

Awards and Commendations

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(Revised 10/24/2022)

I. Purpose

The Office of the Sheriff for Queen Anne's County expects a high level of professionalism for its employees. When employees exceed the minimum standards of the Office, it is appropriate for them to be commended. The official commendation of such performance, and the arrangement of appropriate publicity, is provided by the Office of the Sheriff to give full public recognition to those who have brought honor to themselves, the Office, and Queen Anne's County.

The purpose of this directive is to establish the types of awards and commendations that will be awarded, those who are eligible for each award, and the mechanism for the selection of members who may have obtained such recognition.

II. Policy

It is the policy of the Office of the Sheriff to identify those members of the Office who have exceeded standard levels of performance in specific areas of their duties and provide appropriate recognition in the form of awards and commendations. In addition, allied agency personnel may also be recognized through a Sheriff's commendation.

III. Awards Committee

The awards committee will consist of a minimum of five (5) members from the Office of the Sheriff who are **chosen** by the Chief Deputy, or his designee, and identified to all personnel upon selection. At least **three** of the members shall **be sworn personnel**.

One member of the board will be appointed "Awards Committee **Coordinator**" by the **Awards Committee**. Each board member will serve at the discretion of the Chief Deputy or his designee.

The **Awards Committee Coordinator** will maintain minutes of each meeting.

The Sheriff's Executive Assistant will order the appropriate plaques for each award and print all certificates.

The Quartermaster is responsible for ordering appropriate uniform pins and medals for the nominees as requested by the **Sheriff's Executive Assistant**.

The Awards Committee will meet periodically as directed by the **Awards Committee Coordinator** to consider all recommendations **and nominations received** throughout the year (at least three times per year). The Awards Committee is given access to all information regarding each nominee recommended and may investigate the circumstances surrounding the recommendation in any manner it deems necessary to verify information.

The Awards Committee **Coordinator** forwards final recommendations/**nominations** and the results of their investigations to the Sheriff by way of the Chief Deputy or his designee through interoffice correspondence **for review as a courtesy**.

IV. Nominating Procedures for Awards and Commendations

It is the responsibility of each Sergeant and all Division Commanders to nominate members of their respective units for appropriate awards. However, all members of the Office of the Sheriff, regardless of rank, are encouraged to recognize outstanding performance of sworn personnel, civilian personnel, allied agency personnel, and business/community leaders.

V. Awards Nomination Form

Nominations must be submitted in writing to the **Awards Committee Coordinator** by utilizing the appropriate Nominations Form (**found on PowerDMS**) which shall be maintained in electronic format. Once the form is completed and submitted, containing all appropriate information, the **Awards Committee Coordinator** shall maintain the form in an accessible file. The nominations can be submitted throughout the calendar year in question; however, will not be considered after January 10th of the following year as the Awards Banquet/Gala will be held in February or March of each year (if no schedule conflicts arise). The **Awards Committee Coordinator** will retain all submissions received for consideration on file for a minimum of three years.

VI. Award Nomination Selections

The **Awards Committee Coordinator** will convene the Awards Committee at least three times per year to consider nominations and to prepare for the awards banquet. Award nominations will be reviewed by the Awards Committee Board no later than January following the calendar year in question. The winning nominees will be determined by a majority vote from the board members for each selected award. **The Award Committee Coordinator will abstain from voting unless there is a tie vote.** Upon completion of the nominations for the calendar year, recommendations/**nominations along with any supporting documentation**, will be forwarded to the Chief Deputy, or designee, through written interoffice correspondence **as a courtesy for review by the Sheriff**.

If an Awards Committee Board Member is nominated by another agency employee, the affected board member shall excuse themselves from the board meeting and the vote for that particular award nomination. The board members can return to the meeting once the vote has taken place. This is done to maintain a fair and impartial voting process. A board member is not permitted to vote themselves in for an award. A submission for a board member must be submitted by another board member or other member of the Office of the Sheriff not affected by the nomination. A majority vote shall prevail to award the nomination for a particular award.

