



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, D.C. 20240

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PERSONNEL BULLETIN NO. 02-10 (451)

SUBJECT: Formatting and Processing Departmental Honor Awards

To expedite the review and approval of Departmental Honor Awards, the attached formatting and processing procedures must be followed, effective immediately.

These procedures and guidance will be included in the Departmental Manual chapter on Awards and Recognition when revised. The Departmental point of contact is Jacqueline Johnston at (202) 208-0144, Mail Stop 5221-MIB, E-mail: [Jacqueline\\_Johnston@ios.doi.gov](mailto:Jacqueline_Johnston@ios.doi.gov).

for Carolyn Cohen  
Director, Office of Personnel Policy

Attachment

## **FORMATTING AND PROCESSING OF DEPARTMENTAL HONOR AWARDS**

The award nomination should be based on the employee's contributions while an employee of the Department of the Interior. Although contributions to other Government agencies where the employee worked may be cited, the emphasis should be on specific contributions while serving as an employee of the Department of the Interior.

Before final approval of the honor award, headquarters award coordinators should send via e:mail a copy of the citation for review to their appropriate correspondence analyst in the Office of Executive Secretariat.

All honor award nominations should be submitted in a timely manner. Nominations must be received no later than six months after the date of retirement or separation of an employee.

### **CONTENT:**

Must clearly show specific accomplishments in enough detail to provide a layman with an understanding of the contribution.

Must reflect recent accomplishments.

Must be based on contributions while the employee was employed by the Department of the Interior.

Should be reflective of what was done to warrant Departmental recognition.

Examples of actual accomplishments are necessary - not just nice words.

### **FORMAT:**

Left and right margins should be no less than one inch.

Justified right hand margin is required.

Do not date citations.

Headings must be in all capital letters, bold, double spaced between heading lines, and centered on page as follows:

**CITATION**  
**FOR MERITORIOUS SERVICE**  
**JOHN D. DOE**

Triple space between Full Name and first paragraph.

The body of the citation consists of only two paragraphs.

The first paragraph always begins, "In recognition of his/her ... " and ends with the bureau name. For example:

**"In recognition of his outstanding leadership of international water resources programs for the Bureau of Reclamation."**

The citation must reflect formal reference to the nominee, i.e., Dr. Brown, Mrs. Jones, Mr. Smith - not John, Barbara, or Henry. Always use the formal reference except the last sentence of second paragraph the full name must be used.

The final sentence of the second paragraph for Distinguished Service Awards will read: "For ... (full name) is granted the highest honor of the Department of the Interior, the Distinguished Service Award."

The final sentence of the second paragraph for Meritorious Service Awards (MSA's) will read: "for ... (full name) is granted the Meritorious Service Award of the Department of the Interior."

The final sentence for other honor awards will read similarly to MSA's.

The signature block will be six spaces below the body of the citation and will begin at the center of the page.

Citations should be approximately 350 words and must fit on one page with heading and signature block.

Eliminate large gaps in spacing on citations.

When the bureau name is first used in citation, spell out the bureau name. Use the word “Bureau” or “Service” for all subsequent references to bureau instead of spelling it out.

Use active verbs in citation.

Citations should be checked for correct spelling (including nominee’s name), grammar, punctuation, and sentence structure prior to sending to Executive Secretariat.

Citations should be clear and concise.

Before final approval of an honor award, bureau must ensure that there is no derogatory information pertaining to the nominee by:

reviewing the employee’s Official Personnel Folder;

contacting the bureau Office for Equal Opportunity, the Departmental Office for Equal Opportunity, and the Office of the Inspector General; and

certifying on the Award Certification Form DI-451 in “Justification” section that no derogatory information was found regarding the employee.

### **PROCESSING:**

Once citation has been determined to be properly prepared and reviewed, and concurrences received by the head of the bureau and the appropriate Assistant Secretary, the bureau awards coordinator should send a copy the citation by e:mail for review to the designated bureau correspondence analyst in the Office of Executive Secretariat.

Citations for review should be submitted to Executive Secretariat in a timely manner. Do not hold citations for submission of numerous citations for review at one time.

Following the review of citation by Executive Secretariat, the bureau awards coordinator will be instructed to prepare the citation in final format for the Secretary’s signature with appropriate copies (surname copy, bureau copy, Executive Secretariat copy).

The Office of Personnel Policy maintains a contract for procurement of certificates, medals, and lapel pins for the highest honor awards as well as Meritorious Service Awards and Superior Service Awards.

For Distinguished Service Awards, Valor Awards, Citizen’s Award for Bravery, and Conservation Service Awards, the Department’s Office of Personnel Policy will order the certificates/medals/label pins, as appropriate, for presentation at a Departmental Awards Convocation. Plaques for Convocation presentation to the Unsung Heroes will also be ordered by the Department. The signature of the Secretary will be affixed on certificates by Executive Secretariat and the Office of Personnel Policy will affix the gold seals on the certificates.

For other honor awards - Meritorious Service Unit Awards, Unit Awards for Excellence of Service, and Outstanding Service Awards, the bureau awards coordinator must order embossing of certificates and engraving of medals.

The date used on the certificate and medal should be the same, normally the date that the award will be presented. After embossing of the certificate, the bureau awards coordinator must have the certificate signed by Executive Secretariat with the Secretary's signature, and affix the Department's silver seal on the certificate.

#### Distribution of Signed Copies:

Copies of highest honor awards (Distinguished Service Awards, Valor Awards, Citizen's Award for Bravery, Conservation Service Awards) as well as copies of Unsung Hero awards, should be submitted to the Office of Personnel Policy to hold until a convocation has taken place. Following the convocation, copies will be stamped with date of Convocation and Secretary's signature and submitted to Secretary's Files.

Copies of Meritorious Service Awards, Unit Awards, Outstanding Service Awards, and Superior Service Awards should be stamped with date as shown on certificate/medal and name of person who signed the award. A copy must be sent to the Secretary's Files.