



1.3.202 INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

References:

INS Policy Statement, [1.3.202 INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION](#)
April 1999

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1. Purpose

The purpose of this procedure is to implement the policy statement by outlining responsibilities and procedures to be followed relative to award recognition.

2. Definitions

See definitions in **Attachment A.**

3. Background

Not applicable.

4. Procedures

See detailed procedures in **Attachment B.**

5. Responsibilities

See responsibilities in **Attachment C.**

6. Cancellation, Revision, Etc.

This procedure supersedes and cancels any previous guidance, instructions, or notices that address Incentive Awards/Employee Recognition. There is a newly issued DOJ Order on Awards. However, it is anticipated that reaching agreement with INS employee Unions concerning revisions to this INS policy and procedure to conform with the new Order may take a substantial period of time. Therefore, continue to use only this AM, published in April, 1999, for guidance until it is revised and published again through the AM process.

7. Effective Date

This procedure is effective for all INS managers and supervisors on the date of signature, and shall be reviewed by April 2001 by the Assistant Commissioner for Human Resources and Development to determine if it should be updated or canceled.

8. Information

The proponent of this policy is the Director, Human Resources Branch, INS Headquarters. However, questions or inquiries regarding application of this procedure in particular situations should first be addressed to the Labor and Employee Relations staffs of servicing Human Resources Offices. Labor and Employee Relations staffs may address questions or inquiries to the Human Resources Branch, INS Headquarters, 202-514-2520.

Approved April 1999 by:
Carol A. Hall
Assistant Commissioner
Human Resources and Development

Attachment A - PROCEDURES

DEFINITIONS
INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION
1.3.202

A. Employee means an employee as defined by 5 U.S.C. 2105, except that Senior Executive Service (SES) employees are not eligible for awards covered by this regulation other than those for suggestions, inventions, Special Act or Service Awards, or honorary awards. Where appropriate, employee coverage limitations are further explained in pertinent sections.

B. Contribution means an accomplishment achieved through an individual or group effort in the form of a suggestion, invention or a special act or service

in the public interest, connected with or related to official employment, which contributes to the efficiency, economy or other improvement of Government operations, or results in a significant reduction in paperwork.

C. **Honorary Award** means an award consisting of a medal, certificate, plaque citation, emblem, pin, or other item that has an award or honor connotation.

D. **Superior Accomplishment Award** means a monetary or non-monetary award for a contribution resulting in tangible benefits or savings and/or intangible benefits to the Government (e.g., awards for adopted suggestions or special acts or services).

E. **Interagency Award** means an incentive award for an approved contribution from an employee or employees of another agency.

F. **Length of service** award means an award, usually consisting of a certificate and/or pin or other ornament, given for years of service in the Federal Government.

G. **Quality step increase** or "QSI", means an increase in an employee's rate of basic pay from one rate of the grade of his or her position to the next higher rate of that grade in accordance with section 5336 of Title 5, United States Code. A QSI shall not be required but may be granted only to an employee who receives an outstanding rating of record (performance rating).

H. **Special Act or Service** means a contribution or accomplishment in the public interest which is (a) a non-recurring contribution either within or outside of job responsibilities; (b) a scientific achievement; or (c) an act of heroism.

Attachment B - PROCEDURES

INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

1.3.202

1. **General**

The Service's suggestion program has been established to encourage all employees to contribute ideas which directly increase the Service's efficiency and economy, or which directly increase the effectiveness with which we carry out our program and mission. All employees are eligible for awards for adopted suggestions.

A. **Suggestion Form**

Suggestions should be submitted on Form G-115. Instructions for its use are printed on the form.

B. **Suggestion Criteria**

The suggestion must result from an idea that the employee is not normally expected to contribute during the performance of the duties of his/her position. It can exceed normal expectations by being outside of or beyond what the employee's supervisor expects of him/her in daily performance. In rare instances, contributions within the employee's job responsibilities may be awarded if they are so superior or meritorious as to warrant this special recognition. In such cases, the amount of the award shall be less than the full amount normally awarded. The elements and standards established under a performance appraisal system may be used as the basis for determining what is normally expected of the employee occupying the position. The Incentive Awards Administrator, in conjunction with the Assistant Directors, Human Resources (or Chief, Headquarters Human Resources for Headquarters employees) and, if considered appropriate, one manager in the suggester's organization or the activity most affected by the suggestion will decide if the suggestion is within or outside of the suggester's normal duties.

C. **Ideas that should not be submitted through the suggestion program:**

- 1) Suggestions dealing with the creation, use, or revision of Service forms. Such ideas should be submitted on Form G-179 under the Forms Improvement Program. The Chief, Policy Directives and Instructions, will submit an annual report in the activity as required by paragraph 34A of these procedures.

The Chief, Policy Directives and Instructions, shall submit to the appropriate Incentive Awards Administrator, forms suggestions which result in \$250 or more tangible savings or comparable intangible savings. Such suggestions will be considered for a cash award.

- 2) Ideas concerning services and benefits to employees working conditions, maintenance of buildings and facilities, and normal or routine safety practices. This would include suggestions concerning vending machines, rest rooms, parking facilities, air conditioning, furnishings, uniforms, cleaning and painting of facilities, removal of safety hazards, etc.

Employees should submit such ideas in memorandum form to their supervisors. The supervisor will be responsible for ensuring that they reach the proper individual for decision and that the employee is informed of the results. An idea handled in this manner which is accepted for use and renders significant benefits to the Service, may be recommended by the approving officer for an award in accordance with the criteria for cash and honorary awards.

2. Awards

An employee whose suggestion is adopted shall be presented with a Suggestion Certificate, Form M-189. In addition, a cash award also may be granted when either the minimum tangible or intangible benefits are met, as discussed below.

A. Tangible Benefits

The minimum cash award is \$25 for an adopted suggestion resulting in tangible benefits of at least \$250. The Tangible Benefits Scale in Exhibit 1 should be used to determine the appropriate award whenever tangible benefits are derived. The Intangible Benefits Scale, also in Exhibit 1, may also be used for an additional award if the suggestion warrants it.

B. Intangible Benefits

In order to qualify for the minimum cash award of \$25, a suggestion having intangible benefits must meet the moderate value/limited application criteria outlined in the Intangible Benefits Scale. Awards for suggestions having higher intangible benefits should be made by reference to this scale also.

3. Classes of Suggestions

Suggestions are divided into three classes within this Service based on the scope or applicability of the suggestion.

A. Class I suggestions are those with applicability in one district, sector, or lesser organizational entity within these offices. When a Class I suggestion is approved, it may be considered for region-wide use (Class II). Also, Class I suggestions are those with applicability only in an overseas district, the Training Academies or other similar Headquarters entity (e.g., Service Center and Asylum Office) that is not located in Headquarters.

B. Class II suggestions are those with applicability only in a regional office, or in more than one district or sector within a region. When a Class II suggestion is approved, it may be considered for Service-wide use (Class III).

C. Class III suggestions are those with applicability only in Headquarters, or in more than one region.

4. Routing and Control of Suggestions

The following routing and control of suggestions should enable for their expeditious review:

A. Class I suggestions should be sent directly to the appropriate District, Director, Chief Patrol Agent or Headquarters field official, for review. The receiving official will acknowledge Class I suggestions. A copy of the suggestion and acknowledgment will be sent to the regional Incentive Awards Administrator for record and reporting purposes as soon as possible after receipt of the suggestion. The head of overseas districts and other Headquarters entities will furnish copies to the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator.

B. Regional Incentive Awards Administrators will receive, acknowledge, and control Class II suggestions and Class III suggestions with regional application.

C. The Headquarters administrator will receive, acknowledge and control Class III suggestions received from regional administrators or from suggesters whose suggestion has only Headquarters application within the Washington, D.C. Headquarters.

D. When acknowledging suggestions, Form G-628, "Acknowledgment of Employee Suggestion" may be used.

5. Evaluation Process

Suggestions will be processed and evaluated as follows:

A. Headquarters and Regional Office (Class II and III Suggestions)

- 1) The Incentive Awards Administrator will send the suggestion to the head of the lead activity, i.e., the activity most affected by the suggestion. Form G-629, "Suggestion Referral" may be used for this purpose.
- 2) If needed, the comments from the district, sector and/or regional level will be obtained by the lead activity.

