



Ohio Department of Agriculture Employee Recognition Program Policy and Procedures

Purpose

The Director's Award for Employee Excellence is awarded to individual Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA) employees for work-related achievements. Those individuals who are nominated for the Director's Award are also eligible to be nominated by the Nominating Committee for the Governor's Award for Employee Excellence. Nominations for the Director's Award will be accepted from Chiefs or Directors of a Division, or nominations from subordinates with their Division Chief or Director's endorsement. Each nominee's performance should be beyond that which would be expected from an employee who is fulfilling all the duties and requirements of the job.

Each nomination must include a clear description of the service, achievement, or accomplishment and must be based on one or more of the following criteria:

- The service, achievement, or accomplishment involved the development of division/agency/state policy or improved methods or procedures that resulted in significant increased productivity, cost-savings or revenue enhancements, efficiency, or service to the state or agency;
- The service, achievement, or accomplishment must have division-wide or agency-wide impact, multi-agency, or statewide impact; or
- The service, achievement, or accomplishment must have significantly enhanced the image, prestige, or effectiveness of the division, agency, or state.

Each employee selected by the Nominating Committee for the Director's Award for Employee Excellence will receive a monetary award of \$25 in the form of a Visa gift card, and will receive the right to park where the "Employee Excellence Award Winner" parking placard is placed.

Authority

Pursuant to Ohio Revised Code Section 124.17, the DAS director is authorized to establish programs to recognize exemplary service of state employees. The supporting administrative rules include Ohio Administrative Code Sections 123:1-27-04 and 123:1-27-05. These rules broadly prescribe the requirements of an employee recognition program for state agencies, boards, and commissions as approved by the DAS director.

Roles and Responsibilities

- **Director and/or Director's designee.** Participates in recognizing the recipients of the Director's Award for Employee Excellence, and receives and confirms the award recommendations from the Nominating Committee. May also serve as the chair for the



Nominating Committee. Provides final recommendation on nomination of any employee for the Governor's Award for Employee Excellence.

- **Nominating Committee.** Reviews all nominations received from Division Chiefs, Division Directors, or nominations submitted by subordinates and endorsed by these individuals. Seeks clarification and/or requests additional information regarding nominations, if needed. Provides award finalist recommendations for the Director's Award and the Governor's Award to the Director and/or Director's designee. The composition of the Nominating Committee will include the Director and/or the Director's designee, the Assistant Director, each Deputy Director, the Director of Human Resources Division, the Chief or Assistant Chief of Legal Division, and the Chief of Finance Division. Legal and Human Resources will provide support for the Nominating Committee.

The Nominating Committee is expected to meet, at a minimum, twice a year, March/April and September/October, to review nominations and to make finalist selections.

On an annual basis, the Nominating Committee will evaluate the Director's Award for Employee Excellence program to identify needed improvements and modifications. Feedback will be sought from Chiefs and Directors of the Divisions. Comments and suggestions received from the award recipients will also be collected through the year and will be considered. Human Resources will coordinate this annual evaluation.

- **Division Chiefs and Directors.** Establishes and maintains a means or method to identify potential award nominees in their respective divisions. Nominates individuals or groups from their respective division (or other divisions, if extraordinary work is performed by another division for that Chief or Director's division) on a semi-annual basis for consideration by the Nominating Committee. Ensures that award recipients are scheduled for and are able to attend the award ceremony. Chiefs and Directors will need to set-up a custodial process for the gift card in the event a Director's Award for Employee Excellence recipient is unable to attend the award ceremony.
- **Awards Coordinator.** Designated by the Director. Ensures nominations have been reviewed by the Human Resources Division prior to review by the Nominating Committee. Organizes and distributes electronic copies of nominees' nomination forms to each Nominating Committee member in advance of meeting. Schedules committee meetings and notifies members of meeting date, location, and time. Provides support, as needed, before, during, and after Nominating Committee meetings. Assists Director and Nominating Committee in preparing for and executing the award ceremonies.
- **Nominees.** Nominees are full-time state employees whose Division Chief or Director has deemed them to be candidates for the Director's Award for Employee Excellence. Nominations will be submitted to the Awards Coordinator, reviewed by the Nominating



Committee from which finalists will be identified, and submitted to the Director by the Awards Coordinator for final approval.

Awards

Each employee selected for the Director's Award for Employee Excellence will receive a monetary award of \$25 in the form of a Visa gift card and a certificate from the Director that is suitable for framing. The employee will also receive the right to park in a parking space marked where the "Employee Excellence Award Winner" parking placard is placed up and until a new award winner is identified. The value of the award and any benefits associated with the award may be reassessed annually by the Director in consultation with the DAS Director and the Chief of Finance.

Funding the Awards

The Chief of Finance will procure the awards (i.e. Visa gift cards) on behalf of the Nominating Committee upon submission of the nominees approved by the Director.

