
Ocean City Fire Department
Standard Operating Guidelines

General Policies

Subject: Awards and Commendations
Revised: 12.12.2019
Effective: 02.02.2020
Approved: 01.10.2020
Section: 216.00

216.01 Purpose

To provide a means whereby deserving fire department members, employees, and members of the general public will receive official departmental and public recognition for outstanding acts of valor or meritorious service to the community and the department.

216.02 Commendation Committee

- A. The Fire Chief and the President shall jointly appoint a Commendation Committee of at least five (5) members; consisting of any combination of two fire line officers, (Captain, and Lieutenant), at least two Active Firefighters, with at least one (1) award winner from a previous year, with representation of at least one (1) person from each of the three divisions (OCVFC, Fire/EMS, Office of the Fire Marshal).
- B. The Committee will serve a one (1) year term beginning 1 March, and ending the last day of February the following year.
- C. The committee shall choose its own chairman.

216.03 Nomination Procedure

- A. Any Fire Department member may submit a nomination for an award to the Chairman of the Commendation Committee.
- B. The nomination and all related material shall be submitted promptly after accomplishment. It is recommended that nominations are submitted within 30 days following the act on which it is based, but no later than January 1st following the year in which it occurred.
- C. All nominations must be appropriately justified and sufficiently detailed to allow proper evaluation and decision.
- D. Each nomination must be submitted on an OCFD Awards Nomination Form.
- E. All nominations shall include the following, if applicable:
 - 1. Statement of at least one (1) eyewitness
 - 2. Date/Time of the Incident
 - 3. Names of all persons present
 - 4. Any injury to person being nominated, if applicable
 - 5. Narrative account of the incident
 - 6. Related official reports (Fire/Police/FMO), if applicable

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216.04 Awards and Selection Procedure

- A. The Commendation Committee shall review recommendations for specific commendations and awards, as noted herein. Those commendations and awards that are otherwise selected are noted.
- B. Each accomplishment shall be considered and voted on separately, even those involving a joint endeavor. The committee may call witnesses and request records regarding the matter considered.
- C. The Chairman shall submit the Committee's recommendations in writing to the Chief(s) and/or President, who, upon consideration of the criteria described, may accept or reject the recommendations.
- D. If accepted, a document recording the award shall be placed in the member's personnel file, and the corresponding medal(s), commendation ribbon(s) and/or certificate shall be presented in a timely manner at either a formal or informal gathering of the Department.
- E. It is the responsibility of the Committee Chairman to ensure notices of its approval are sent to those personnel making the recommendations, completed within 7 days of the decision. Should the personnel making the recommendations disagree with the finding of the Committee, they may forward correspondence to the Committee requesting an appeal as noted herein.
- F. The Committee, at its discretion, can recommend the presentation of a different award it feels is more appropriate for the act.

216.05 Appeal Procedure

- A. The Commendation Committee will, upon receiving correspondence from personnel recommending a commendation, grant one (1) appeal hearing of the decision of the Committee.
- B. All appeals must be filed within 5 calendar days of the notification of the Commendation Committee's final decision.
- C. The Chief and President will jointly appoint an Appellate Committee to mirror that of the Awards Committee.
- D. The Appellate Committee may grant appeal hearings on late filed appeals ONLY when it is shown that the request to appeal was delayed due to newly found evidence or to correct an injustice.
- E. The writer of the appeal, or a designee familiar with the nomination, should appear in person before the Committee to discuss the reasons for the appeal. A written appeal may be accepted; however, it limits the Committee's discussion to what is presented in writing.
- F. The finding of the appeal, along with the original nomination, will be forwarded to the Chief(s) and/or President, along with a recommendation for consideration, to reach a final decision within 5 calendar days.

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216.06 Types of Commendations

The following commendations may be awarded for significant accomplishment:

A. Medal of Honor

The Department's Highest Award- Awarded posthumously to a member of the Department who, in the line of duty, makes the ultimate sacrifice by giving his or her life serving the community. Award is presented to family member of deceased.

Award: Medal
Commendation ribbon (Blue/White/Red)
Framed Certificate

Awarded to: Any member of the Department

Presented by: Chief Officer

B. Medal of Valor

Awarded for an act of heroism, bravery or courage involving personal risk or imminent personal danger to life; or saving or attempting to save the life of another with knowledge of the danger inherent to the act; beyond that which is expected in the line of duty.

Award: Medal
Commendation ribbon (Red/White/Red)
Engraved plaque

Awarded to: Any member of the Department

Presented by: Chief Officer and/or Incident Commander

C. Lifesaving Commendation

Awarded to departmental personnel who used excellent judgment and went above and beyond what is expected of him/her, which resulted in the saving of a human life.

Award: Commendation Ribbon (White/Blue/Red/Blue/White)
Engraved plaque

Awarded to: Any member of the Department

Presented by: Mayor and City Council

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D. Honorable Discharge

Awarded to any member who successfully completes 25 years or more of honorable service to the City and retires (employee) or is placed on the Gold Badge Roster (volunteer).