- 3) If the suggestion impacts on more than one activity, the lead activity will coordinate the evaluation with the other activities in the region/ Headquarters.
In this regard, it may be beneficial to utilize a committee composed of representatives from all the activities.
- 4) The "Suggestion Evaluation" portion of Form G-115 should address each point raised by the suggester and clearly reflect the basis for adoption or non-adoption. If a suggestion cannot be implemented even if it appears to be a good idea it should not be approved. The Form G-115 will be signed by the head of the lead activity. When the recommended award is in excess of \$2,000 (see paragraph 5a(6)) it must be referred to the Service Incentive Awards Board for approval of the award amount.
- 5) If the suggestion is approved, the evaluator in the lead activity will return the suggestion file, including the completed and signed Form G-115, to the Incentive Awards Administrator, and initiate appropriate implementation action. Awards are certified for payment in accordance with current fiscal authorities. Therefore, an adopted suggestion that involves a cash award must include a statement from the head of the lead activity in the evaluation package that funds are available in the budget of **the benefiting organization (s)**.
- 6) If upon analysis of cost benefits, it is determined that the award is in excess of \$2,000, the evaluated suggestion will be returned to the Incentive Awards Administrator for referral to the INS Incentive Awards Board, which has authority to approve awards in excess of \$2,000 to a maximum of \$5,000. Additionally, recommendations for suggestion awards in excess of \$5,000 must be personally endorsed by the Commissioner, following the Board's review, and forwarded to the Attorney General for approval.
- 7) If the suggestion is not approved, the evaluator in the lead activity will provide valid reasons that are tactful and courteous in the evaluation portion of Form G-115, and return the suggestion file, including the completed and signed form, to the Incentive Awards Administrator. A copy of the evaluation is to be sent to the suggester.
- 8) The Incentive Awards Administrator will notify an employee directly of adoption or non-adoption of his/her suggestion and ensure the preparation and presentation of an award, as appropriate. Form G-631, "Transmittal of Approved Incentive Awards Items" may be used for transmitting awards.
- 9) A copy of each adopted Class II and Class III suggestion, and related materials, should be forwarded by the Incentive Awards Administrator to each of the other regional Incentive Awards Administrators. This sharing procedure will allow other regions to determine applicability of an adopted suggestion from another region.

B. District and Sector Offices (Class I Suggestions)

- 1) If needed, the comments from subordinate levels within a district/sector may be obtained by the evaluator(s). A committee may also be utilized for the evaluation, if desired.
- 2) The "Suggestion Evaluation" portion of Form G-115 should address each point raised by the suggestion and clearly reflect the basis for adoption or non-adoption. Form G-115 will be signed by the District Director/Chief Patrol Agent, except when the recommended award is in excess of \$2,000. (See paragraph 5B(4) below.)
- 3) If the suggestion is approved, the evaluator will send the completed Form G-115 to the suggester with a copy to the Incentive Awards Administrator for preparation of an award, as appropriate and for record and reporting purposes. Form G-631, "Transmittal of Approved Incentive Awards Items" may be used for transmitting awards. Appropriate action will be taken by the district/sector to implement the suggestion. Awards are certified for payment in accordance with current fiscal authorities. Therefore, an adopted suggestion that involves a cash award must include a statement in the evaluation package that funds are available in the budget of the benefiting organization (s).
- 4) If upon analysis of cost benefits, it is determined that the award is in excess of \$2,000, the evaluated suggestion will be routed through appropriate awards administrator(s) for referral to the Service Incentive Awards Board. For awards in excess of \$5,000, see paragraph 5A(6).
- 5) If the suggestion is not approved, the evaluation will provide valid reasons that are tactful and courteous in the evaluation portion of Form G-115, and send it to the suggester. The evaluator will also send a copy of the form to the Incentive Awards Administrator for record and reporting purposes.

C. Copies of awards/commendations for approved suggestions will be filed in the employee's Official Personnel Folder (right side) and other folders as may be required under personnel programs.

6. Group Suggestion Awards

When more than one person is involved in the contribution, the total amount of a cash award to be shared normally should be the same as it would be had only one person been involved or the value of the contribution to the agency. An exception may be made when the amount to be shared would be too small to be meaningful and motivating. Group awards for Class I and II suggestions are approved, certified and processed in a region. Awards for Class III suggestions are approved, certified and processed at Headquarters. A monetary award to an SES member requires the approval of the Deputy Attorney General.

7. Inter-Bureau and Inter-Departmental Referrals

When a suggestion is applicable to more than one bureau, or to other Government agencies, it will be referred by the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator (following the required Service review, comment, etc.) to the Executive Secretary of the Department's Incentive Awards Board, who will coordinate the referral to the appropriate organizations. When a suggestion is applicable to only one other bureau, the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator (following the required Service review, comment, etc.) will forward the suggestion directly to that bureau for evaluation.

8. Suggestion Timetable

The following is a guide provided to aid officials with authority to approve suggestion processing:

- A. **Class I Suggestions** Class I suggestions should normally be approved or disapproved within 30 calendar days from the date that they are received by the district director or chief patrol agent. If a cash award is recommended, a copy of the approved suggestion (Form G-115) will be forwarded to the regional Incentive Awards Administrator who should have an additional 15 calendar days to ensure that final action is taken on the award.
- B. **Class II Suggestions** Class II suggestions should normally be approved or disapproved within 60 calendar days from the date received by the regional Incentive Awards Administrator. However, suggestions with applicability in the regional office only should normally be processed in 30 calendar days. An additional 15 calendar days should be allowed the regional Incentive Awards Administrator to ensure that final action is taken on the award.
- C. **Class III Suggestions** Class III suggestions should normally be approved or disapproved within 90 days from the date received by the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator. However, suggestions with applicability in the Headquarters only should normally be processed in 30 calendar days. An additional 15 calendar days should be allowed the Incentive Awards Administrator to ensure that final action is taken on the award.
- D. Suggestions and related awards which require extensive evaluation, are disputed, or must be referred to other agencies for comment or approval may take longer to process.
- E. Incentive Awards Administrators should follow up with program officials on the status of outstanding suggestions and notify suggesters accordingly. A follow-up period of 30 days is recommended.
- F. A suggestion shall be considered active and the suggester eligible for an award for 24 months after the date of disapproval if the idea is later implemented. Prior to the expiration of the 24-month period any disapproved suggestion may be resubmitted by the suggester for re-evaluation.

9. Delegations of Authority Relating to Suggestions

The officials designated to adopt or not adopt suggestions and related awards shall be responsible for notifying the servicing human resources office (or other designated office) of the date adopted suggestions are implemented. The office preparing the annual regional/Headquarters Incentive Awards Report shall follow up for such information, as necessary. Awards are certified for payment in accordance with current fiscal authorities. Therefore, an adopted suggestion that involves a cash award must include a statement in the evaluation that funds are available in the budget for the appropriate activity.

Superior Accomplishment Awards for Special Acts or Services

10. Special Act or Special Service Awards

Awards for special acts or services are lump-sum cash awards granted in recognition of one-time, non-recurring contributions or accomplishments connected with or related to official employment, such as: performance which has overcome unusual difficulties; creative efforts resulting in important contributions to science or research; special efforts or innovations resulting in increased productivity, economy or other highly desirable benefits; or

exemplary or courageous handling of an emergency situation related to official employment.

11. Employee Coverage

All Service employees including SES personnel are eligible for these awards.

- A. The purpose and intent of an award under this section is NOT to supplement performance awards or basic pay increases. The granting of an award for a special act or service is inappropriate if the performance for which the award is being granted is a duty or responsibility which appears in the employee's performance work plan.
- B. Awards for special acts or services may be granted to an individual or to a group of employees.

12. Documentation

The decision to grant an award for a special act or service must be supported by a statement of justification which is separate from one's performance rating. It should be brief and factual and should emphasize results achieved which are beyond job requirements; identify benefits which can be measured; and generally not exceed one page, unless the contribution is very complex. The recommendation must contain a recommended amount for the award. See paragraph 16 below.

- A. The recommendation for a cash award must include a statement that funds are available in the budget for the appropriate activity. Recommendations for regional employees that require Headquarters approval must contain a statement in the nomination that regional funds are available and must include the fund citation number.
- B. A cash award to an employee may be paid from the fund or appropriation of the activity primarily benefiting or the various activities benefiting from the employee's performance or services.

13. Procedures

All nominations for these awards should be submitted by the nominating official (normally the employee's immediate supervisor) through supervisory channels to the official designated to approve the award. Employees should not be advised that they have been nominated for an award, but should learn of any approved award at the time it is officially presented. The above procedures do not preclude individual human resources office policies that require nominations to be reviewed by the Incentive Awards Administrator prior to action by the approving official.

- A. Each approved nomination will be forwarded by the designated approving official to the Regional/Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator in the servicing human resources office for processing. Incentive Awards Administrators are responsible for advising nominating/approving officials if an award is forwarded for processing which fails to meet any of the eligibility requirements.
- B. Regional nominations that require approval at Headquarters will be sent to the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator through the Regional Incentive Awards Administrator. The Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator will control these nominations and refer them to the designated approving official(s) or Service Incentive Awards Board, as appropriate. Form G-630 may be attached for purposes of approval/disapproval.
- C. Nominations may be submitted at any time up to one year from the date of the event or accomplishment which serves as the basis for the award.

14. Delegations of Authority

The officials designated to approve or disapprove awards for special acts or services are contained in **Attachment C, Responsibilities**, and **Attachment F, Delegations of Authority**.

- A. A supervisor at a higher level of authority (who is not the designated approving official) cannot rescind a nomination for a superior accomplishment award submitted by a supervisor at a lower level of authority, although intervening level officials may provide comments to the approving official regarding the nomination.
- B. If the designated approving official disapproves the nomination, he or she must provide valid reasons for the disapproval that are tactful and courteous, and return the nomination to the recommending supervisor.

