

BATON ROUGE POLICE DEPARTMENT

General Order
No.113

Effective Date
11-01-1994

Revised Date
10-14-2019

Subject: Awards and Merit

Reviewed 10/10/19

POLICY

It is the policy of this Department to actively seek to recognize individual and collective acts above and beyond an officer's or units' assigned duties. This policy is designed not only to recognize heroic acts, but to reward those officers whose performance is outstanding and those who develop innovative and ingenious methods of furthering the goals and objectives of the Department.

The purpose of the Meritorious Awards Program is to create criteria and procedure for recognition of commendable acts, acts of valor, the saving of human life, exceptional service, and outstanding achievements performed by members of the Department while in the service of the community.

PROCEDURES

I. Meritorious Awards Review Board Established

- A. The Department has established a system of recommendation and review for acts that fit the general criteria above. It is in the best interest of the Department that outstanding officers be recognized so that their accomplishments set an example for all to follow. It is the responsibility of each and every officer to bring such acts to the Department's attention through the recommendation process.
- B. It is the Department's responsibility to document each recommendation to assure that no act fitting the enumerated criteria goes unrewarded, and to maintain the integrity of the awards so that their value is not lost or demeaned. To that end, the Meritorious Award Review Board has been established.
- C. Those chosen to administer this program will not take this responsibility lightly; it is a serious task. Police Officers routinely make sacrifices the public at large cannot fathom; therefore recognition by their peers is the highest honor an officer can achieve.
- D. Officers, regardless of rank, administrative position, or job function will be eligible for awards.

II. General Guidelines for Awards

- A. Only one award will be granted for any one act. In the event that an officer's action in any one particular incident qualifies him for more than one award (i.e., Life Saving, Medal of Merit), the higher medal will be awarded with qualifications for the lesser medal used as supporting basis. An exception is the awarding of a Service Injury Medal. In the event that injuries are inflicted on an officer during the action qualifying him for another award, then the Board may also consider awarding the officer the Service Injury Medal.

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- B. In the event that an officer's actions in separate incidents qualify him for the same medal, he will instead be awarded clusters to be attached to the original medal.
- C. Medals for plainclothes officers, in the form of a lapel pin, may also be issued with any medal and may be worn by those who receive the award when not in uniform. The lapel pin will be identical to the original uniform medal, except that it will be reduced in size to properly fit the coat lapel.
- D. Prior to the awards ceremony, the board members will be provided with a report from Internal Affairs regarding the administrative and criminal histories of each potential recipients. This is to ensure that there are no ongoing, open or pending investigations that may create controversy or conflict that would damage the positive image of the Baton Rouge Police Dept. If a candidate falls into this category, he/she will not be presented until the case has been dispositioned.

III. Meritorious Award Review Board

- A. The Board will consist of five (5) members from the Baton Rouge Police Department, selected by the Chief of Police to serve at his pleasure. This board will be directly responsible to the Chief of Police who will serve as Ex-officio Chairman.
 - 1. The chairman, appointed by the Chief of Police, will be responsible for the agenda of the Board.
 - 2. The Board will meet as often as necessary. The chairman will notify members of the time and place of each meeting.
- B. The level of recognition will be left to the good judgment and careful deliberations of the Board who will bear the responsibility of maintaining the integrity and honor of the awards. The recommendations of the Board will be forwarded to the Chief of Police for his approval and disposition.

IV. Recommendations for Awards

- A. A recommendation may be initiated by anyone who has information and knowledge of the facts of an incident in which outstanding acts have been performed by a commissioned police officer of the Baton Rouge Police Department.
 - 1. Officers in the supervisory level will be particularly cognizant of actions of subordinates that should be commended and are obliged to initiate award proceedings.

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2. When personnel in other divisions within the department in the course of their duties discover actions or acts that they believe to be commendable, they will forward the information on which his or her opinion is based to the commanding officer of the involved.
 - a. The commanding officer will investigate the circumstances and take any necessary action.
 - b. The report is to be reviewed by the division commander and then upon his endorsement, forwarded to the Chairman of the Meritorious Awards Review Board.

- B. Reports should state the facts of the event with sufficient detail to enable the members of the Board to make a proper evaluation and recommendation to the Chief of Police.
- C. Recommendations for awards must be submitted to the Board no later than three (3) months following the act for which the officer is recommended for recognition.
- D. The range officer will submit recommendations for the Firearm Award to the Chairman of the Board.
- E. Any member of the department who believes him/her or another officer is entitled to any of the departmental awards, but who has gone unrecognized will notify the Board. This notification must be in writing, with copies to the officer's chain of command.
- F. The selected members will be notified by the board.

V. Medal of Valor

- A. This is the highest award of the Baton Rouge Police Department, and will be presented for exceptional services only.
- B. Only those officers who have given their lives in the line of duty or who have performed acts considered beyond the call of duty under conditions where the chances of survival were remote will be eligible.
- C. In the event an officer loses his or her life in the line of duty, the award will be presented to the spouse and parents of the slain officer. If the officer is not married, the award will be given to his parents.
- D. It is the honor and duty of the Chief of Police to present this award upon final and complete recommendation of the Board.

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- E. The medal will be the standard military type and obtainable through the International Association of Chiefs of Police or one of the national suppliers of police uniforms and equipment.
 - 1. A metal bar will also be presented to surviving officers for uniform or plainclothes wear.
 - 2. A certificate will also be presented in conjunction with the Medal of Valor by the Chief of Police to the officer, spouse, and/or parents. This certificate, bearing the signature of the Mayor-President of East Baton Rouge Parish and issued by the Chief of Police will be presented on behalf of the citizens of Baton Rouge for bravery shown in the line of duty.

