

## 1.23 EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION - IMMEDIATE

The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) uses the following as the foundation for establishing uniform guidance to recognize employees:

- Commonwealth's (DHRM) [Policy 1.20 Employee Recognition Programs](#)
- (DHRM) [Employee Recognition Program Handbook](#)

Employees may be recognized individually or as teams for significant contributions in achieving the agency mission, strategic objectives, and customer service expectations. Employees should refer to Commonwealth policy and the guidance below for information about how the Department of Social Services provides opportunities to recognize noteworthy employees and team contributions.

Please refer to DHRM [Policy 1.20](#), *Employee Recognition Programs Policies – General Provisions* for more information.

[http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/hrpolicy/web/pol1\\_20.html](http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov/hrpolicy/web/pol1_20.html)

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### VDSS Guidance



#### AUTHORITY, INTERPRETATION, AND REVISION:

This guidance is issued by the VDSS. The Departments' Director of Human Resources (HR) or designee is responsible for the agency's interpretation of this guidance and for its revision or rescission.

## REWARD & RECOGNITION PROGRAM

Each Division Director may develop division-specific reward and recognition criteria in addition to the criteria established in this guidance. These additional criteria must be consistent with the business needs of the agency. Each Director will determine the level of supervisor within the Division who is authorized to implement this guidance. All actions must be approved by the applicable or impacted Division Director before submission to Human Resources. If the award is for a Division Director the request must be approved by a Deputy Commissioner.

Division Directors are expected to actively implement this program. The intention is that rewards should be distributed on an ongoing basis throughout the fiscal year.

### I. FUNDING & ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

- A. Each fiscal year, funds totaling up to ½ of 1 percent of each Division's payroll budget may be used for Employee Reward and Recognition dependent on available financial resources. This is not an additional allocation of funds. Division Directors must manage these reward funds through staff vacancies and/ or discretionary funds within their budget.

1. All monetary awards must be approved by the Division's budget representative.

B. All VDSS classified and wage employees, including Division Directors, are eligible for nomination and selection for the employee Reward & Recognition Program if they meet the following criteria:

1. Classified employees must have successfully completed their probationary period;
2. Classified employees must have no active disciplinary actions (*i.e.*, Written or group notices under the Standards of Conduct) on file;
3. Wage employees must have been employed with the VDSS for at least twelve consecutive months; and,
4. Both wage and classified employees must have at least a "Contributor" overall performance rating on the most recent performance evaluation.
  - a. Classified employees who transfer from another state agency are eligible for awards, provided they received a rating of at least "contributor" on their most recent evaluation from their previous agency.

C. The Division of Human Resources will ensure compliance with this section.

## II. TYPES OF AWARDS & LIMITS

### A. Monetary Awards

1. Classified and wage employees may receive cash awards up to \$1,000. Awards between \$1,001 and \$2,000 must be sent to the Commissioner for approval.
2. An employee may receive several reward and recognition monetary awards within a year, provided the \$2,000 limit during a fiscal year (July 1 – June 30) is not exceeded.
3. All monetary awards are subject to appropriate state and federal taxes.

### B. Leave Recognition

1. Only classified employees may receive leave.
2. Recognition leave of up to five workdays may be awarded to a classified (non-wage) employee in a calendar (leave) year (January 10 --- January 9). Leave is available for use on the effective date.
3. Recognition Leave expires within 12 months from the date it is awarded. Unused active Recognition Leave is paid to the employee upon separation or transfer to another state agency within this twelve-month period.
4. The value of Recognition Leave awarded will not be included in the computation of the \$2,000 cash award limit per employee per fiscal year.

C. A classified employee may receive the maximum monetary and the maximum Recognition Leave award in the same fiscal year.

## III. AWARD CRITERIA FOR IMMEDIATE REWARD & RECOGNITION

Employees whose consistent behavior supports the agency's core values – accountability, integrity, effectiveness, innovation, excellent customer service, and diversity – are eligible to be nominated. Nominations for awards and recognition must meet at least one of the following criteria.

### A. Customer Service

1. Employees who consistently or proactively provide internal and/ or external customers with a level of service that exceeds customer expectations.

2. Employees who strive to solve the customer's problem while effectively communicating service options, policies, and procedures.
3. Employees who convert a dissatisfied customer (internal or external) into a satisfied one.
4. Employees who contribute outstanding efforts that benefit the work unit or the agency.
5. Employees who improve their communication, solicit feedback, and modify behavior or processes to become more customer service –oriented.

**B. Revenue/ Internal Process**

1. Employees who demonstrate unusual initiative or creative ability in developing and improving business processes, procedures, or policies resulting in substantially increased productivity, efficiency, economy, customer service and/ or a reduction in expenses.
2. Employees who recommend and help implement cost savings or efficiencies.
3. Employees who develop solutions to complex business problems or turn problems into opportunities.
4. Employees who streamline work processes in a manner that allows new duties and responsibilities to be incorporated into the agency without adding positions or increasing MEL.

**C. Teamwork**

1. Employees who demonstrate a commitment to quality results by successfully leading change and innovation, building teams, and developing and empowering people.
2. Employees who build trust, respect, and commitment among fellow team members.
3. Employees who work together to develop and implement strategies to resolve a work unit or agency crisis.
4. Employees who demonstrate a positive attitude, individual initiative, integrity, loyalty and/ or responsiveness to the needs of our customers and coworkers through consistent performance.

**D. Quality of Work Life**

1. Employees who demonstrate extraordinary performance and/ or contributions, which enhance VDSS' commitment to safety in the workplace for our employees and customers.
2. Employee who develop new ideas that improve employee on-the-job safety and enhance workplace morale in a cost effective manner.