15. Group Awards

Group Awards (including monetary awards) to regional employees for a special act or service are approved, certified and processed in the region, except when (1) the nominating official is the Regional Director, (2) the nominees include an employee in a non-delegated position, a member of the SES, or an attorney; or (3) the sum total of the group award exceeds \$2,000. In such cases, the recommendation will be referred to the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator for processing.

16. Award

When recognizing a special act or service, awards will be based on tangible savings, intangible benefits or a combination of the two using the appropriate award scales in Exhibit I. When more than one person is involved in the special act or service (a group award), the total amount of a cash award to be shared normally should be the same as it would be had only one person been involved. An exception may be made when the amount to be shared would be too small to be meaningful and motivating. An award for a special act or service will be accompanied by Certificate M-192. Evidence of an award, when granted, (e.g., Form G-631) or equivalent shall be filed in the Official Personnel Folder (right side). The supporting documentation for the award will be filed in the Employee Performance File. NOTE: PLEASE REFER TO EXHIBIT 1 FOR INFORMATION ON SUSTAINED SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE AWARDS.

Quality Step Increases for General Schedule Employees

17. Quality Step Increases (QSI) These are additional within-grade increases which increase the employee's basic pay. They are intended to reward those employees in positions subject to the Classification Act whose performance is above that ordinarily found in the type of position occupied, and they normally benefit the employee throughout his/her career. Awards granted shall be accompanied by Certificate M-193.

18. It is discretionary to grant a QSI to GS employees who otherwise meet the eligibility criteria contained in the following paragraph.

19. Eligibility Criteria

To be considered for a QSI, the employee's current rating of record MUST BE OUTSTANDING and he or she must not have received a QSI within the preceding 52 consecutive calendar weeks. Employees who received a sustained superior performance award during the preceding 52 consecutive calendar weeks are also ineligible.

20. Limitations

A QSI is appropriate when faster than normal salary advancement is warranted. Although otherwise merited, a QSI is not appropriate when:

- A. The employee is nearing retirement and would benefit only for a limited period;
- B. The employee is about to receive or has just received a promotion, the selection for which included consideration of the outstanding performance the QSI would have recognized;
- C. The employee's contribution has been recognized through a large performance award;
- D. The employee has been detailed or temporarily promoted to another position; (Any language within the employees rating of record relating to performance of the employee while temporarily promoted may not be used as a basis to support or justify a QSI.);
- E. The employee is transferring to another position either within or outside the Service;
- F. The employee is in step 10 of his/her pay range.

21. Documentation

The recommendation to grant a QSI must be supported by SPECIFIC AND SUFFICIENTLY DETAILED DOCUMENTATION in the employee's most recent performance appraisal and work plan which are issued under a performance appraisal system. Under no circumstances may a QSI be granted absent the detailed documentation and based merely on the basis of the "outstanding" block being checked on the rating form.

22. Relation to Regular Within-grade Increases

An employee who receives a quality step increase does not start a new waiting period to meet the time requirements for a regular within-grade increase. However, if a quality increase places an employee in the fourth or seventh rate of the grade, the waiting period for a regular within-grade increase is extended by 52 weeks under the graduated waiting period schedule prescribed by section 5335(a) of title 5, U.S. Code. **AM 1.3.110** contains Service policy on the granting of within-grade increases.

Documentation in support of a QSI (i.e., the current performance rating of record must be filed in the Employee Performance File (EPF). The SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action will be filed on the right side of the Official Personnel Folder (OPF). The supporting documentation for the award will be filed in the Employee Performance File.

23. Procedures

All nominations for QSI's should be submitted by the nominating official (normally the employee's immediate supervisor) through supervisory channels to the official designated to approve the award. Employees should not be advised that they have been nominated for an award, but should learn of any approved award at the time it is officially presented. The above procedures do not preclude individual human resources office policies that require

nominations to be reviewed by the Incentive Awards Administrator prior to action by the approving official.

- A. Each approved nomination will be forwarded by the designated official to the regional/Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator in the servicing human resources office for processing. Incentive Awards Administrators are responsible for advising nominating/approving officials if an award is forwarded for processing which fails to meet any of the eligibility requirements.
- B. Regional nominations that require approval at the Headquarters will be sent to the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator through the Regional Incentive Awards Administrator. The Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator will control these nominations and refer them to the designated approving official(s) or Service Incentive Awards Board, as appropriate. Form G-629 may be used for referral purposes, and Form G-630 may be attached for purposes of approval/disapproval.

24. Delegations of Authority

The officials designated to approve or disapprove QSI's are contained in **Attachment C, Responsibilities**, and **Attachment F, Delegations of Authority**.

- A. A supervisor at a higher level of authority (who is not the designated-approving official) cannot rescind a nomination for a performance award submitted by a supervisor at a lower level of authority, although intervening level officials may provide comments to the approving official regarding the nomination.
- B. If the designated approving official disapproves the nomination, he or she must provide valid reasons for the disapproval that are tactful and courteous, and return the nomination to the recommending supervisor.

Honorary Awards

25. The Commissioner's Awards

The Commissioner's Awards represent the highest form of recognition within the Immigration and Naturalization Service for outstanding or meritorious accomplishments and all employees are eligible for these awards. These awards are granted only by the Commissioner. These awards will be in the form of a specially designed plaque, certificate, medal or other appropriate award device. If a cash award is involved, the recommendation must include a statement that funds are available in the budget for the appropriate activity and must identify a fund citation against which the amount of the award will be charged. The various types of Commissioner's Awards and other pertinent information related to them are contained in **Attachment G**.

26. The Attorney General's Awards

The Attorney General's Awards are the Department's foremost means of recognizing exceptional or distinguished achievements. All employees are eligible for these awards. They are awarded once a year at an appropriate ceremony after the most thorough evaluation of the events and circumstances upon which the recommendation is based. These awards are granted only by the Attorney General. **Attachment H** contains additional information on specific Attorney General's Awards.

27. Nominating Procedures for the Commissioner's Awards and the Attorney General's Awards

Nominations for these awards will be solicited by the Headquarters Human Resources. Each regional nomination shall bear the personal endorsement of the Regional Director, or in the case of a Headquarters employee, the personal endorsement of the Executive Associate Commissioner or office head over the activity in which the employee is engaged.

- A. Nominations in triplicate (original and 2 copies) shall contain the following information:
 1. The name of the award. Nominations of the John Marshall Award should also specify for which category of the award the nominee is recommended.
 2. The nominee's name, position, title, grade or salary, and organizational location.
 3. A brief description of assigned duties during the period covered by the recommendation and dates of the service for which the award is recommended.
 4. A justification describing the achievement or contribution, showing clearly the manner in which the nominee is considered to have met the criteria for the award for which he/she is nominated.
 5. A listing of previous honors and awards.
 6. A proposed citation of 60 words or less.

B. The Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator will process the nominations and ensure for the preparation of awards and certificates, as appropriate.

28. Presentation and Recording of the Commissioner's Awards and the Attorney General's Awards

A. The Commissioner's Awards may be presented to field recipients at the Department's Annual Awards Ceremony in Washington, D.C. or at the Commissioners Annual Conference, provided that funds are available for the travel and per diem expenses necessary to have all field recipients present. In the case of a group award, one representative may travel to accept the award for the group if sufficient funds are available.

If, at the discretion of the Commissioner, funds are not available to provide for travel of all field recipients, Regional Directors will ensure that awards are presented at ceremonies appropriate to the significance of these honorary awards.

B. The Attorney General's Awards will be presented by the Attorney General at the Department's Annual Awards Ceremony.

C. Evidence of the award, when granted, shall be filed in the Official Personnel Folder (right side) and other folders as may be required under personnel programs. The supporting documentation for the award will be filed in the Employee Performance File.

29. Other Forms of Recognition

Letters of appreciation or commendation may be granted by any supervisor and are appropriate for those instances of above average performance or work achievement by an individual employee, or group of employees, which do not meet the standard for a cash award. These types of recognition, for reporting purposes, are known as non-cash awards. Copies of any letter of appreciation or commendation shall be placed in the Employee Performance File and/or other folders as may be required under personnel programs.

Non-Justice/INS Awards

30. Awards Granted by Other Organizations

The INS is given the opportunity, at various times during the year, to nominate outstanding employees for awards granted by organizations outside the Department. Nominations for each of these awards are requested annually by the sponsoring organization through the Department. There is sufficient similarity in standards of competition for each award from year to year to permit advance planning for nominations. The U.S. Department of Justice, "Incentive Awards Planning Guide" contains a list of the most significant of these awards with a brief statement about the purpose, requirements and criteria for each one. Accordingly, servicing human resources offices should establish procedures for timely call-up of these awards to ensure submission of nominations upon the request of the Headquarters servicing human resources office. Particular consideration should be given to nominating employees who have been recommended for or who have received one or more of the Justice/INS honorary awards.

A. Nominations for these awards shall be submitted in the format required by the sponsoring organization to the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator. Each regional nomination shall bear the personal endorsement of the Regional Director, or in the case of a Headquarters employee, the personal endorsement of the Executive Associate Commissioner or office head over the activity in which the employee is engaged.