Award Eligibility and Restrictions

An ODA employee or work group of ODA employees must meet the following criteria to be eligible to receive a Director's Award for Employee Excellence:

- Be a full-time permanent, non-probationary, bargaining unit or exempt state employee;
- Have received an overall rating of at least satisfactory or the equivalent in the employee's most recent performance review; and
- Have no current discipline in employee's personnel file. Chiefs and Directors of divisions may ask for a waiver of this requirement for extenuating circumstances. The eligibility of such nominations would be considered on a case-by-case basis.

In addition, the following restrictions apply:

- An employee can be nominated multiple times, but should only receive one award (\$25 award) in any given 12-month period; and
- The members of the Nominating Committee should be ineligible to receive the award during the members' tenure on the committee, or if nominated, shall be excused from any deliberations of the Nominating Committee during the awards period they have been nominated. In this event, an independent third person from ODA, either a Chief or Director of a Division, shall be substituted on the Nominating Committee in lieu of the nominated member. The selection of this individual shall be in the Director's discretion.

An award may be presented to an individual ODA employee or group of ODA employees.

Submission of Nominations

All documents and forms for the Director's Award for Employee Excellence can be found on ODA's website. This site will also support the electronic submission of nominees by Chiefs and Directors. Paper copies or email copies of the nomination form will also be accepted.



Nominations. The Director's Award for Employee Excellence nomination form must be completed and submitted for each nominee. The form seeks basic information about the employee and detailed information that explains and describes the accomplishments achieved by the employee(s). The final section of the nomination form is reserved for completion by ODA's Director of Human Resources to ensure that the employee is eligible to receive the award.

Selection process. Nominations for the Director's Award for Employee Excellence are submitted by each division's chief or director to the Awards Coordinator. The Nominating Committee will be responsible for reviewing each Director's Award for Employee Excellence nomination and for making award recommendations for the Director's Award to the Director and/or Director's designee. The Nominating Committee will also be responsible for reviewing the same nominations and making an award recommendation for the Governor's Award for Employee Excellence to the Director and/or the Director's designee.

The Awards Coordinator will submit all nominations selected by the Nominating Committee to the Director for final review and concurrence. Upon receipt of the Director's concurrence, the Awards Coordinator is expected to notify the employee and the employee's Chief and/or Director of the award and make plans for the employee to attend the awards ceremony. It is recommended that any individual who is nominated for a Governor's Award is also first the recipient of the Director's Award.

Selection criteria. Examples of evaluation criteria for a nomination could be as follows:

- Supports internal and/or external customers in ways that exceed expectations and result in positive and/or noteworthy outcomes;
- Demonstrates highly effective and/or innovative techniques that inspire and/or lead others to contribute constructively to reaching the desired goal or vision;
- Designs, develops, and/or implements innovative methods or processes that improve or enhance responsiveness and quality;
- Demonstrates superior performance in completing an assignment or special project.
- Identifies improvements to practices, policies, and/or program designs that result in substantial cost savings, cost prevention, and/or revenue enhancement; and
- Enhances the image and/or prestige of a division, ODA, the State of Ohio, and/or public services.

Recognition Process/Award Ceremony

The receipt, selection, and announcement of awards will occur twice a year. Award ceremonies will be scheduled for 15 minutes during the Director's Annual Hog Roast in May and during the Christmas Banquet in December. The timelines for submissions and review of nominations and selection of nominees are as follows:

May Ceremony.

- Nominations must be submitted to the Awards Coordinator by **February 25**.



- Finalist nominations for the Director’s Award and Governor’s Award as selected by the Nominating Committee must be provided to the Director by **March 10**.
- The Awards Coordinator shall provide the nominations for the Governor’s Award approved by the Director to DAS by **March 15**.

The awards ceremony shall be in May during the Director’s Annual Hog Roast.

December Ceremony.

- Nominations must be submitted to the Awards Coordinator by **August 25**.
- Finalist nominations for the Director’s Award and Governor’s Award as selected by the Nominating Committee must be provided to the Director by **September 10**.
- The Awards Coordinator shall provide the nominations for the Governor’s Award as approved by the Director to DAS by **September 15**.

The awards ceremony shall be in December during the Christmas Banquet.

The exact time and location will be determined based on the Director’s schedule.

Award: Applying Tax to Employee’s Pay

The DAS-HRD Office of HCM and Agency Support (DAS) will manually add the \$25 to the employee’s earnings as supplemental income after notification of the award to the employee by ODA’s Division of Human Resources. ODA’s Division of Human Resources shall provide the amount of the award and the employee’s information to DAS no later than 10 days after the award has been made to the employee. ODA shall request the amount to be added as supplemental income. DAS will deduct the appropriate taxes from each employee’s pay in the same pay period in which the award is received by the employee if possible. The payment will be reported on the employees’ W-2 Wage and Tax Statement because it is compensation to the employee. (IRS Publication 15: Employer’s Tax Guide).

Data/Reports

ODA’s Division of Human Resources shall serve as the custodian of records for the Director’s Award for Employee Excellence. Information maintained shall include: 1) annual costs of the program, 2) award recipients, 3) ceremony dates and locations.

Report any questions or concerns to:

Director of Human Resources, Traci Orahood, 614-466-5339

Revision History

Date	Description of Change
7/2014	Initial Policy Issued