**E. Team Results**

NOTE: For the purpose of this policy, a team is defined as a group of employees from the same division, a cross-functional group of employees, or a cross-divisional group of employees completing a designated task or project.

1. Teams who complete significant project milestones on multi-year projects.
2. Teams who complete small or major projects before the deadline and/or within budget.
3. Teams who demonstrate commitment to organizational values while delivering project results.

**IV. FACTORS TO BE CONSIDERED IN DETERMINING APPROPRIATE LEVEL OF AWARD**

- A. Once a determination for an award has been made, based on the criteria in Section III, the level of award must be determined.

B. Supervisors should identify and analyze specific criteria, either individually or in combination to determine the most appropriate award level. Guidelines are as follows:

<b>CASH &amp; LEAVE AMOUNTS</b>	<b>CASH &amp; LEAVE AMOUNT GUIDE</b>
<b>\$0 - \$200.00</b> or <b>1 - 2 Days</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Contribution is for a one-time, outstanding effort, which benefited VDSS and/or customers.</li> <li>• Provision of extraordinary workplace results in one time savings in time and/or money.</li> </ul>
<b>\$201.00 - \$500.00</b> or <b>3 - 4 Days</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of a small project before the deadline under extraordinary time pressure or circumstances.</li> <li>• Receipt of repeated recognition by a single customer for extraordinary service.</li> <li>• Provision of extraordinary workplace results with ongoing savings in time and/or money impacting one program area.</li> </ul>
<b>\$501.00 - \$1,000</b> or <b>4 - 5 Days</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of a major project (impacting a single program or functional area) before the deadline under extraordinary time pressure.</li> <li>• Receipt of repeated recognition by multiple customers for extraordinary service.</li> <li>• Provision of extraordinary workplace results with ongoing savings in time and/or money impacting more than one program area.</li> </ul>
<b>\$1,001.00 - \$2,000.00</b> or <b>5 Days</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of a major, multi-year project, or project milestones (impacting multiple programs or functional areas) before the deadline under extraordinary time pressure.</li> <li>• Formal recognition across the Commonwealth as a model for customer service.</li> <li>• Provision of extraordinary workplace results with ongoing savings in time and/or money impacting the overall organization.</li> </ul>

**V. Administration of Rewards**

- A. A Personnel Transaction Form (PTF) must be completed for each individual employee nominated for an award.
- B. For cross-functional teams working on a project, the manager of the team (Team Sponsor/nominator) may nominate any or all members of the team to recognize the contributions of the team. The nominator must coordinate the award costs with the Division Director of each team member, unless the nominator will use his or her division funds for the nominated employee(s)' awards.
  - a. The nomination should include a description of the team goals and a list of all the team members.
  - b. The nominator's name should be included on the PTF so that s/he can be notified by HR once the award has been processed.
  - c. PTFs for each individual being recognized must be signed by each employee's respective Division Director and the Director of the Division from which budget the award will be paid, if different.
  - d. If the nominator utilizes funds from his or her division to pay for awards to employees in other divisions, ATV forms should be included that confirm the transfer of funds to the nominated employee(s)' division to fund the award.
- C. Once the award has been approved by management and the Division of Finance (i.e., Budget), the Division Director should immediately submit the request to the Division of Human Resources using the Personnel Transaction Form. Upon receipt, HR will review and verify employee(s)' eligibility. HR will e-mail the Division Director confirmation of the effective date(s).

**A. CASH**

1. Once notified by HR, the Division Director, Team Sponsor/nominator or designee should notify and recognize the employee(s) timely, including apprising them of the pay dates for cash awards. Employees receiving team awards should be notified by the Team Sponsor/nominator in a team setting.
2. Cash awards will be processed by the Division of Finance upon the submission of a completed PTF from the Division of Human Resources. Awards will be paid in the next available pay cycle (10<sup>th</sup> or 25<sup>th</sup>) and available to the employee on the payday following the close of the pay cycle. Distribution will follow existing pay practices.
  - a. If the employee has direct deposit, the cash award will be directly deposited and an earnings statement will be issued via Payline on the next available regular pay date.
  - b. If an employee receives a paycheck, the cash award will be reflected in the pay check that is received on the next available regular payday.

**B. LEAVE**

1. Once notified by HR, the Division Director or designee should notify and recognize the employee(s) timely, including apprising them of the time limit for use of recognition leave (12 months).
  2. Recognition Leave must be entered into CIPPS and into PMIS.
    - a. The Division's Leave Coordinator will enter the leave into CIPPS.
    - b. Human Resources will enter the leave into PMIS using the PTF form.
- F.** Leave codes have been created by the Department of Accounts to enter and maintain Recognition Leave activity via the Leave Activity Reporting Form as follows:
- a. RE- Recognition Leave Earned – Recognition leave will be keyed into CIPPS by the Division's Leave Coordinator once it has been approved by the Division Director.
  - b. RT- Recognition Leave Taken – this will also be keyed by the Division's Leave Coordinator into CIPPS.

**VI. AUTHORITY AND INTERPRETATION**

- A.** This guidance is issued by the Virginia Department of Social Services, pursuant to the authority granted under the laws and regulation of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- B.** Quarterly reports on the utilization of this Guidance will be developed by the Division of Human Resources for review by the Employee Recognition Program Focus Group (ERP); who will conduct periodic evaluations on the Employee Recognition Program. See Fact Sheet....[ERP Fact Sheet.doc](#)
- C.** The Division of Human Resources is responsible for the official interpretation of this policy. Human Resources will maintain data on the use of this guidance to include program implementation, monitoring, and recommendation for program improvement as needed. Questions regarding this policy should be addressed to the Director of the Division of Human Resources.