VII. Written Notification of Award Nominees

Once nominees have been selected by the Awards Committee, the Awards Committee Coordinator will be forward nominations to the Chief Deputy or his designee by way of written interoffice correspondence and include a complete list of each award recipient. The nominations will then be forwarded to the Sheriff for a final review and approval. All nominations submitted will be accompanied by the original recommendation and any supporting documentation. Once a final selection of award nominees has been made, the Sheriff's Executive Assistant shall immediately mail written notification to all award recipients acknowledging their selection of an award and to request their attendance at the annual awards banquet. The written correspondence shall NOT reveal what type of award will be given – just that the selected individual shall receive an award.

VIII. Maintenance of Records

Once the award nominee selections are final, the Awards Committee Coordinator will prepare and forward a final electronic copy of the approved nominations to the Sheriff's Executive Assistant for permanent record keeping within the Sheriff's Office. Additionally, copies shall be maintained in the nominees' personnel files.

A PowerPoint presentation may be developed and/or created by the Sheriff's Executive Assistant, with assistance from the Public Information Officer, for presentation at the yearly awards banquet.

IX. Awards Banquet

All Awards and Commendations will be presented during the Annual Awards Banquet Ceremony in February/March of the calendar year following the nominations if possible. The date, time, and location of the Awards Ceremony will depend on facility availability but will occur no later than the end of March each calendar year. If this is not feasible, the Sheriff or designee will present any awards and commendations as soon as possible.

The Awards Committee will be responsible for planning and making all necessary arrangements for the Annual Awards Ceremony. This shall be accomplished financially through fundraisers and Office of the Sheriff funds allotted within the budget.

X. Awards Order of Precedent

The following awards and uniform pins are to be worn on the uniform in order of precedence. The order in this policy will show from the highest award to the lowest award in succession. It is noted that this policy will also show what each award recipient shall receive at the Annual Awards Banquet for each award.

1.	Medal of Honor Award	Medal, Plaque, Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
2.	DFC Jason Schwenz Award	Medal, Plaque, Certificate
3.	Deputy of the Year Award	Plaque, Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
4.	Legion of Honor Award	Plaque, Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
5.	Purple Heart Award	Medal, Plaque, Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
6.	Lifesaving Award	Plaque, Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
7.	Sheriff's Commendation Award	Plaque, Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
8.	Meritorious Unit Citation	Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
9.	Outstanding Patrol Performance Award	Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
10.	Narcotics Enforcement Award	Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
11.	DUI Enforcement Award	Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
12.	K9 Commendation Award	Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
13.	The Patriot Award	Bar Pin, Certificate <i>(One Time Award)</i>
14.	Distinguished Volunteer Service Award	Plaque, Certificate
15.	Honor Graduate Award	Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
16.	Years of Service Award	Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
17.	Civilian Service Employees Award	Plaque, Bar Pin/Number, Certificate
18.	Exceptional Driving Skills Award	Certificate Only
19.	Business Owners' Service Award	Plaque, Certificate
20.	Allied Agency or Civilian Recognition Award	Plaque, Certificate

XI. Order of Wear on Uniform

All ribbons shall be worn on the uniform on the right side above the name plate. All ribbons shall be worn from top to bottom in order of precedence (highest to lowest). All previously issued ribbons for the Office of the Sheriff personnel that have been re-issued under this policy may exchange their older ribbons for new ones pertaining to the appropriate award. Awards issued to deputies from outside agencies may only be worn at the discretion of the Sheriff.

XII. Award Prerequisites

A. Medal of Honor Award



The Medal of Honor is awarded to deputies who distinguish themselves through extraordinary bravery, heroism, and selflessness. The deputy must have been award of the imminent threat to their own personal safety and have acted “Above and Beyond the Call of Duty,” at the risk of their own personal safety and/or their life. The nominee receives a Medal, Plaque, Bar Pin or Number, and Certificate.

NOTE: The nominee for this award shall be considered for entry into the Maryland Sheriff’s Association Deputy of the Year Award, which takes place at the Annual Maryland Sheriff’s Association Banquet.