B. The Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator will arrange for (1) evaluation of nominations by the INS Incentive Awards Board, (2) personal endorsement by the Commissioner, and (3) submission of nominations to the Executive Secretary of the Department's Incentive Awards Board or other appropriate official.

C. Evidence of the award, when granted, shall be filed in the Official Personnel Folder (right side) and other folders as may be required under personnel programs. The supporting documentation for the award will be filed in the Employee Performance File.

Publicity and Honor Awards

31. Publicity

Maximum effort will be made to effectively and appropriately publicize performance awards and honor awards in local and regional newsletters or in memorandums to all employees. Incentive Awards Administrators will send information about award recipients to the Publications Editor, Headquarters, for publication of feature articles on awards in an appropriate Service-wide publication.

32. Impact of the Privacy Act

Routine data for promotion and publicity purposes (e.g., name, grade, organizational location, photograph of the recipient, type and amount of award, and recognition of contribution) is considered public information and, therefore, not subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act. Personal information

and recognition of contribution) is considered public information and, therefore, not subject to the provisions of the Privacy Act. Personal information (e.g., date of birth, home address, professional affiliations, employment history) may not be publicized without prior permission from the employee.

Necessary information connected with reporting on and processing incentive awards may be furnished other agencies, the U.S. Office Personnel Management, and external organizations which sponsor awards for Federal personnel. However, the employee's prior permission is required to release personal information to external organizations. All servicing human resources offices should ensure that any employee nominated for an external award has signed Form DOJ-387, Consent to Release Information for Award Consideration, and that this form is forwarded with the nomination. A sample of this form is provided in **Attachment I**.

Career Service Awards

33. **General**

Length of service awards are designed to recognize significant milestones in an employee's career in the Federal Service. INS employees will be given credit for total Federal service (based on his/her service computation date) when computing eligibility for this award.

A. **Award** Length of service awards will be granted as follows:

- 1) 5, 10, 15, 20 years service: The employee will receive an emblem (charm for women, lapel pin for men) with the seal of the Department of Justice showing the years of service.
- 2) 25 years through 45 years service: The employee will receive a gold key embossed with the seal of the Department of Justice. A diamond chip will be placed in the 25 year award. Additional diamond chips will be placed in the award for each five years of service. A length of service certificate will also be presented to employees with 25 years of service and every fifth year thereafter through 45 years of service.
- 3) 50, 55 and each successive 5-year interval: The employee will receive a specially designed plaque, medal or other appropriate award device.

B. **Procedures**

1. Employees receiving awards will be those becoming eligible during the calendar year. Generally, awards should be appropriately presented to employees on or about the date they complete the appropriate number of years warranting the award.
2. Each servicing human resources office will receive quarterly a computer listing of employees in the region who are eligible for awards during a calendar year. The listing will be used to estimate emblem needs for ordering purposes and to distribute emblems.
3. Servicing human resources offices will order directly from the contractor by category and gender (for employees eligible in a calendar year). Orders should be placed in sufficient quantity to allow for a supply to be retained in each category for replacement purposes.
4. Computer lists will assist human resources offices in making distribution of emblems on Form G-732 (Length of Service Awards Lists) when annual orders are received.

C. **Eligibility** - Service employees will be eligible for awards as follows:

5 years credible Federal Service-----	5-year award
10 years credible Federal Service-----	10-year award
15 years credible Federal Service-----	15-year award
20 years credible Federal Service-----	20-year award
25 years credible Federal Service-----	25-year award
30 years credible Federal Service-----	30-year award
35 years credible Federal Service-----	35-year award
40 years credible Federal Service-----	40-year award
45 years credible Federal Service-----	45-year award
50, 55 and each successive 5-year interval-----	a specially designed award

Reporting Requirements

34. Annual Report

- A. The Chief, Policy Directives and Instructions will report to Chief, Headquarters, Human Resources, on suggestion activity dealing with Service forms by completing OPM form 1465, Part B, Sections 1 and 2.
- B. Performance-type awards (monetary and honorary) for SES members will not be reported on OPM form 1465.

Public Service Awards

35. Purpose

Cooperative relationships between the Federal Government and the public have many benefits. One effective means of strengthening these benefits is to appropriately honor and publicize the contributions which citizens and organizations made to Federal activities. Actions of this type will support the work of the agency as well as the national program for Voluntary Action established by Executive Order 11470. The purpose of these awards, therefore, is to recognize outstanding acts which contribute to the affairs and activities of the Department and to honor through a Public Service Awards Program those contributions which are exceptionally effective. The program is designed to:

- A. Encourage citizens and organizations in their efforts to assist the Department in the accomplishment of its mission.
- B. Recognize the contributions of private citizens or organizations to the Department's functions, services or operations.
- C. Demonstrate the Department's interest in efficiency, economy and effectiveness and its appreciation for public support.

36. Scope

The recognition authorized by this regulation may be conferred on any citizen of the United States of America or to an organization located within the fifty states who/which by their/its actions, make a significant contribution to the accomplishment of the Department's mission. This chapter does not cover those employees of the Department who are eligible for recognition under the other parts of this administrative manual or to an employee's family.

37. Awards

Awards will consist of a Public Service Certificate to recognize exceptional contributions to the missions of the Department and a Meritorious Public Service Award to recognize those recipients of certificates whose contributions are the most significant.

38. Criteria Examples of the types of actions or contributions of individuals or organizations which should be considered for these awards include:

- A. Service in an advisory capacity to a Department function, program, trial, project, etc;
- B. Direct assistance to any bureau of the Department through actions or useful ideas which are beneficial in eliminating or minimizing problems or in actively contributing to mission accomplishments;
- C. Participation in any Department-sponsored program involving officials of other Federal agencies or state or local governments;
- D. Assistance to the Department through the cooperative use of facilities, equipment or manpower;
- E. Courageous or heroic action in support of a Department activity or mission.

39. Public Service Award Certificate

- A. Approving Authority Public Service Award Certificates may be approved by the Commissioner or Regional Directors.
- B. Procedures Nominations for Commissioner approved Public Service Award Certificates should be submitted by INS officials through regional Incentive Awards Administrators to the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator. Nominations may be submitted at any time during the year in which the contribution to the mission of the Department occurred. Nominations should be reviewed and endorsed in accordance with the requirements in paragraph 27 of these procedures. A copy of all Commissioner approved nominations should be sent to the Executive Secretary of the Department's Incentive Awards Board for consideration of the Meritorious Public Service Award.
- C. Content of Nominations To be eligible for consideration, nomination letters must contain the following information:

- 1) A brief biographical sketch of the nominee including: full name; date of birth; home address; level of education; organizations to which they belong; occupation; and name and address of employer;
- 2) Dates of the achievement or contribution and the place where it occurred;
- 3) A narrative statement of the outstanding endeavor or achievement for which the candidate is being nominated;
- 4) Any newsworthy items which may be used in a publicity release;
- 5) A factual explanation of how the contributions were reflected in the work of the Department;
- 6) For group or organizational nominations, the name and address of the individual designated to serve as the representative for award purposes should be specified.

40. Meritorious Public Service Award

A. Approving Authority The Meritorious Public Service Award may be granted only by the Attorney General.

B. Procedures Recommendations for this award will be made to the Attorney General by the Department's Incentive Awards Board. Selection will be made from recipients of the Public Service Award Certificate during the preceding twelve months. There will normally be only one Meritorious Public Service Award granted annually.

C. Special Selection Factors In order to receive this award, the nomination must show either:

[Go to the Next Page >>>](#)



- 1) Extraordinary valor;
- 2) Exceptional personal service or consultation by an individual;
- 3) Exceptional contribution by a group or an organization.

41. Presentation and Publicity

A. Presentation

Presentation of Public Service Award Certificates should be made by the nominating official at a suitable ceremony. Presentation should be as soon as possible after the award has been approved. Presentation of the Meritorious Public Service Award will be made by the Attorney General at the annual awards ceremony.

B. Publicity

Maximum effort will be made to effectively and appropriately publicize the Department's Public Service Awards Program. Newspapers, local radio and TV stations, as well as the recipient's employer, professional, fraternal and other associations, will be used in publicizing award winners and their contributions at the time of the presentation. Publicity for presentation made in the field will be the responsibility of the nominating official, while presentations made in Washington, D.C., will be handled by the Headquarters Public Information Officer for Public Services Certificates and the Department's Office of Public Information for the Meritorious Public Service Award.

