee's supervisor. This memorandum will include the number of years served, rounded to the nearest full year the employee has worked for the department, and the date the retirement is effective.

DEPARTMENTAL RIBBONS

A recipient of any of the following medals shall be issued a corresponding colored ribbon: Medal of Honor, Medal of Valor, Police Cross, Medal of Meritorious Service, Purple Heart, Life Saving, Distinguished Service, Chief's Commendation and Officer of the Year.

The ribbon bar will be worn horizontally on the uniformed officer's shirt, immediately above the left pocket. No more than three ribbons will be worn on a tier. Awards received in excess of three will be worn on successive tiers of three each. Ribbons not constituting a full tier will be centered above the completed tier. Ribbons shall be dressed from right to left, top to bottom, in order of importance.

Other ribbons authorized by the Chief of Police, but not issued by the Reno Police Department, such as the National Law Enforcement Officers ribbon, are to be worn evenly dressed above the officer's name tag above the right breast pocket.

AWARD NOMINATION PROCEDURE

Sworn and non-sworn employees of any class or rank may nominate an employee or a citizen for an award by submitting an interoffice memorandum, in email form, to the Chief of Police via the nominee's chain-of-command. Every email relating to an award nomination must be carbon copied (CC) to the Awards and Commendations Board through the departmental email system for tracking purposes. Principal parties involved normally will not nominate themselves. Nominations should be submitted from witnesses of the incident, case investigators, on scene supervisors, or persons who have gathered information from eyewitnesses or involved parties. Included in this memorandum should be full documentation of the incident in chronological sequence and the full name and badge/employee number of the employee commended. If more than one person participated in the meritorious act, each name will be included in the same memo. If warranted, supportive reports, diagrams or photographs should be added to explain unusual circumstances. The Chief of Police shall forward all award nominations to the Awards and Commendations Board for consideration.

AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS BOARD

The Awards and Commendations Board is comprised of members of the Department who represent each of the Department's bargaining groups. A Chairperson and Vice Chairperson shall be elected by the Board. The Board is charged with evaluating nominations received and

determining their merit. The Board shall complete a review of the case and seek input from the primary case investigator, immediate supervisor, or any principal named recipient to determine if the nomination meets the criteria for the nominated award or if another award is more appropriate. The Board shall decide if the award will or will not be issued and then forward their recommendation to the Lieutenant designated by the Chief of Police to be the Awards Committee Liaison. Awards shall be approved only upon a majority affirmative vote of the Board. No awards, with the exception of the Chief's Medal of Commendation and the Chief's Certificate of Commendation, shall be issued except upon the approval of the Board. The Chief of Police has the ultimate authority to award or deny any commendations from the department. The Board's by-laws will not supersede this general order.

The board is charged with reviewing and approving or disapproving all nominations expeditiously and in a manner consistent with maintaining the integrity of the Department's employee awards program. A written record will be maintained of cases, recommendations and submissions to include the final outcome of the case.

AWARD PRESENTATIONS

The following awards will be presented by the Chief of Police to the recipient employee at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Reno City Council:

The Police Medal of Honor, Police Medal of Valor, Medal of Meritorious Service, Purple Heart Medal, and Lifesaving Medal. The Awards Committee's Lieutenant Liaison will be the point of contact and coordinator for the facilitation of award presentations.

Other commendations, awards, and certificates may be presented by the employee's division commander or other chief officer.

MASTER POLICE OFFICER

The Master Police Officer designation is a mechanism to provide peer recognition for outstanding performance and exemplary conduct over a sustained period of time. Any sworn officer of non-supervisory rank may be nominated for the title of Master Police Officer. Nominations shall be made in writing in memorandum form to the and any sworn officer not already a Master Police Officer may nominate any other officer with the endorsement of at least three (3) other sworn officers. Officers of supervisory rank may not nominate candidates for the Master Police Officer group's consideration. Sponsors should be fully aware of the eligibility criteria which establish minimum qualifications for nomination of candidates. Sponsors may be called before the Master Police Officer group to give testament as to the nominee's qualifications. Additionally, officers opposed to the nominee's selection may appear and give testimony to the Master Police Officer group. Such testimony shall be factual and cite specific instances where the nominee has failed to meet the selection criteria as outlined in this General Order. Officers above the rank of sergeant may not participate in the selection process.

The Chairman from the Awards and Commendations Board will oversee the Master Police Officer selection process and assure the minimum qualifications have been met prior to

consideration by the Master Police Officer group. An appointed member of the RPPA Board of Directors will be required to be present and monitor any selection or removal process. A majority vote by the Master Police Officer group is needed for approval of the Master Police Officer designation. The Awards and Commendation Chairman does not have a vote in the selection process. Upon approval by the Master Police Officer group, the Awards and Commendation Chairman will forward the recommendation up the chain of command to the Chief of Police and Executive Staff for validation. The Chief of Police or Executive Staff can veto recommendations issued by the Master Police Officer group.

CRITERIA FOR NOMINATION

Officers nominated for selection as Master Police Officer shall meet the following minimum qualification criteria:

- They must have served a minimum of ten (10) continuous years of service with the Reno Police Department;
- They must be judged by their peers and supervisors to demonstrate department values and possess an outstanding work ethic, professional demeanor, and exceptional job knowledge in the law enforcement profession;
- They must not have had a sustained personnel complaint in any of the aforementioned performance areas for the previous five (5) years which resulted in other than non-punitive disciplinary action; and
- They must have received above-average annual performance evaluations from their supervisors for the preceding five (5) years.
- They must participate in organizational and personnel development on a consistent basis within the department.
- They should strive to maintain department values and achieve the department mission.

REMOVAL

The Master Police Officer Group is responsible for the removal of any member that engages in behavior or is involved in an incident that may discredit the designation or the department. The Master Police Officer Group will review any incidents by their members that involve the lack of professionalism, integrity, ethics or honesty. All reviews will take place at the conclusion of any administrative or judicial process. A majority vote of the existing Master Police Officers will be required for the removal of the Master Officer designation. As described in the selection process, all recommendations for removal will be forwarded through the chain of command. Decisions for removal are final and not subject to contractual grievance procedures or appeal.

Determination as to the severity of the offending act and its impact on the Master Police Officer program shall be determined by the Master Police Officer group. Officers failing to maintain the high standards of professionalism required for selection may be removed from such designation for any act that brings discredit upon themselves, their profession, or the Department. As in the selection process, the Master Police Officer group's decision is final and not subject to contractual grievance procedures or appeal.

INSIGNIA

The insignia designating a Master Police Officer is a wreath design of yellow (gold) color. It shall be worn directly above the officer's service stripes on the long sleeve shirt and affixed to the short sleeve shirt 1 ½ inches below the Department's patch on the left sleeve, centered on the crease, like the patch. The insignia shall only be worn on the Department's class "A" uniform.

Unless removed by a decision of the Master Police Officer group, officers shall carry the Master Police Officer designation for the balance of their careers, or until promoted to a supervisory rank. The Master Police Officer insignia shall not be worn in conjunction with any other rank or insignia.