B. DFC Jason Schwenz Award

The “DFC Jason Schwenz Award” is presented to members of the Queen Anne’s County Office of the Sheriff who have made extraordinary contributions to law enforcement throughout their tenure with the Queen Anne’s County Office of the Sheriff and who exemplify the character and dedication of Deputy First Class Jason Schwenz, as defined by the Schwenz Memorial Foundation (SWF), by consistently performing above and beyond their required duties. This shall be considered one of the most prestigious awards given to a deputy in the QAC Office of the Sheriff due to the ultimate sacrifice given by DFC Schwenz. Nominations shall be received by the Awards Committee then forwarded to the Chief Deputy for vetting by the Sheriff. All nominations approved by the Sheriff will be forwarded to the Schwenz Memorial Foundation who will make the final selection. Recipients will receive a Medal, Plaque, and Certificate which will be ordered by the Sheriff’s Executive Assistant and paid for by the Queen Anne’s County Office of the Sheriff. The Schwenz Family will also be invited to the Gala to present the award to the recipient. The recipient of the Award remains confidential until the Awards Ceremony.

C. Deputy of the Year Award

The Deputy of the Year Award is presented at the annual awards banquet to a Deputy in recognition of his/her outstanding overall performance during the prior calendar year. The Awards Committee shall take into consideration the prior year’s statistical data when considering nominees for this award. The recipient receives a plaque, bar pin or number, and certificate. As well, the recipient’s name is engraved onto a metal plate and placed on a permanent plaque within the Office of the Sheriff.

D. Legion of Honor Award



The Legion of Honor Award is presented to deputies who have affected the arrest or assisted in the capture/arrest of a person who was a major threat and/or risk to the community. The recipient receives a plaque, bar pin or number and certificate.

E. Purple Heart Award



The Purple Heart Award shall be awarded to deputies who are injured while serving in an official capacity as a Law Enforcement Officer. The injury sustained must have been as a result of a life-threatening situation, or a permanent injury received as a result of any official action or self-sacrifice, and not by carelessness on the part of the deputy. The recipient receives a metal, plaque, bar pin or number, and certificate.

F. Lifesaving Award



The Lifesaving Award is presented to deputies for saving human life, whereas, if not for the direct action of the deputy, in all probability the life would not have been saved. Documentation and other supportive evidence, such as statements from physicians, witnesses, and/or other deputies should be included with the original recommendation. If a deputy's action led to the prolonging of life to the extent that the victim was released to the care of medical authorities, he/she is also eligible to receive this award even though the victim may expire at a later time. The recipient receives a plaque, bar pin or number, and certificate.

NOTE: The recipient of this award shall be considered for entry into the Maryland Sheriff's Association Deputy of the Year Award, which takes place at the Annual Maryland Sheriff's Association Banquet. Proper applications and documentation must be filed separately.

G. Sheriff's Commendation Award



The Sheriff's Commendation Award is awarded to any member or unit of the Queen Anne's County Office of the Sheriff, or allied agency personnel, for an outstanding accomplishment that resulted in improved administration, operations, or substantial savings in manpower or operational costs, where the recipient or recipients have gone above and beyond the requirement of his/her normal assignment to contribute to a more effective and efficient law enforcement service, or for outstanding performance that brought great credit to the Office of the Sheriff and/or Queen Anne's County in a case of unusual public interest.

This award is solely decided upon and selected by the Sheriff and not by the Awards Committee. However, the Awards Committee may submit nominations to the Sheriff for consideration. The recipient receives a plaque, bar pin or number, and certificate. If an allied agency member is nominated to receive this award, the recipient member shall receive a plaque and certificate only – not a uniform bar.

H. Meritorious Unit Citation Award



The Meritorious Unit Citation Award is given to only ONE (1) unit per year within the Office of the Sheriff, which has gone above and beyond the call of duty in the performance of their law enforcement responsibilities. For purposes of this award, a unit is defined as any division, unit, group, or team that works together to accomplish a common goal. The unit selected for this prestigious award should have displayed exemplary performance throughout the calendar year. All units within the Office of the Sheriff are eligible for this award to include Administrative Services, Field Operations, Support Services, Sheriff's Resource Unit, School Resource Officers, Criminal Investigations, Drug Task Force, K9, Circuit Court Security, the S.W.A.T. Team, and the Civilian Administrative Staff. The recipients receive a bar pin or number and certificate.