Attachment C - PROCEDURES

RESPONSIBILITIES: INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION 1.3.202

- A. **The Attorney General** has overall responsibility for the recognition and awards program. The Attorney General retains the authority to approve the Department's top awards and cash awards in excess of \$5,000, but not more than \$10,000; to nominate employees for awards granted by agencies and organizations other than the Department of Justice; and to recommend to the Office of Personnel Management cash awards of more than \$10,000.
- B. **The Deputy Attorney General** retains the approval authority on cash awards for all INS attorneys and SES employees within the INS. This authority does not pertain to awards that require the approval of the Attorney General.
- C. **The Commissioner** has overall responsibility for ensuring effective administration of the INS awards program. The Commissioner (1) approves the Service's most prestigious awards, and (2) recommends employees for awards that require DOJ approval or concurrence. The Executive Associate Commissioner, Management has been delegated general responsibility for the administration of the program and the formulation and issuance of policies and procedures.
- D. **Regional Directors** are responsible for ensuring effective administration of the awards program in their regions. With respect to employees under their jurisdiction, Regional Directors (1) recommend employees for the most prestigious INS awards; (2) recommend employees for awards that require DOJ approval or concurrence; (3) retain authority to approve awards under this regulation not in excess of \$2,000 (See [Attachment F](#)) or may redelegate such authority, as they deem appropriate, to a regional awards committee and/or regional officials not below the district director or chief patrol agent levels. All delegations must be in writing and a copy of each must be provided to the Labor Management and Employee Relations Policy Section in Headquarters.

E. The Assistant Commissioner for Human Resources and Development has been redelegated general responsibility for the administration of this program within the Service. The **Director, Human Resources Branch** is redelegated responsibility for the formulation of policies and procedures related to the program.

F. Within Headquarters, Associate Commissioners, Assistant Commissioners and office heads may approve awards under this regulation not in excess of \$2,000. **Attachment F** provides additional information on the delegations of authority within Headquarters for the approval of Superior Accomplishment Awards and QSI's.

G. Within all locations, in the event that the position of the approving official is vacant, the next higher official shall have approval authority for award recommendations. As an alternative, an appropriate authority may redelegate approval authority to an official who is serving in an acting capacity, provided the redelegation is in writing. In no instance may the approving official also be the recommending official, except when the recommending official is the Commissioner.

H. The INS Incentive Awards Board receives, evaluates and acts on (1) recommendations for awards requiring approval (or recommendation) by the Commissioner or the Deputy Commissioner; (2) all award nominations exceeding \$2,000; and (3) all nominations of employees in non-delegated field positions regardless of amount. When the Commissioner or Deputy act on an award nomination that otherwise would go to the Board, the Commissioner's or Deputy's action is sufficient.

The INS Incentive Awards Board also acts on difficult and controversial cases that are referred to them by the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator.

The INS Incentive Awards Board consists of three members appointed by the Commissioner, one of whom is designated as the chairperson.

I. Regional Incentive Awards Committees may be established to receive and evaluate for Regional Directors, recommendations for the most prestigious INS and DOJ awards, as well as regional awards not forwarded to the INS Incentive Awards Board. These regional committees may also act on difficult and controversial cases referred to them by the regional Incentive Awards Administrator if he/she is unable to, or believes the committee should, resolve a particularly difficult case.

Regional awards committees, if established, must consist of a Chairperson and four officials (grade 12 or higher), chosen by the Regional Directors on an ad hoc basis annually; they should provide for representation by at least one minority, handicapped or female employee. In addition, the Assistant Directors, Human Resources and Training, will be the Executive Secretary of a regional awards committee (non-voting member), and he/she will provide for its administrative support.

J. Incentive Awards Administrators will be designated in each servicing human resources office. Their responsibilities include:

1. maintaining for a period of two years records on suggestions and awards for employees in their respective jurisdictions, including information that is used in compiling the annual incentive awards report for the Office of Personnel Management. This information may be maintained in a log or on Form G-8, Incentive Awards Control Card (See **Attachment I**). At a minimum, the information maintained should include the type of award, the name, pay plan, grade, and other relevant data regarding the contributor, the names of others involved (including the supervisor), and a summary of the evaluation and final disposition.
2. ensuring that suggestion files are maintained so that they may be reviewed by operating officials as an idea source.
3. providing officials with responsibilities under the program with adequate information to ensure their compliance with these regulations and the effective functioning of the program.
4. providing the heads of the affected activities with copies of all correspondence conducted with the suggester.
5. providing awards, letters, and certificates for approved items to appropriate officials for presentation to recipients.
6. ensuring, as is feasible, the timely and equitable consideration of all items and compliance with the suggestion timetable.
7. ensuring that employee suggestions are acknowledged in a timely manner after receipt; that employees are kept informed of the status of their suggestions; and that employees are tactfully informed when a suggestion is rejected.
8. returning suggestions without action which do not comply with the criteria contained in paragraph 1B, **Attachment B, Procedures**, of this section.
9. sending, as appropriate, to the INS Incentive Awards Board/regional awards committees for decision any recommended suggestion award, special act/service award, or quality increase which is controversial.
10. calling to the attention of appropriate nominating/approving officials those award nominations which do not meet eligibility requirements.

11. providing copies of a SF-50, Form G-631, or other evidence, as appropriate, for inclusion into an employee's Official Personnel Folder (right side) which reflects that an award was received and providing the supporting documentation (award justifications, evaluation sheet or other pertinent correspondence) for inclusion into Employee Performance Files.

12. preparing suggestion activity reports and awards reports, as required.

K. **Supervisors** have primary responsibility for the successful motivation of their employees' interest and participation in the awards program. This responsibility includes keeping themselves informed of all aspects of the program; recognizing deserving employees by initiating recommendations for awards; ensuring that their employees are aware of the opportunities the program offers for personal and group recognition; achieving high quality results and operational improvements through active encouragement of employee contributions as well as through their own efforts.

L. **Employees** share the responsibility for efficient and economical Government operations. Every employee should endeavor to make contributions to Government operations of such significance as to warrant recognition under the awards program.

Attachment D - PROCEDURES

EXHIBIT 1

INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

1.3.202

SCALE#1 Tangible Benefits

Used to determine the amount of cash award for approved suggestions or special achievement awards for special acts or services.

Estimated First-Year Benefits to Government	Amount of Award
Up to \$10,000	10% of benefits
\$10,001 to \$100,000	\$1,000 for the first \$10,000 plus 3% of benefits over \$10,000
\$100,001 or more	\$3,700 for the first \$100,000 plus .5% of benefits over \$100,000

SCALE#2 Intangible Benefits

VALUE OF BENEFITS

EXTENT OF APPLICATION

Limited

Affects functions, mission, or

personnel of one office, facility,

Extended

Affects functions, mission, or personnel

of several offices, facilities, or

Broad

Affects functions, mission, or personnel

of an entire regional area of command.

General

Affects functions, mission, or

personnel of several regional areas

installation, or an organizational element of a headquarters. Affects a small area of science or technology.	installations. Affects an important area of science or technology.	May be applicable to all of an independent agency or a large bureau. Affects a broad area of science or technology.	or commands, or an entire department or large independent agency, or is in the public interest throughout the Nation or beyond.
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MODERATE

VALUE

Change or modification of an operating principle or procedure which has moderate value sufficient to meet the minimum standard for a cash award; an improvement of rather limited value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	\$25-100 (compare with \$250-1,000 tangible benefits)	\$100-250 (compare with \$1,000-2,500 tangible benefits)	\$250-500 (compare with \$2,500-5,000 tangible benefits)	\$500-1,000 (compare with \$5,000-10,000 tangible benefits)
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SUBSTANTIAL

VALUE

Substantial change or modification of an operating principle or procedure; an important improvement to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	\$100-250 (compare with \$1,000-2,500 tangible benefits)	\$250-500 (compare with \$2,500-5,000 tangible benefits)	\$500-1,000 (compare with \$5,000-10,000 tangible benefits)	\$1,000-2,500 (compare with \$10,000-60,000 tangible benefits)
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HIGH VALUE

Complete revision of a basic principle or procedure; a highly significant	\$250-500 (compare with	\$500-1,000 (compare with	\$1,000-2,500 (compare with	\$2,500-5,000 (compare with
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significant improvement to the value of a product, major activity, or program or service to the public.	(compare with \$2,500-5,000 tangible benefits)	(compare with \$5,000-10,000 tangible benefits)	(compare with \$10,000-60,000 tangible benefits)	(compare with \$60,000-360,000 tangible benefits)
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EXCEPTIONAL

VALUE	\$500-1,000	\$1,000-2,500	\$2,500-5,000	\$5,000-10,000
Institution of a new principle or major procedure; a superior improvement to the quality of a critical product, activity, program, or service to the public.	(compare with \$5,000-10,000 tangible benefits)	(compare with \$10,000-60,000 tangible benefits)	(compare with \$60,000-360,000 tangible benefits)	(compare with \$360,000-1,360,000 tangible benefits)

Scales #1 and #2 are for use in determining awards for either Special Achievement Awards for special acts or services or employee suggestions. The minimum award for tangible benefits may be granted only when the benefits reach or exceed \$250. The minimum award for intangible benefits should require a comparably high standard. In determining cash awards for contributions with intangible benefits, the value to the Government must be comparable to those contributions receiving equivalent awards on the basis of tangible results.

Recommendations for all cash awards must include a statement that funds are available in the budget for the appropriate activity.

SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARD FOR SUSTAINED SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE

I. General: This part is included only as a temporary measure until such time as the Office of Personnel Management issues implementing regulations or rules regarding performance awards for employees covered under the Performance Management System (PMS) and/or implementing instructions are provided by the Department of Justice. Upon receipt of such guidance the provisions of the PMS relative to performance awards will be implemented and this part regarding Special Achievement Awards for Sustained Superior Performance will be deleted from this regulation. SES employees are ineligible for this award.

