



Accountability - Dedication  
Honesty - Integrity - Respect

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** May 11, 2026  
**TO:** Tara Vasicek, City Administrator  
**FROM:** Tammy Orender, Human Resource Director  
**RE:** City of Columbus Recognition Program

**RECOMMENDATION:** Approve the revised City of Columbus Recognition Program.

**DISCUSSION:** Department Heads met and all agreed to remove the annual awards and make them all quarterly awards and also added a "Life Saver" award.

Attached is the current program with redlined changes and a clean copy.

**Signature:**

By: Tammy Orender

Concurrence By: Betsy Eckhardt

Approved By: [Signature]

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## City of Columbus Recognition Program

### Purpose

The City of Columbus Recognition Program is designed to formally acknowledge and celebrate employees and citizens whose actions, performance, and service positively contribute to the City's mission, operations, and community. The program reinforces the City's core values, promotes employee engagement and morale, and expresses appreciation for exceptional service, innovation, teamwork, and commitment to public service.

The program is intentionally structured to be inclusive, transparent, and easy to participate in, recognizing both ongoing excellence and exceptional achievements.

Recognition is provided through ~~a combination of~~ quarterly ~~and annual~~ awards.

~~Quarterly~~ awards offer timely acknowledgment for contributions that improve productivity, operations, and service delivery, while annual awards honor sustained excellence, acts of valor, volunteer service, years of service, and career milestones.

A wide range of achievements may be recognized, including individual performance, team efforts, departmental accomplishments, and citizen contributions that support the effective delivery of municipal services. Nominations may be submitted by employees, supervisors, Department Heads, and citizens, as appropriate. All nominations are evaluated by the Department Heads based on established award criteria and merit. Awards may be granted to one or more recipients—or not awarded in a given period—based on these determinations. Employees selected for awards will be publicly recognized through City social media and Employee Recognition Boards displayed at all City facilities. The Employee Recognition Committee is responsible for planning the annual events and creating content for the recognition boards.

### June is Employee Recognition Month

1<sup>st</sup> Monday: Kick Off Breakfast 6:00-9:00 AM

- Announce Annual Awards- Awards will be announced via a looping video with voiceover
- Open to Elected & Appointed Officials, & Retirees (retirees since last recognition)

2<sup>nd</sup> Monday: Afternoon Social (PM)

- Ice Cream, Dessert or similar food item will be available for employees.

3<sup>rd</sup> Monday: Beverage Truck (AM)

- A Coffee, Smoothie or similar food item will be available for employees.

4<sup>th</sup> Monday: Food Truck (PM)

- Lunch will be available for employees.

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## RECOGNITION AWARDS

### QUARTERLY AWARDS

1. **Power & Progress Award.** This award recognizes employees who exemplify the City's core values (Accountability, Dedication, Honesty, Integrity, Respect) and demonstrate commitment to innovation, teamwork, and public service. ~~There is no limit on the number of recipients.~~ Up to four awards may be issued per quarter. Recognition will be in the form of a \$50 gift card.

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2. **Productivity Award.** The productivity awards recognize employee contributions that improve city operations. Up to ~~four~~ two awards may be issued per quarter. The purpose of this award is to encourage and to recognize productivity and improvement of government services by City of Columbus employees. The recipient of a Productivity Award should be responsible for improvements with a result in one of more of the following:
  - a. Savings in time or materials.
  - b. Improvement in procedures.
  - c. Improvement in tools or equipment.
  - d. Increased efficiency.
  - e. Elimination of hazards to personnel.
  - f. Improvements in public service without increased costs.Recognition will be in the form of a \$100 gift card.

