

## HONORARY AWARDS

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### I. Purpose

A. This Directive implements the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Honorary Awards Program (Program) by assigning responsibilities and establishing policies for the granting of DHS's 14 most significant honorary recognitions.

B. Secretarial awards provided by this Directive provide recognition for outstanding contributions by DHS employees and external partners. The DHS management team and DHS line supervisors are encouraged to assist the Secretary of Homeland Security in identifying candidates who should be recognized for significant contributions, outstanding achievements, acts of valor or special service to the Department and the nation.

### II. Scope

A. The Program applies to all DHS employees who meet the definition of "employee" under 5 U.S.C. § 2105, individuals in the DHS Senior Executive Service, DHS employees paid from non-appropriated fund instrumentalities, and U.S. Coast Guard military employees.

B. Where specifically referenced, this Directive also makes employees of other military services or agencies, State or local responders, and private citizens, organizations and DHS contractors eligible for certain honorary awards.

### III. Authorities

A. Core authorities for this Program are specified at 5 U.S.C. Chapter 45 (Incentive Awards), at 5 CFR Part 451 (Awards)

B. DHS Directive 255-02, "Employee Recognition"

### IV. Responsibilities

A. The Secretary of Homeland Security has overall responsibility for the Program.

B. The **Deputy Secretary of Homeland Security**:

1. Designs, implements, supervises and evaluates the overall Program.
2. Reviews and recommends to the Secretary as appropriate DHS Component nominations for DHS honorary awards (see [DHS Instruction 255-01-001](#), Appendix A) and honorary Presidential-level awards (see [DHS Instruction 255-01-001](#), Appendix B). The Deputy Secretary and the Secretary reserve the right to initiate such recommendations.

C. The **Under Secretary for Management**, acting through the **Chief Human Capital Officer**:

Provides administrative support for the Department's Honorary Awards Program.

D. **Heads of the DHS Components**:

1. Provide leadership, direction and supervision over the Program within their Component, including program planning, budgeting and evaluation.
2. Establish supplemental recognition devices and honorary awards adapted to their mission and organization.
3. Endorse to the DHS Chief Human Capital Officer Component nominations for any honorary awards above the Component level.
4. Design and conduct an appropriate annual Component award ceremony consistent with this Directive. Such ceremonies are encouraged to reinforce Component mission and traditions and to honor Component employees with Component awards that reflect the special achievements of its employees.

## V. Policy and Requirements

A. By recognizing employee achievements, this Program is an important tool for sustaining and improving performance, increasing morale and supporting retention of a high quality workforce.

B. Honorary awards provide a way to reinforce and celebrate the values of the Department. Components may create honorary awards that recognize accomplishments and honor cross-component cooperation and teamwork in meeting individual component goals, and Department-wide objectives.

C. Generally, honorary awards are recognition of employee contributions that are both significant and beyond the scope of achievement normally expected as part of the employee's job.

D. Both an honorary and a monetary or time-off award may be granted to an employee for the same act or achievement if the criteria for each award are met.

E. Employees may not grieve or appeal a decision not to grant an honorary award. This does not extinguish or lessen any right or remedy under 5 U.S.C. Chapter 12, subchapter II, 5 U.S.C. Chapter 71, or any of the laws referred to in 5 U.S.C. § 2302.

F. Honorary awards shall be given due weight in qualifying and selecting employees for promotion as required by 5 U.S.C. § 3362.

G. To enhance the value and importance of honorary awards, formal award ceremonies should, if possible, be held as a means of publicly identifying the recipients. Formal award ceremonies should recognize only non-monetary honorary awards. Any request to present monetary awards at a public award ceremony would be an exception to policy and must be approved in advance by the Under Secretary for Management.

H. DHS Components shall not title a Component-established award or award program as a "Department of Homeland Security" or "Secretary of Homeland Security," award, either in whole or in part.

I. Requirements and procedures for the granting of honorary awards shall be governed by [DHS Instruction Guide 255-01-001](#).

## VI. Questions

Address any questions or concerns regarding this Directive to the Office of the Chief Human Capital Officer.

  
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Michael Chertoff  
Department of Homeland Security

10/31/12  
Date