A. The Special Achievement Award for Sustained Superior Performance is a lump sum cash award granted in recognition of an employee's sustained performance which exceeds normal job requirements for a period of at least six months. Awards shall be accompanied by Certificate M-191.

B. Eligibility Criteria: Major duties of the position must be performed for a period of at least six months in a manner clearly exceeding normal requirements, or performed in a excellent manner during a period of at least six months characterized by abnormal workload, temporary shortage of personnel, or other unusual circumstances. In the context of these regulations, the employee's overall performance must, at a minimum, be rated at the "excellent" level with no element rated less than "fully successful", for the employee to be deemed eligible for consideration.

(1) The employee must not have received any other award that is based on job performance within the 12 months preceding the date of nomination. However, an award for a Special Act or Service during the 12 month period is not disqualifying.

(2) The following are characteristic of the criteria which must be met for a Special Achievement award for sustained superior performance:

(a) Performance which has involved overcoming unusual difficulties.

(b) Creative efforts that make important contributions to science, research, or the state of the art of an employee's field of endeavor

underlying.

(c) Performance of assigned duties with special effort, or special innovation, that results in significant economic or other highly desirable benefits.

C. Award amounts for sustained superior performance awards will be determined in accordance with the Cash Award Scale and information contained in this Attachment.

D. Documentation: Recommendations generally should not exceed one page unless the position is very complex. They must contain the following:

- (1) A brief description of the employee's major job duties and, if appropriate, a description of the unusual workload or requirements during the period of service on which the award is based.
- (2) A brief, factual narrative or, if appropriate, the narrative on the performance rating showing how the employee's actual performance exceeded the normal standards during the six-month period. To the greatest extent possible specific examples of the employee's performance should be included to support the conclusion that it warrants recognition.

E. Procedures: All nominations for sustained superior performance awards should be submitted by the nominating official (normally the employee's immediate supervisor) through supervisory channels to the official designated to approve the award. Employees should not be advised that they have been nominated for an award, but should learn of any approved award at the time it is officially presented. The above procedures do not preclude individual human resources office policies that require nominations to be reviewed by the Incentive Awards Administrator prior to action by the approving official.

- (1) Each approved nomination will be forwarded by the designated approving official to the regional/Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator in the servicing human resources office for processing. Incentive Awards Administrators are responsible for advising nominating/approving officials if an award is forwarded for processing which fails to meet any of the eligibility requirements.
- (2) Regional nominations that require approval at Headquarters will be sent to the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator through the regional Incentive Awards Administrator. The Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator will control these nominations and refer them to the designated approving official(s) or Service Incentive Awards Board, as appropriate. Form G-629 may be used for referral purposes, and Form G-630 may be attached for purposes of approval/disapproval.

F. Delegations of Authority: The officials designated to approve or disapprove these awards are identical to those contained in **Attachment F**.

- (1) A supervisor at a higher level of authority (who is not the designated approving official) cannot rescind a nomination for a performance award submitted by a supervisor at a lower level of authority, although intervening level officials may provide comments to the approving official regarding the nomination.
- (2) If the designated approving official disapproves the nomination, he or she must provide valid reasons for the disapproval that are tactful and courteous, and return the nomination to the recommending supervisor.

CASH AWARD SCALES FOR AWARDS FOR SUSTAINED SUPERIOR PERFORMANCE

General Schedule Grade

Award Range

GS 1-4	\$100 up to 15% of basic salary
GS 5-8	\$150 up to 15% of basic salary
GS 9-11	\$200 up to 15% of basic salary
GS 12-13	\$250 up to 15% of basic salary
GS 14-18	\$300 up to 15% of basic salary

Awards in excess of the dollar amounts reflected in the chart may be granted, but are reserved for the truly exceptional performance which has substantial positive impact within the employee's organization or other INS, DOJ or Government-wide organizations. The maximum amount which may be awarded for an SSP is 15 percent of basic salary and only in extremely rare circumstances. The full 15 percent (15%) may be granted to an employee only once in any 52 week period. Additionally, any SSP nomination for an amount in excess of 8% of basic salary, even if less than \$2,000, must be referred to the Service Incentive Awards Board for approval.

In determining an appropriate amount for any particular award the following factors should also be considered:

- (1) The level of accomplishment achieved by the employee. This factor is partially addressed when a determination is made as to the type of award (i.e., Quality Step Increase, SSP, etc.) merited by the employee. However, when determining for example, if their employees "clearly exceeded normal requirements," in order to qualify for an SSP award, it is equally important that supervisors clearly distinguish between the various levels of performance attained by employees under their supervision who are also performing above the satisfactory level. To the extent feasible, officials should cite specific quantitative, qualitative, and timeliness factors in rendering a determination in this regard in order to be in a position to substantively support their conclusion.
- (2) The overall impact on the particular activity/office/Service. High level performance by an employee which brings about a significant improvement or impacts substantially on a particular activity, office or the Service as a whole should be given careful consideration by recommending officials in order to determine if it was of such importance as to warrant the amount of the cash award under consideration. While this factor would seem to be closely related to the "level of accomplishment" factor previously enunciated, this is not always the case. In many instances, while the level of accomplishment achieved by the employee is quite high, the overall impact on the employee's activity, office or the Service in general, is relatively minimal. In such cases an employee would not be entitled to the same recognition as would another individual whose performance was for a similar duration, attained approximately the same level of accomplishment, and also had a significantly greater impact on the activity in which he/she is involved.
- (3) Finally, in recommending any employee for a cash award for sustained superior performance, one should keep in mind that in arriving at a salary increase for a one grade promotion, an employee's salary is increased the equivalent of two within-grade increases (6%) in the old grade level prior to adjusting the salary in the new grade level. Considering the previously cited factors, the recommending official may also wish to maintain some perspective relative to the amount of increase in relation to the amount received when an employee is promoted.

It is emphasized that the considerations listed above are parameters, which recommending officials should apply when using their discretionary authority in these matters.

Attachment E - PROCEDURES

INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY TO ADOPT OR NOT ADOPT SUGGESTIONS AND TO APPROVE RELATED AWARDS, AND THE RECOMMENDED PROCESSING TIME 1.3.202

APPROVING AUTHORITY	Scope of Suggestion and Recommended Processing Time		
	CLASS I	CLASS II	CLASS III
	30 DAYS	60 DAYS*	90 DAYS*
District Director/ Chief Patrol Agent**	approval of awards not exceeding \$2000/disapproval		

Regional or	approval of awards not	approval of awards not
Headquarters Office	exceeding \$2000/	exceeding \$2000/
Head, as appropriate, of Activity Most Affected By Suggestion **	disapproval	disapproval
Service Incentive	approval of all awards in excess of \$2000,	
Awards Board	but not exceeding \$5000/disapproval	

*30 days for Class II suggestions with applicability in the regional office only or Class III suggestions with applicability in Headquarters only.

**Group awards for Class I and Class II not exceeding \$2000 are approved, certified, and processed in the region. Class I and Class II Group awards exceeding \$2000 and Class III Group awards are approved, certified, and processed in Headquarters.

Attachment F - PROCEDURES

DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY RELATING TO SUPERIOR ACCOMPLISHMENT AWARDS AND QUALITY STEP INCREASES: INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION 1.3.202

TABLE 1: Districts/Sectors and Regional Offices

APPROVING OFFICIAL	DISTRICTS/SECTORS		REGIONAL OFFICES	
	DELEGATED POSITIONS	NON- DELEGATED POSITIONS	DELEGATED POSITIONS	NON- DELEGATED POSITIONS
District Director	Grades 1-11 and Wage Grade			
Chief Patrol Agent	Grades 1-11 and Wage Grade			
Ass't Reg'l Director or equivalent*			Grades 1-11 and Wage Board	
Assoc. Reg' 1	Grades 12 and		Grades 12 and	

Director or Office Head*	above	above	
INS Incentive Awards Board		DD's, CPA's and all Grade 15 employees	Assoc. Reg'l Director
Deputy Atty. General		SES and Attorneys	SES and Attorneys

*of the activity in which the employee is engaged.

Awards in excess of \$2000 require Headquarters or Departmental approval.

Regional Directors retain authority to approve all awards not exceeding \$2000 for employees in delegated positions or may redelegate such authority as deemed appropriate in writing irrespective of the delegations cited above. Redelegations may be to a regional awards committee and/or regional officials not below the district director or chief patrol agent levels.

DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY RELATING TO SUPERIOR ACCOMPLISHMENT AWARDS AND QUALITY STEP INCREASES

TABLE 2: Headquarters

APPROVING OFFICIAL	GRADES1 - 12	GRADES 13 & ABOVE	ATTORNEY POSITIONS	SES POSITIONS
Asst. Commissioner or Office Head*	X			
Associate Commissioner or Office Head*		X		
Deputy Attorney General			X	X

*of activity in which the employee is engaged

Associate Commissioners or equivalent Office Heads may redelegate their authority in writing to the approving official who has authority to approve awards for employees in grades 1-12, if desired, but only after coordinating the re delegation with the Assistant Commissioner for Personnel and Training.