Award: Display Medal (Seal of Ocean City & White/Blue Ribbon)
 Commendation Ribbon (White/Blue with Gold Star center)
 Certificate of Appreciation (Mayor and City Council)

Awarded to: Any member of the Department with 25 years of Service

Presented by: Chief Officer
 Mayor and City Council

E. Distinguished Service

Awarded for a highly creditable accomplishment, display of perseverance or an independent humanitarian action taken by personnel outside of the responsibilities of the Department, thereby actively promoting the welfare of the department and the community, or bringing public acclaim to the Ocean City Fire Department.

Award: Commendation ribbon (Blue/White/Blue)
 Engraved plaque

Awarded to: Any member of the Department

Presented by: Chief Officer

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F. Firefighter of the Year (Ralph R. Dennis Award)

Awarded annually by the OCVFC Chiefs to the member who sets an example of performance, in a firefighting capacity, above and beyond that of his peers. The Chiefs shall consider total points accumulated by the individual in Formal Training (as it pertains to firefighting,) Drills, Sleep Ins/Duty Crews, Alarms, and Collateral Duties (as it pertains to firefighting) as a guide, but not as the sole source of award determination.

Award: Commendation ribbon (White/Red)
Engraved plaque

Awarded to: OCVFC personnel

Presented by: OCVFC Chief Officer

G. Firefighter of the Year (Fire-EMS Division)

Awarded annually to one member of the Fire-EMS Division who demonstrates above average work ethics in the Fire Service, and puts forth the extra effort for Customer Service, both internal and external. Personnel are peer nominated, and selected by the Fire/EMS Division command staff.

Award: Commendation ribbon (White/Red)
Engraved plaque.

Awarded to: Fire/EMS Division personnel

Presented by: Fire/EMS Division Chief Officer

H. Paramedic of the Year (Fire-EMS Division)

Awarded annually to one member of the Fire-EMS Division who demonstrates above average work ethics in the EMS field and puts forth the extra effort for customer service, both internal and external. Personnel are peer nominated, and selected by the Fire/EMS Division command staff.

Award: Commendation Ribbon (White w/ Gold Star Center)
Engraved plaque

Awarded to: Fire/EMS Division personnel

Presented by: Fire/EMS Division Chief Officer

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I. Master Blaster Commendation

Awarded to public safety bomb technicians, assigned to the Bomb Squad, who have successfully completed basic Hazardous Device School certification, and continued the training and physical requirements to maintain this certification for a minimum period of ten (10) years.

Award: Commendation Ribbon (Black with Silver Star)
Engraved Plaque

Awarded to: Bomb Squad Personnel

Presented by: Bomb Squad Commander

J. Member of the Year (F. Michael Sacca Award)

Awarded annually by the Board of Directors to the member who sets an example of performance, in an administrative capacity, above and beyond that of his or her peers. The Board of Directors shall consider total points accumulated by the individual in Formal Training (as it pertains to administrative duties,) Elected/Non-Salaried positions, and Collateral Duties (as they pertain to administrative duties) as a guide, but not as the sole source of award determination.

Award: Commendation ribbon (Blue/White)
Engraved plaque

Awarded to: OCVFC Personnel

Presented by: OCVFC President

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K. Training (Alfred E. Harmon Award)

Awarded annually to the OCVFC individual personnel who accumulates the most hours of advanced training (above MFRI Firefighter I) in a one (1) calendar year period. The top four (4) runners-up shall receive honorable mention at the same time the award is presented. Members who are at any time during the aforementioned year employed by any organization that mandates or compensates an individual for specific training for continued employment and/or continuing education and/or recertification may not include this training when totaling hours for award consideration.

Award: Commendation ribbon (Red/Blue)
Engraved plaque

Certificate: (Honorable Mention(s))

Awarded to: OCVFC personnel

Presented by: OCVFC Chief Officer

L. Chief's Award (Harry J. Cropper Award)

Selected and awarded annually by the OCVFC Chief to the member who best exemplifies the selflessness and dedication necessary to serve the company in an operational capacity.

Award: Commendation Ribbon (White/Red Multi)
Engraved plaque

Awarded to: OCVFC personnel

Presented by: OCVFC Chief Officer

M. President's Award (Capt. W.B.S. Powell Award)

Selected and awarded annually by the OCVFC President to the member of the Ocean City Volunteer Fire Company who best exemplifies the selflessness and dedication necessary to serve the company in an administrative capacity.

Award: Commendation ribbon (White/Blue Multi)
Engraved plaque

Awarded to: OCVFC personnel

Presented by: OCVFC President

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N. Unit Citation

Awarded to a Division, Shift, Platoon, or Crew for meritorious service or outstanding achievement, wherein the designated unit is clearly set above and apart from other units.

Award: Commendation Ribbon (Light Blue)
Certificate

Awarded to: Any group of members of the Department

Presented by: Incident Commander or Chief Officer

O. Incident Citation

Awarded to personnel operating on, or supporting, an emergency incident that required above-average teamwork, perseverance, or involved an act of exemplary performance beyond that of a normal incident.