VI. Life Saving Award

- A. This award will be presented to a commissioned police officer for acts responsible for the saving of the lives or prevention of great bodily harm to one or more persons in any particular instance.
- B. The medal will be the standard military type and obtainable through the International Association of Chiefs of Police or one of the national suppliers of police uniforms and equipment.
 - 1. A metal bar will also be presented to surviving officers for uniform or plainclothes wear.
 - 2. A Life Saving Certificate, issued by the Chief of Police, will also be presented in conjunction with the medal.

VII. Service Injury Award

- A. This award will be presented to an officer who has been wounded or injured intentionally by other persons while in the performance of duty. The fact that the officer was on or off duty will have no bearing on the award.
- B. The medal will be the standard military type and obtainable through the International Association of Chiefs of Police or one of the national suppliers of police uniforms and equipment.
 - 1. A metal bar will also be presented to surviving officers for uniform or plainclothes wear.
 - 2. A Service Injury Certificate, issued by the Chief of Police, will also be presented in conjunction with the Service Injury Medal.

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VIII. Medal of Merit

- A. This award will be awarded for acts of courage and/or distinguished and meritorious achievement calling for a higher degree of dedication to duty, but which does not meet the degree of risk associated with the Medal of Valor.
- B. The Medal of Merit may be awarded for extraordinary and exemplary service in the performance of duty as a commissioned police officer.
 - 1. The dedication and diligence shown by the recipient while discharging his duties will govern recommendation for the award.
 - 2. It is not necessary that the extraordinary actions result in the saving of lives or have been performed at a risk to the recipient's life.
- C. The medal will be the standard military type and obtainable through the International Association of Chiefs of Police or one of the national suppliers of police uniforms and equipment.
 - 1. A metal bar will also be presented to surviving officers for uniform or plainclothes wear.
 - 2. A Merit Certificate, issued by the Chief of Police will also be presented in conjunction with the Medal of Merit to the recipient.

IX. Joe Sanchez Award

- A. This annual award, presented by the Chief of Police in memory of Joe Sanchez, will be awarded jointly to the outstanding uniformed officer and detective.
- B. Officers must distinguish themselves in the performance of duty throughout the year by exhibiting outstanding leadership, superior skill and ability, exemplary conduct and service to the community above and beyond the call of duty.
- C. Officers must be nominated by their immediate supervisor. This will include a written statement and supporting documentation of the officer's accomplishments and abilities.
- D. Officers will receive a plaque and certificate commemorating the award, a cash award, and a metal bar distinct in appearance and design signifying the accomplishment to be worn on the uniform or suit lapel.

X. Certificate of Commendation

- A. This award will be awarded to an individual officer or departmental unit for outstanding effort put forth to excel and achieve above normal results in the performance of duty.

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- B. The Certificate of Commendation is awarded for the diligent pursuit of a suspect; the alertness, skill or the application of skills, and/or time beyond the normal duty requirements to successfully complete a difficult investigation or assignment, or the apprehension of a felon in the commission of a crime.
- C. It may also be issued for an exceptional contribution to the progress of the department or the furtherance of departmental goals and objectives, including the submission of an idea, device, or method that has substantially improved the Department.
- D. This award will consist of a framed certificate presented to the recipient.

XI. Marksmanship Award

- A. Qualifications for this award will be based on the results from the Range Officer based on the standards of the National Rifle Association.
- B. Each officer's score during annual firearms qualification will determine if an award is merited, and if so, which pin will be awarded. Upon successful completion of the annual qualification, the Range Officer will present the Board with a record of individual scores. The Chairman will then forward such information to the Chief of Police so that proper certificates and bar pins may be presented accordingly.
- C. This award will consist of a brass bar pin to be worn on the left pocket flap underneath the badge and a certificate of accomplishment. This award will only be worn while in uniform.

XII. Safe Driving Medal

- A. This medal will be presented to any officer who operates a departmental vehicle for a period of five (5) years without being involved in a preventable accident. This award is given on behalf of the citizens of Baton Rouge and the Baton Rouge Police Department.
- B. This award will be presented in the form of a medal bar the same size and shape as the Life Saving Medal, except for the color which will represent each five year period of safe driving.
- C. A Safe Driving Certificate will also be presented in conjunction with the Safe Driving Medal.

XIII. Awards by Other Organizations

- A. Recommendations for awards and commendations set forth in this program will not restrict or limit awards presented to police officers by civic organizations, such as "Officer of the Month or Year" Awards.

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- B. Organizations requesting such information will be furnished the necessary facts to facilitate the award by the officer's superiors through the Chief of Police.
- C. The Department's nominee for Police Officer of the Year selected by Parade Magazine, in conjunction with the International Association of Chiefs of Police, will be selected from those officers who have been presented the described awards and medals within the past year. The selection made by the Board subject to the approval of the Chief of Police.

XIV. Annual Chief's Awards

- A. Outstanding Communications Officer
- B. Outstanding Civilian Employee
- C. Outstanding Humanitarian of the Year (This honor can be awarded to either a Sworn or Non-sworn employee.)
- D. Supervisor
- E. Procedure and Criteria for award
 - 1. Any civilian employee or communications officer who distinguishes themselves in the performance of duty throughout the year by exhibiting outstanding leadership, superior skill and ability, exemplary conduct, and service to the community above and beyond the call of duty will be eligible.
 - 2. The commander of the communications division and commanders of any civilian employees will submit their recommendations to the board annually. The recommendation should include a written narrative and supporting documentation.
 - 3. The board will review the nominations and make a recommendation to the Chief of Police.