I. Outstanding Patrol Performance Award



The Outstanding Patrol Performance Award is presented to one (1) patrol squad from the Field Operations Division which has made outstanding contributions toward keeping the communities safe through criminal and/or traffic enforcement, by performing an exceptional amount and/or quality of law enforcement activity, developing and implementing effective operational strategies or tactics, or consistently conducting skillful or persevering investigation of an arduous or complex task. As additional criteria for this award, the Awards Committee shall take into consideration yearly statistical performance when comparing all patrol squads for the entire calendar year in their law enforcement responsibilities. Each member of the recipient squad receives a bar pin or number and certificate.

J. Narcotics Enforcement Award



The Narcotics Enforcement Award is given to up to two (2) deputies with the highest statistical performance in Narcotics investigations leading to the arrest of persons for violations of the Controlled Dangerous Substance laws. Statistical performance includes on-view arrests and charging documents issued, which need not be served to get credit for the arrest. **Deputies assigned to the Queen Anne's County Drug Task Force are excluded from consideration for this award.** The recipient receives a bar pin or number and certificate.

NOTE: The deputy with the top statistical performance for the award throughout the Office of the Sheriff will additionally be awarded the opportunity to attend aggressive Narcotic Enforcement Training (when available) to include but not limited to: The "Top Gun" Undercover Narcotics Investigator School given at Ft. Indiantown Gap Military Training Base in Pennsylvania, and/or attend the MACLOLEN Annual Narcotics Conference in Ocean City, Maryland. The Awards Committee board members will forward the nominated deputy selected to the training coordinator who shall be responsible for registering the top award recipient for this training.

K. DUI Enforcement Award



The DUI Enforcement Award is given to up to two (2) deputies with the highest statistical performance in DUI/DWI investigations leading to the arrest of persons for violations of all laws pertaining to DUI/DWI. Statistical performance includes on-view arrests and any charging documents issued at a later time. The recipient receives a **bar pin or number** and certificate.

NOTE: The deputy with the top statistical performance throughout the Office of the Sheriff in this area will additionally be awarded the opportunity to attend the Annual MADD Awards banquet. The Awards Committee board members will forward the nominated deputy selection the training coordinator who shall be responsible for registering the top award recipient for this training.

L. K-9 Commendation Award



The K9 Commendation Award is given to one (1) deputy per year with the K9 Unit who displays exceptional expertise and performance in the areas related to K9 enforcement, and who displays great credit upon the Office of the Sheriff. The recipient receives a **bar pin or number** and certificate.

NOTE: If feasible, the awarded deputy shall be considered to attend additional K9 training when available.

The Awards Committee board members will forward the nominated deputy selection to the training coordinator who shall be responsible for registering the award recipient for this training.

DISCLAIMER: The Office of the Sheriff Awards presented at the Annual Gala/Awards Banquet are independent of award nominations/submissions/selections for MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving), MSA (Maryland Sheriff's Association), NRA, or any other local, state, or national awards not directly associated with the Queen Anne's County Office of the Sheriff.

M. The Patriot Award



The Patriot Award is a one (1) time award given to each new deputy or new civilian **employee** for their dedication to the Defense of the United States Constitution, the State of Maryland, and the local laws and ordinances of Queen Anne's County. Additionally, this award is given for the Protection of the United States Flag. The recipient receives a bar pin and certification.

NOTE: Each deputy or civilian is given this award only once. When a new deputy or new civilian employee is hired, this award will be issued at the next Annual Awards Banquet/Gala to that individual.

N. Distinguished Volunteer Service Award

The Distinguished Volunteer Service Award shall be awarded to a deputy and/or citizen who have selflessly volunteered themselves and their time to improve services within the community in which they live/work. Furthermore, the Office of the Sheriff seeks to further the acceptance of these duties through recognition of both deputies and citizens whose actions have contributed to the accomplishment of the Office's mission or the safety of the community. The recipient receives a plaque and certificate.