The authority to approve performance awards by associate commissioners, assistant commissioners, and office heads is limited to awards not in excess of Awards exceeding \$1500 require the approval of the INS Incentive Awards Board.

DELEGATIONS OF AUTHORITY RELATING TO HONOR AWARDS

TABLE 3: Honorary Awards

TYPE OF AWARD	RECOMMENDING OFFICIAL	APPROVING OFFICIAL
Commissioners	Regl Director/Exec. Assoc. Commr.	Commissioner

or Office Head*

Attorney Generals

Reg'l Director/Exec. Assoc.
Commr. or Office Head*

Attorney General

Outside Organization

Reg'l Director/Exec. Assoc.
Commr. or Office Head*

Outside Organization

*of the activity in which the employee is engaged

Nominations for honorary awards will be sent to the Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator for processing.

Attachment G - PROCEDURES

HONORARY AWARDS: COMMISSIONERS AWARDS INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION 1.3.202

1. Newton-Azrak Award

- a. Purpose: Named in honor of Theodore L. Newton, Jr., and George P. Azrak, two young Border Patrol officers who were kidnapped by four smugglers on June 17, 1967 while investigating the smugglers' vehicles, and later murdered. This award is given to honor the memories of the many Service officers who have given their lives in the line of duty. Recipients of this award will receive a cash award of \$1,000.
- b. Eligibility: This award will be given to Service officers, border patrol agents, immigration inspectors, district and center adjudication officers, criminal investigators, deportation officers, pilots, detention officers, or others who are actually involved in day-to-day Federal law enforcement and who clearly distinguish themselves in their efforts to accomplish the Service's mission.
- c. Criteria: Accomplishments which may merit this award include:
 - (1) exercise of unusual courage or competence in the line of duty;
 - (2) outstanding accomplishments in special law enforcement programs;
 - (3) outstanding performance, leadership, or innovation in Federal law enforcement;
 - (4) exceptionally effective work with other law enforcement agencies or community segments which enhances the Services image and makes its efforts more effective and more easily accomplished.

2. The Commissioner's Meritorious Achievement Award

- a. Purpose: This award is conferred by the Commissioner on those who make notable contributions not otherwise more appropriately covered by other INS honor awards or Department of Justice honor awards. It provides a means of giving recognition throughout the entire range of praiseworthy acts or services which benefits the Immigration & Naturalization Service. Recipients of this award will receive a cash award of \$1,000.
- b. Eligibility: Any employee of INS will be eligible for this award. The fact that an employee has received other recognition under the Incentive Awards Program for a special act, accomplishment or service will not preclude consideration by the Commissioner for this honorary award.
- c. Criteria: The following are examples of the types of acts, accomplishments or services which may be recognized by this award:
 - (1) detection of significant violations under unusual circumstances;

- (2) heroic and humane acts performed by employees during times of extreme stress or in emergency situations;
- (3) exceptional skill or ability in the performance of duties;
- (4) demonstration of remarkable initiative or creative ability which improves Service programs.

3. Awards for Excellence in Group Achievement

- a. Purpose: These awards shall be granted annually to the Service office(s) which exhibit(s) a spirit of team effort and cooperation and which has/have made a significant contribution to the accomplishment of the Services mission.
- b. Eligibility: Border patrol sectors, district offices, and lesser organizational units within the sectors, districts, regional offices, or Headquarters shall be eligible for this award.
- c. Criteria: The following types of accomplishments will be considered:
 - (1) increase in, or maintenance of, high production without an increase in personnel;
 - (2) decrease in backlogs without additional staff or overtime;
 - (3) successful accomplishment of new goals or programs despite problems or setbacks;
 - (4) improvement in morale;
 - (5) improvements in operations or procedures which result in substantial benefits, increased production, or decreased backlogs.

4. The Commissioner's Special Commendation Award

- a. Purpose: This award is established to recognize those employees who make significant contributions which result in direct benefits to the accomplishment of the Services mission. The award is accompanied by a cash award of \$1,000.
- b. Eligibility: Any employee who has at least 3 years of service with the INS may be considered for this award.
- c. Criteria: The following are examples of the types of achievements which may merit consideration for recognition:
 - (1) exceptional work in the development and/or execution of an administrative or operational program;
 - (2) establishment of an extraordinary record of achievement by an individual in his/her work production or in the production of work by a unit for which an individual has responsibility;
 - (3) demonstrated outstanding leadership in the administration of major programs;
 - (4) a single act of major significance to the INS.

5. Distinguished Career Service Award

- a. Purpose: This award shall be granted in recognition of the completion of noteworthy careers with the Service and will be accompanied by a cash award of \$1,000.
- b. Eligibility: INS employees who have had at least 15 years of service with the INS are eligible to receive this award at the time of their retirement or resignation. Nominations should reflect the projected date of final separation.
- c. Criteria: The following may merit this award:
 - (1) consistent excellence and efficiency during his or her career;
 - (2) exceptional contributions to the employee's field during his or her tenure.

6. Award for Promoting Equal Employment Opportunity

- a. Purpose: These awards are granted to recognize employees who have excelled in actively contributing to equal employment opportunity within the

- a. Purpose: These awards are granted to recognize employees who have excelled in actively contributing to equal employment opportunity within the Service and the Federal Government. The Headquarters Incentive Awards Administrator will forward the names of nominees for these awards to the EEO Officer for noting prior to submission to the INS Incentive Awards Board.
- b. Eligibility and Criteria: These awards will be granted to individual employees or groups of employees who are generally recognized within the Service or their location as having successfully extended equal employment opportunities to the special emphasis programs (i.e., Federal Women's Program, Hispanic Employment Program, African-American Affairs Program, American Indian/Alaskan Native, Asian American/Pacific Islander and the Handicap Program). Employees will also be recognized who have provided outstanding leadership or support to community activities which help or foster this goal. The following are examples of the types of employees who may be recognized by this award:
- (1) Supervisors at all levels of management who clearly excel in promoting EEO within their organizational entities by:
 - (a) motivating employees through direct encouragement and assistance to develop their full potential and utilize their skills to the greatest possible extent. This will be evidenced by promotion of lower grade and under-utilized employees, and recognition through awards of lower level employee achievements;
 - (b) achieving effective employee utilization as evidenced by integrating women, minority groups, and handicapped employees successfully in the unit;
 - (c) demonstrating concern for employee needs as evidenced by attendance at EEO training and consideration of EEO goals in providing training, promoting employees, assigning overtime and creating new job opportunities.
 - (2) Training officers, administrative officers, human resources officers, and management officials involved in operations or administrative activities who provide outstanding leadership in the development or fulfillment of recruitment and training programs which foster equal employment opportunity.
 - (3) EEO Officer, EEO Counselors, EEO Investigators, EEO Service Representatives, and other EEO officials who provide superior guidance counseling, investigating, representation of the Service at EEO hearings, and/or effective resolution of complaints of discrimination.
 - (4) EEO Specialists, Special Emphasis Managers, and other EEO officials who provide:
 - (a) assistance to individual employees in planning and achieving educational or occupational goals which benefit both the employee and the Service;
 - (b) outstanding leadership in developing EEO plans of action.
 - (5) Individual employees who establish a high level of respect and confidence through their work with minority or community groups in solving problems which interfere with the Government's recruitment and employment efforts.
- c. Nature of Award: Although the award is honorary in nature, it may be accompanied by a cash award if the achievements under consideration meet the criteria for a superior accomplishment award for a special act or service.

7. Federal Executive Board Performance Award

- a. Purpose: This award is granted to recognize employees who have excelled in active participation in the Federal Executive Board program. Although this award is honorary, it may be accompanied by a cash award if the achievements under consideration meet the criteria for a Superior Accomplishment Award for a special act or service.

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b. **Eligibility and Criteria:** The award will be given to members of Federal Executive Board or other employees who clearly distinguish themselves in Federal Executive Board activities. The following may merit this award:

- (1) Outstanding leadership in the administration of a major Federal Executive Board program which results in highly successful accomplishments;
- (2) Exceptionally outstanding contribution to accomplishment of a Federal Executive Board activity;
- (3) Unusual accomplishment of the Service's mission through utilization of Federal Executive Board resources, interagency relations and cooperation;
- (4) Other acts sufficiently outstanding to merit special recognition.

8. The Commissioner's Award for Exemplary Secretarial Achievements

- a. **Purpose:** One award may be granted each year by the Commissioner to a secretary who clearly exemplifies in an outstanding manner the primary characteristics of the secretarial profession. It provides a means of giving well deserved recognition to a group of individuals who, by their efficient and dedicated service, have made notable contributions to the operations of the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Recipients of this award will receive a cash reward of \$1,000.
- b. **Eligibility:** Any individual who serves in a secretarial capacity will be eligible for this award, which is conferred in addition to any other recognition under the incentive awards program, such as a Supervisor Accomplishment Award or a Quality Step Increase.
- c. **Criteria:** To be eligible for consideration, the employee's achievement, service or contribution must show at least one of the following:
 - (1) performance of secretarial duties in such an outstanding manner as to set a noteworthy record of achievement that will inspire other secretaries to attain equally high standards of performance;
 - (2) demonstration of remarkable skills, initiative and/or creative ability in a complex assignment for which the nominee was primarily responsible, or through participation in a special Service project or program, that resulted in significant benefits to the Service's program.
 - (3) implementation of an innovative idea that resulted in the increased efficiency and/or effectiveness of a Service program.