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### **Process**

~~The quarterly awards recognize outstanding employee performance and contributions throughout the year. The process ensures open participation and transparent review across all departments.~~

#### ~~1. Nomination Period~~

- ~~○ Nominations open each quarter.~~
- ~~○ The deadline for submission is the first Monday following the end of the quarter.~~

#### ~~2. Notification of Deadline~~

- ~~○ Department Heads will send email reminders during the last month of each quarter to encourage participation.~~

#### ~~3. Submission Procedure~~

- ~~○ Employees submit nominations on the provided form to their immediate supervisor.~~
- ~~○ Supervisors will forward completed nominations to their Department Head with any relevant comments.~~

- ~~Department Heads are responsible for bringing all nomination forms they receive to the first Department Head meeting following the submission deadline for review.~~

#### ~~4. Review and Selection~~

- ~~Nominations are reviewed at the first Department Head meeting following the submission deadline.~~

#### ~~5. Award Announcement~~

- ~~Human Resources will send an email announcement to all city employees announcing award recipients.~~
- ~~The Employee Recognition Committee will prepare an employee recognition spotlight of the recipients for display on the recognition boards.~~

## ~~ANNUAL AWARDS~~

~~4.~~ **3. Citizen Volunteer Service Recognition.** This award may be given to recognize the civic contributions made by a citizen~~(s)~~ such as a member of an advisory board, committee, commission, or other department operation. One award may be given per quarter.

Any citizen or employee may nominate a citizen involved on a city board, committee, or department activity.

The award will be in the form of a plaque or similar form of award product.

~~2.~~ **4. Award of Valor.** An employee(s) who performs an act of heroism in the face of personal injury or risk of life to the employee, whether or not it is performed during his/her normal working hours, may receive this citation.

Any citizen or employee may nominate a city employee for this award. The Department Head who supervises the nominated City employee will also provide a short confirmation statement for the Department Head Committee, which makes the award decision.

The award will be in the form of a plaque or similar award.

5. Life Saver Award. This award may be given to recognize an employee(s) who takes immediate, decisive action to preserve or protect human life during a critical or emergency situation. This honor is reserved for individuals whose quick

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thinking, courage, and willingness to act go beyond normal job expectations and directly result in saving or sustaining a life. Their actions demonstrate exceptional bravery, presence of mind, and a deep commitment to the safety and well-being of others.

The award will be in the form of a plaque or similar award.

**3. 6. Exemplary Service Award.** Awards may be given to those employees who have consistently, over a period of time, demonstrated excellent performance and productivity, loyalty, professional pride and other noteworthy accomplishments.

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Any citizen or employee may nominate a full-time or part-time City employee for this award. The Department Head supervising the nominated employee for this award should also provide a short confirmation statement for the Department Head Committee which makes the decision.

This award is given to recognize those employees who make significant contributions to the goals of the city by consistently demonstrating work performance clearly above and beyond what is normally required to meet the standards of their positions. Up to two awards may be issued per quarter. Please include examples and noteworthy accomplishments when nominating the employee.

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The award will be in the form of a plaque and a monetary award of \$125, which will be added to the employee's taxable income. Recipient(s) will receive a plaque and \$100 in a gift card. The remaining \$25 will be credited toward required taxes.

**4. 7. Service Awards.** Recognition of year of service will be provided to employees once annually for every 5 years of service.

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The award will be in the form of a gift card in the following amount:

5 years: \$75, 10 years: \$100, 15 years: \$125, 20 years: \$150, 25 years: \$175, ~~30~~ 30 years: \$200, 35 years: \$225, 40 years & above: \$250

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**5. 8. Retirement Recognition.** A \$250 gift of the employee's choice and a plaque of thanks are provided on the last day of work.

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### Process

The quarterly awards recognize outstanding employee performance and contributions throughout the year. The process ensures open participation and transparent review across all departments.

#### 34 1. Nomination Period

a. Nominations open each quarter.

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b. The deadline for submission is the first Monday following the end of the quarter.

32 2. Notification of Deadline

a. Department Heads will send email reminders during the last month of each quarter to encourage participation.

33 3. Submission Procedure

a. Employees submit nominations on the provided form to their immediate supervisor.

b. Supervisors will forward completed nominations to their Department Head with any relevant comments.

c. Department Heads are responsible for bringing all nomination forms they receive to the first Department Head meeting following the submission deadline for review.