NOTE: This award is now combined with the Citizen Recognition Award from previous policy.

O. Honor Graduate Award



The Honor Graduate Award is awarded to one (1) deputy in a Police Training Academy who consistently displays exceptional performance while in training. The deputy who is awarded this honor shall be selected with the top statistical performance when compared to other trainees in the areas of grade point average, physical skills average, shooting, testing scores, driving scores, hand-to-hand combat, physical performance testing, and practical application scores.

If there is only one training in a police academy for the calendar year, the sole deputy to be selected for this award shall maintain a grade point average for all categories listed with a minimum of 90%. The training coordinator maintains consistent interaction with these deputies while in the academy and therefore, he/she is best suited to nominate and/or provide documentation to the Awards Committee regarding this nomination. The recipient receives a **bar pin** and certificate.

P. Years of Service Award



The Years of Service Award shall be awarded to both sworn and civilian personnel for their years of service to the Office of the Sheriff, which shall proceed at five (5) year increments during employment. The recipient receives a **bar pin or number** and certificate.

Q. Civilian Service Employee Award



The Civilian Service Employee Award shall be awarded to a civilian staff member of the Office of the Sheriff for exceptional performance by civilian staff in the performance of their duties. The recipient receives a plaque, **bar pin or number**, and certificate.

R. Exceptional Driving Skills Citation

The Exceptional Driving Skills Citation is awarded to deputies who display safe driving skills for a period of five years in which the deputy has had no preventable departmental accidents, nor had any negative Job Observation Reports for bad driving habits. The recipient receives a certificate only.

S. Business Owner's Service Award

The Business Owner's Service award is awarded to businesses that have consistently contributed their time and support to Law Enforcement as well as their community. The recipient receives a plaque and certificate.

T. Sheriff's Quarterly Award

The Sheriff's Quarterly Award is awarded to any employee of the Office of the Sheriff for going above and beyond their normal duties and for displaying daily initiative to achieve the mission of the Office. **This award is solely decided upon and selected by the Sheriff and not by the Awards Committee.** The recipient receives a plaque and certificate. **The recipient's name is also engraved onto a metal plate and placed on a permanent plaque within the Office of the Sheriff.** This award may also be presented to the recipient at a Command Staff Meeting at the Sheriff's discretion.

U. Deputy of the Quarter

The Deputy of the Quarter Award is awarded to deputies who display exceptional performance in all areas of their job function for a particular quarter of the calendar year. This award shall be agreed upon unanimously by the Division Commanders. If a unanimous decision cannot be reached by the Division Commanders, the file of recommendations will be referred to the Sheriff and Chief Deputy for their decision on the recipient. The recipient receives a certificate. **The recipient's name is also engraved onto a metal plate and placed on a permanent plaque within the Office of the Sheriff.** The presentation to the recipient may be made during a Command Staff Meeting at the Sheriff's discretion.

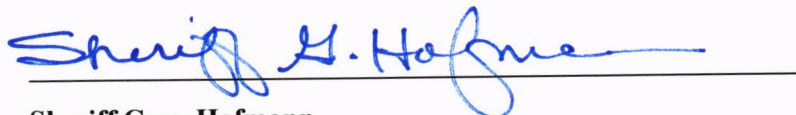
V. Hazardous Duty Citation

The Hazardous Duty Citation is given to members of the Office of the Sheriff who have worked during a time of crisis and or state of emergency during inclement weather. The recipients will receive a certificate only.

W. Allied Agency or Civilian Recognition Award

The Allied Agency or Civilian Recognition Award is given to Allied Agencies or civilians who have provided assistance to the Office of the Sheriff above and beyond their normal course of business, provided assistance to a deputy in distress, or made a significant contribution to the preservation of life, property or public welfare during a call for service in Queen Anne's County. The recipient will receive a plaque and certificate.

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| XIII. CALEA Reference: | None |
| XIV. Proponent Unit: | Awards Committee |
| XV. Cancellation: | Index Code 203 Dated 01/13/2020 |



Sheriff Gary Hofmann
Queen Anne's County Office of the Sheriff