9. The Commissioners Productivity Improvement Award

- a. **Purpose:** This award shall be conferred annually concurrent with the Attorney General's Award Ceremony to the individual(s) and team(s) making the greatest contribution to productivity improvement in INS within the preceding fiscal year. The award is to be accompanied by a cash award in conformance with the incentive awards programs.
- b. **Eligibility:** Any GS, GM or Wage Grade employee, supervisory or non-supervisory or group.
- c. **Nominations:** Since productivity improvement should be a high priority in all phases of INS endeavors, a nominating committee of six senior officials will recommend individual recipients or teams to the INS Incentive Awards Board. Up to four awards may be granted annually to separate qualifying individuals or teams.
 - (1) The nominating Committee shall consist of a senior level official, GM-15 or above, from each of the Executive Associate Commissioner's Offices in Headquarters, one representative from a regional office (to be rotated annually in the following order: Western Region, Eastern Region, Central Region), and a chairperson, the Director of the Office of Internal Audit.
 - (2) Proposed nominations to be made by the Nominating Committee must be selected from and limited to submissions to the Commissioners "Management Improvement and Productivity Program" (MIPP).

d. Criteria - This award is intended to span all levels. It is used to award initiative and creativity in the workplace, with an emphasis on identifying and implementing efficiencies. Each of the following factors should be considered:

(1) Initiatives involving substantial efficiencies (cost savings) which have been implemented.

(2) Initiatives involving substantially increased effectiveness measures (enhancing the obtaining of objectives and goals at the same or slightly higher costs) which have been implemented.

Attachment H - PROCEDURES

HONORARY AWARDS: ATTORNEY GENERALS AWARDS INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION 1.3.202

1. Attorney General's Award for Exceptional Service

a. Description: This is the highest award granted by the Attorney General within the Department of Justice and only one is awarded each year. The Attorney General may grant an accompanying cash award if merited by the employee's contributions or performance. Nominees for the Exceptional Service Award who are not selected will be automatically considered for the Distinguished Service Award. If a cash award is involved, the recommendation must be accompanied by a statement that funds are available in the budget for the appropriate activity.

b. Criteria: Achievements or contributions must show at least one of the following:

- (1) The performance of a special service in the public interest which is over and above normal requirements and of an outstanding and distinctive character in terms of improved operations, public understanding of the Department's mission, or accomplishments of one of the major goals of the Department.
- (2) Exceptionally outstanding contribution to the Department of Justice and/or exceptionally outstanding leadership in the administration of major programs which resulted in highly successful accomplishments to meet unique or emergency situations.
- (3) Extraordinary courage and voluntary risk of life in performing an act resulting in direct benefits to the Department or the nation.

2. Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service

a. Description: This is the second highest Department of Justice award granted by the Attorney General. No more than eight Distinguished Service Awards will be awarded annually. The Attorney General may grant an accompanying cash award if merited by the employee contribution or performance.

b. Criteria: Superior performance of normal duties will not, in itself, justify this award. To be eligible for consideration, the employee's achievement or service must show at least one of the following:

- (1) The accomplishment of assigned duties in such an outstanding manner as to be clearly noteworthy among all those who have performed similar duties, or performance of assigned tasks in such an exemplary manner as to set a record of achievement that will inspire others to improve the quality and/or quantity of their work.
- (2) The exercise of unusual courage or competence in an emergency while on official duty.
- (3) The rendering of professional service of a unique or distinctive character worthy of significant honorary recognition.
- (4) Distinguished conduct in the performance of duties over a period of years in a position of responsibility that involves exercise of authority and judgment in matters of marked significance.

3. John Marshall Award

a. Description: The John Marshall Award, named for the fourth Chief Justice of the United States, is designed to recognize outstanding professional achievement by attorneys of the Department of Justice. There will be one award granted annually in each of the following six areas:

- (1) Trial of litigation;
- (2) Preparation of litigation;
- (3) Support of litigation;
- (4) Handling of appeals;
- (5) Providing legal advice or preparing legislation;
- (6) Interagency cooperation in support of litigation.

b. Criteria: All attorneys employed by the Department of Justice are eligible for the award in the first five areas. A nominee must have demonstrated outstanding legal accomplishment in one of these areas. The sixth area, interagency cooperation in support of litigation, will be available to recognize an attorney or group of attorneys from client agencies who have rendered exceptionally helpful assistance to the Department in high-visibility litigation. This award category will demonstrate the benefits which inure to the public when the existing allocation of litigation responsibility operates without friction between the Department and the client agency, and will recognize the agency's attorney(s) for the role they play in such cooperative endeavors.

4. Attorney General's Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement

a. Description: The Attorney General's Award for Excellence in Law Enforcement is designed to recognize outstanding professional achievement by a law enforcement officer of the Department of Justice. There will be one award granted annually.

b. Definition: The term "law enforcement officer" means an employee whose primary duties are the investigation, apprehension, or detention of individuals suspected or convicted of offenses against the criminal laws of the United States.

c. Criteria: All law enforcement officers employed by the Department of Justice are eligible. A nominee must have demonstrated unusual courage or outstanding accomplishments in the field of law enforcement. Nominations may be submitted by heads of offices, boards, divisions, or bureaus for employees of other Department organizations if they have sufficient knowledge of the employee's performance. However, these nominations must also bear the endorsement of the Commissioner in order to be considered for the award.

5. Attorney General's Award for Equal Employment Opportunity

a. Description: The Attorney General's Award for Equal Employment Opportunity is designed to recognize the most significant contribution or contributions to the Equal Employment Opportunity Program. Only one award will be granted annually.

b. Criteria: This award is not restricted to EEO program officials. A nomination may be for any manager, employee or group of employees who have made significant contributions to the Department's EEO program. These contributions could be in the areas of leadership, training, recruitment, conciliation or any other activity that enhances employment opportunities for women and minorities including Black, Hispanics, Native Americans and Asian Americans within any organizational component of the Department.

6. Attorney General's Award for Upward Mobility

a. Description: The Attorney General's Award for Upward Mobility is designed to recognize the most significant contribution or contributions by an individual to the Upward Mobility Program. One award will be granted annually if a significant contribution is identified.

b. Criteria: This award is not restricted to Upward Mobility Program Officials. A nomination may be for any manager or employee who has made significant contributions to the Department's Upward Mobility Program. These contributions could be in the areas of leadership, training, program development, program implementation or any other activity that enhances upward mobility opportunities for lower grade employees of the Department.

7. Attorney General's Award for Excellent in Legal Support

a. Description: The Attorney General's Award for Excellence in Legal Support is designed to recognize outstanding achievements in the field of legal

- a. Description: The Attorney General's Award for Excellence in Legal Support is designed to recognize outstanding achievements in the field of legal support to attorneys. Two awards will be granted each year; one in the area of Paralegal support, and the second for Legal Secretary support.
- b. Criteria: All Paralegal Specialists and Legal Secretaries, grades GS-12 and below are eligible for nomination. A nominee must have demonstrated outstanding performance in the field of legal support over a sustained period of time or have displayed extraordinary achievements that overcame unusual difficulties or unique situations of high importance to the mission of the employee's organization. While nominations may be initiated by the employee's immediate supervisor, they must contain the personal endorsement of the Commissioner and only one employee per category may be nominated by any office, board, division, or bureau.

8. Attorney General's Award for Excellence in Administrative Support

- a. Description: The Attorney General's Award for Excellence in Administrative Support is designed to recognize outstanding administrative or managerial achievements. Two awards will be granted each year; one in the area of Administrative support (e.g., Personnel, Information Systems, Budget, etc.), and the second for general, non-legal Secretarial Support.
- b. Criteria: All administrative and secretarial personnel, grades GS-12 and below are eligible for nomination. A nominee must have demonstrated outstanding performance in the field of administrative support over a sustained period of time or have displayed extraordinary achievements that overcame unusual difficulties or unique situations of high importance to the mission of the employee's organization. While nominations may be initiated by the immediate supervisor, they must contain the personal endorsement of the Commissioner and only one employee per category may be nominated by any office, board, division, or bureau.

Attachment I - PROCEDURES

CONSENT TO RELEASE INFORMATION FOR AWARD CONSIDERATION: INCENTIVE AWARDS/EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE 1.3.202

You have been nominated for an award sponsored by an external non-federal organization. The information contained in the nomination is required by the organization in its nominating procedures for award consideration. The Department of Justice is prohibited from releasing this information without your consent. The sponsoring organization has informed this office that without this information they will eliminate you from further consideration for this particular award. This information will only be disseminated to the organization listed below. Copies of your nomination and any endorsements are available for review by you in your servicing Human Resources Office.

RELEASE OF INFORMATION STATEMENT:

I hereby give my consent for the release of the personal information contained in my nomination for the award to the sponsoring organization for award consideration.

Date Signature

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