34 4. Review and Selection

a. Nominations are reviewed at the first Department Head meeting following the submission deadline.

35 5. Award Announcement

a. Human Resources will send an email announcement to all city employees announcing award recipients.

b. The Employee Recognition Committee will prepare an employee recognition spotlight of the recipients for display on the recognition boards.

**Process**

~~The annual awards recognize outstanding employee performance and contributions throughout the year. The process ensures open participation and transparent review across all departments.~~

~~1. Nomination & Submission~~

~~• Nominations and submissions are continuously open.~~

~~2. Notification of Deadline~~

~~• Department Heads will send an email reminder as the deadline approaches to encourage participation.~~

~~3. Submission Procedure~~

- ~~• Employees submit nominations on the provided form to their immediate supervisor by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of March.~~
- ~~• Supervisors will forward completed nominations to their Department Head with any relevant comments the final business day in March.~~
- ~~• Department Heads are responsible for bringing all final nomination forms they receive to the first Department Head meeting in April.~~

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~~4. Review and Selection~~

- ~~• Nominations are reviewed at the first Department Head meeting following the submission deadline.~~

~~5. Award Announcement~~

- ~~• Annual awards will be presented to the employee recipients by the City Administrator and Department Head prior to the June Kick Off Breakfast. All recipients will be highlighted in a video presentation which will be continuously played at the June Employee Recognition Kick Off breakfast.~~

## FEATURING RECOGNITION AWARDS

### Boards:

Each City building will display an Employee Recognition Board provided by the city. Boards will display quarterly ~~and annual~~ award recipients, with consistent content and design. Updates will occur quarterly following each recognition cycle. Each board shall be maintained by the Department Head or their designee.

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### Online Content:

Each award recipient will be ~~included in the Power & Progress Press publication as well as posted on~~ social media postings by the city.

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## EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION NOMINATION FORM

### Section 1: Nominee Information

- **Nominee Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Department/Division:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Position Title:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Employment Status:**  Full-Time  Part-Time  Volunteer

### Section 2: Nominator Information

- **Your Name:** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Your Department/Division (if applicable):** \_\_\_\_\_
- **Your Role:**  Employee  Supervisor  Department Head  Citizen
- **Email Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

### Section 3: Award Category (Select One)

**Power & Progress Award**

Power & Progress Award recognizes employees who exemplify the City's core values and demonstrate commitment to innovation, teamwork, and public service. And consistently demonstrate the city's core values of Accountability, Dedication, Honesty, Integrity, Respect. **Up to four awards may be issued per quarter.**

**Productivity Award** Recognizes suggestions that improve city operations. Up to ~~four~~ **two** awards per quarter. Eligible suggestions must result in one or more of the following:

- Savings in time or materials
- Improved procedures
- Improved tools or equipment
- Increased efficiency
- Elimination of hazards
- Improved public service without increased costs

**Citizen Volunteer Service Recognition** Recognizes civic contributions by citizens involved in City boards, committees, or department activities. **One award per quarter may be issued.**

**Award of Valor** Recognizes acts of heroism by employees in the face of personal injury or risk of life.

**Life Saver Award** Recognize employee(s) who take immediate, decisive action to preserve or protect human life during a critical or emergency situation.

**Exemplary Service Award** Recognizes employees who consistently demonstrate excellence, loyalty, pride, and noteworthy accomplishments. **Up to two awards may be issued per quarter.**

#### **Section 4: Nomination Statement**

Please describe why this individual deserves the selected award. Include specific examples, accomplishments, and alignment with award criteria.

**Nomination Statement:**

(Attach additional pages if needed)

**Section 5: Supervisor Comments (To be completed by immediate supervisor)**

I support this nomination.  I do not support this nomination.

**Comments:**

**Supervisor Name:**

\_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Section 6: Department Head Review (To be completed before quarterly meeting)**

Received and forwarded for committee review

Additional comments attached

**Department Head Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date:** \_\_\_\_\_