

State of Iowa Department of Corrections

Policy and Procedures

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1. PURPOSE

The Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) recognizes employees are our greatest assets. Showing appreciation and recognition is important to employee morale. This policy describes practices and procedures that shall apply in all Iowa Department of Corrections (IDOC) Institutions, Districts and the Central Office regarding the Employee Recognition Programs.

2. POLICY

The Iowa Department of Corrections strives to recognize and reward staff members, volunteers, and contract employees for their contributions. Acknowledging individuals for their exemplary work performance, making significant contributions to the mission of the Iowa Department of Corrections, or for having performed outstanding acts of generosity or courage on behalf of the citizens of the State of Iowa are all examples of such recognitions. Employee Recognition Programs shall be implemented at each Institution and District, as well as on a Departmental level and this policy establishes the minimum requirements, operational guidelines, and responsibilities for the administration and implementation of such programs.

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3. DEFINITIONS - As used in this document:

- A. Employee Recognition Program - An approach, such as a ceremony or event designed to regularly recognize staff, volunteers or contract employees for achievements, accomplishments and/or contributions made to enhance the effectiveness of state government or the lives of the citizens of the State of Iowa.
- B. Agency Employee Recognition Committee - A committee of agency employees, charged with the responsibility of planning and arranging an annual Agency Recognition Ceremony. This committee is also entrusted with the responsibility of selecting award recipients.

4. PROCEDURES

A. Central Office

1. The Director of the Iowa Department of Corrections will annually host an Agency Recognition Ceremony. Recognition and awards will be provided to department employees from each of the Institutions, Districts, and Central Office.
2. The Iowa Corrections Learning Center shall develop and implement the training of supervisory staff concerning the importance, benefits, and administration of employee recognition programs.

B. Institutions/Districts

1. Each institution and district shall develop procedures outlining local employee recognition programs.

2. Wardens/District Directors shall promote the Agency Recognition Program by encouraging staff participation.
3. Each Institution/District will appoint an Employee Recognition Coordinator.
4. Institutions/Districts are encouraged to be innovative with their range of recognition programs; however, these procedures shall at minimum, include the following:
 - a. Length of Service Recognition
 - 1) To be provided in 5-year intervals (i.e., 5 years, 10 years, 15, years, etc.)
 - 2) May be done annually, quarterly, or more frequent to recognize all those celebrating a 5-year interval anniversary within that time-frame.
 - 3) Certificates signed by the Director of the DOC shall be provided to all employees for each 5-year anniversary. Gifts are also permissible for those with twenty-five years or more of service and shall comply with limits as set forth in DAS Procedure Number 220.350.
 - b. Retirement Recognition
 - 1) All employees retiring from the Iowa DOC shall receive a certificate signed by the DOC Director and the Governor (coordinate request through Central Office).
 - 2) A moderate gift of appreciation (clocks, plaques or pictures of institutions are appropriate choices) with the employee's name and number of years of service/services dates engraved. See DAS Procedure 220.351 for allowable expenses for retiring employees.

C. DOC Agency Recognition Committee

1. The DOC Agency Recognition Committee will include the following:
 - a. Representatives from each of the Institutions and Districts, comprising both labor and management.
 - b. A representative from the Director's Office.
2. The IDOC Agency Recognition Committee shall be responsible for the following:

- a. Planning, organizing, arranging, coordinating, promoting and publicizing the Annual Employee Recognition Ceremony.
- b. Review and revise award criteria annually and as necessary.
- c. Review all award nominations and submit recipients to the IDOC Director.
- d. Review annually and make suggested changes to Employee Recognition Program policy.

D. Nomination Process

1. The DOC Agency Recognition Committee will initiate the nomination process and establish reasonable submission timelines to coincide with the annual Recognition Ceremony.
2. Nominations may be submitted by any employee, through the normal chain of command and/or per locally established procedures.
3. Institutional Wardens/District Director/Designee shall ensure the following, prior to submission of [Nomination Form](#) **(AD-PR-26 F-1)** to the Agency Recognition Committee:
 - a. Verification of the reasons, facts, events, or actions involved with the nomination.
 - b. Ensure the nominated employee satisfies criteria requirements, or request a waiver of criteria.
 - c. All nominations must be a minimum of 250 through a maximum of 500 words.

E. DOC Agency Recognition Awards

1. Basic Eligibility Requirements
 - a. Must be an Agency employee, volunteer, or contract employee.
 - b. Not to have received formal disciplinary action within the last 12 months.
 - c. Have a minimum evaluation score of "Meets".
 - d. Has made an overall contribution to the Agency's Vision and Mission.

e. Projects a professional appearance and demeanor.

2. Criteria Waiver

The IDOC Director, upon recommendation of the Agency Recognition Committee, may waive any or all basic eligibility requirements.

3. Award Categories

a. Courage and Honor

- 1) Awards shall be presented to the family of any staff who have lost their life in the line of duty, and/or;
- 2) To any staff that sustained a critical injury in the line of duty, or;
- 3) To any staff who performed an act of great courage and bravery to ensure the public's safety in honor of the Department's vision to create safer communities while in the performance of duty.

b. Meritorious Service

- 1) Awards shall be presented to the family of a staff who lost their life while performing an act of heroism while off duty, or;
- 2) To a staff that sustained critical injury while performing an act of heroism while off duty.
- 3) To a staff that performed an act of heroism while off duty.

c. Volunteer of the Year

Awards may be presented to volunteers who are not Department of Corrections (DOC) staff, and who have donated time and effort to the inmate population, as well as demonstrated outstanding service to the Department of Corrections. This can be an individual or a group.

d. Excellence in Safety

Individuals or teams are eligible for this award based on this criteria:

- 1) By making significant improvements in workplace safety, and/or;

- 2) By significantly reducing the events of workplace accidents.
- e. Agency Employee of the Year
- 1) Nominees shall include, but are not limited to, recipients of local award selections.
 - 2) Individuals selected based on the following criteria:
 - a) Contribution to the Agency's Vision and Mission Statement.
 - b) Overall professionalism
 - c) Leadership skills
 - d) Respect for fellow staff, incarcerated individuals/clients, volunteers, guests and the general public.
 - 3) One recipient may be selected by each Institution/District annually and recognized at the annual Agency Ceremony.
- f. Manager/Supervisor of the Year
- 1) Nominees shall include, but are not limited to, recipients of local award selections.
 - 2) Individuals selected based on the following Criteria:
 - a) Contribution to local mission statement and/or Agency Vision and Mission.
 - b) Demonstrates and exemplifies excellence in leadership.
 - c) Effective management of day-to-day operations and resources.
 - 3) One supervisor may be selected by each Institution/District annually and recognized at the annual Agency Ceremony.
- g. Team Excellence
- 1) This award represents a collective effort by a team or group of DOC employees that meet this criteria:

Have accomplished a goal consistent with the Agency Vision and Mission, and/or for improvements in the quality of life for the Citizens of Iowa.

- 2) Please list team member names individually in the description section.
- 3) One team may be selected by each Institution/District annually and recognized at the annual Agency Ceremony.

h. Life Saving Measures

This award represents an act performed by an employee that saved the life of another person, regardless of the relation to duty.

- 1) Any emergency that if staff had not intervened would have resulted in the loss of life. To include any emergency event that prolonged someone's life or staff made every effort to save a life.
- 2) Physically and actively involved in saving the life of another person (staff, incarcerated individual/client, volunteer, or visitor).

i. Humanitarian of the Year

- 1) Awards shall be presented to staff that have enhanced the quality of life for the Citizens of Iowa, through acts of kindness and generosity, outside of their official work duties.
- 2) Recipients may qualify only for acts not related to their duties.

j. Special Recognition

- 1) Recognition awards will be given to staff that have earned recognition for specific accomplishments, regardless of duty relation, that does not qualify them for previously mentioned awards.
- 2) Personal accomplishments such as the completion of an educational degree are considered as an acceptable nomination.
- 3) Other accomplishments such as ideas implemented and used can be considered as a nomination.
- 4) One recipient may be selected by each Institution/District annually and recognized at the annual Agency Ceremony.

- k. The Lorena Schulte and Robert McFarland Medal of Valor/Purple Heart: This award, created in honor of Registered Nurse Lorena Schulte and Correctional Officer Robert McFarland is the most prestigious of honors given by the Department. Reserved exclusively for those exhibiting exceptional courage and bravery, who through an act of heroism, prevent serious injury or death to ensure the public's safety, regardless of his/her own safety.

Lorena and Robert demonstrated extraordinary decisiveness and presence of mind when they understood the demand for immediate action and gave the ultimate sacrifice, losing their own lives while protecting those of their coworkers and the community at large when they prevented the escape of two prisoners from the Anamosa State Penitentiary on March 23, 2021. The Iowa Department of Corrections strives to never suffer another such loss of staff lives and together with the families of Lorena and Robert, the Department honors their memory with the exclusiveness of this award. (Note: This award shall not be given without consulting representatives of the Schulte and McFarland families. If this award is to be given, it will be announced on March 23rd and presented at the Annual Awards ceremony.)

- 1) Medal of Valor may be presented to any staff who exhibited an act of heroism to prevent serious injury or death while in the performance of duty;
- 2) Purple Heart may be awarded to any staff that sustained a critical injury during an act of heroism in the line of duty.
- 3) Purple Heart may be awarded to the family of any staff who have lost their life during an act of heroism in the line of duty;

F. IDOC Statewide Employee Award Recognition Ceremony

1. The Statewide Employee Recognition Ceremony shall be held annually.
2. Managers and Supervisors from each Institution/District shall make every effort to be in attendance.
3. Award Recipients shall be granted paid leave and authorization to use state vehicle or paid travel expense in order to attend.
4. Awards shall consist of certificates, pins, medals, trophies, etc. as approved by the Agency Recognition Committee and in compliance with DAS Procedure Number 220.350.

5. A permanent record of the award will be placed in the employee's personnel file.
6. A notification of the award and a photograph of the recipient may be sent to the employee's local newspaper. This is optional and locally controlled by the Warden/District Director/Designee and with award recipient's authorization.