Award: Commendation Ribbon (Green/White Multi)
Certificate

Awarded to: All personnel operating on/supporting a noted incident

Presented by: Incident Commander or Chief Officer

P. Resuscitation Award

Awarded to personnel participating in the successful resuscitation of a patient from a confirmed cardiac arrest by an EMS provider. The successful resuscitation is defined as a patient who is discharged from the hospital with a cerebral perfusion score of a 1 or 2.

Award: Commendation Ribbon (White/Blue/Gold/Blue/White)

Awarded to: All personnel operating on/supporting a noted incident

Presented by: Incident Commander or Chief Officer, & CPR Survivor

Q. Emergency Management Operations Commendation

Awarded to personnel on duty (working or volunteering) when the Town of Ocean City activates the Emergency Operations Center for an unusual occurrence such as: hurricane, blizzard, northeaster, etc.

Award: Commendation ribbon (White/Green)
Certificate

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Awarded to: Any member of the Department

Awarded by: Incident Commander or Chief Officer

R. Authorized Special Operations Units Badges & Ribbons

1. Bomb Squad
 - a. Hazardous Devices Technician Badge (Silver or Gold HDT)
Awarded by Bomb Squad Commander to personnel upon completion of Hazardous Devices School

2. Marine Unit
 - a. Vessel Operator Badge (Silver/Gold Anchor)
Awarded by Marine Unit Officer in Charge to personnel upon completion of Vessel Operator training and completed examination board. Worn along with Marine Unit Crew Ribbon.
 - b. Marine Unit Crew Ribbon (Gray/Blue)
Awarded by Marine Unit Officer in Charge to personnel upon completion of Crew Member training.

3. Water Rescue Unit
 - a. Dive Team Badge (Silver Diver Helmet)
Awarded by Dive Team Officer in Charge to personnel upon completion of PADI Basic, Advanced, Rescue Diver and Dive Rescue International Dive Rescue 1 Certifications.

4. Field Training Officer
 - a. Awarded by the department for those personnel assigned Field Training responsibilities.

S. Years of Service Awards

The following commendation ribbons/certifications shall be given for Years of Active Service to the Department. For OCVFC Personnel, this is noted as Active Years. For employees, this is noted as Full-Time Service:

Commendation Ribbons:

5 Years	Gold
10 Years	Red
15 Years	Red/Gold
20 Years	Blue
25 Years	Blue/Gold
30 Years	Blue/Red Multi
35 Years	Gold/Green Multi
40 Years	Green

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45 Years	Green/Gold
50 Years	White
55 Years	White/Gold
60 Years	Burgundy

25 Years of Service and every 5 years of Active Service thereafter:

- a. Commendation Ribbon (as noted above)
- b. Congressional Years of Service Citation
- c. Town of Ocean City Years of Service Citation
- d. Governor's Citation
- e. House of Delegates Years of Service Resolution
- f. Worcester County Commissioners Years of Service Accommodation
- g. Senatorial Years of Service Resolution

50 Years of Service:

- a. Commendation Ribbon (as noted above)
- b. Governmental citations/resolutions (as noted above)
- c. Engraved axe & plaque

Awarded to: Any member of the Department with noted service

Presented by: Chief Officer & Governmental Representatives

T. Citizen Service Certificate

Awarded when a civilian assists in an emergency situation or provides services, which may be deemed beneficial to the Ocean City Fire Department.

Award: Framed Certificate

Awarded to: Selected civilians

Presented by: Chief Officer

U. Citizen Appreciation Certificate

Awarded to a citizen for an act that material contributes to the Ocean City Fire Department.

Award: Framed Certificate

Awarded to: Selected civilians

Presented by: Chief Officer

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216.07 Appurtenance

In cases where personnel receive multiple commendations of the same type, a numeral shall be displayed on the commendation ribbon to indicate each award after the initial. Duplicate commendation ribbons shall not be displayed on the uniform.

The exception to the numbering of additional awards is the Emergency Operations Commendation, and Resuscitation Award. After the initial award, these commendations will not receive numbered ribbons. Members will continue to receive a certificate for each additional time this commendation is awarded.

216.08 Proper Display of Ribbons & Badges

- A. Commendation ribbons shall be displayed only on Class A, Ocean City Uniforms.

- B. Except for those state/international commendations listed below, no other ribbons shall be displayed upon Ocean City uniforms:

Federal Awards

Presidential Citizens Medal
Presidential Medal of Freedom
Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor (President)
Secretary's Award for Distinguished Public Safety Service (FEMA)
Gold Lifesaving Medal (USCG)
Silver Lifesaving Medal (USCG)

Maryland State Fireman's Association

Oscar Baker Rookie of the Year Award (Outstanding Rookie Firefighter/EMS Provider)
Francis L. Brannigan Instructor of the Year Award
Colburn Trophy Award (Heroism)
MSFA Firefighter of the Year
Marbery F. Gates Service Cup (50+ Years of Service)
Gladhill-Thompson Trophy (Contribution to MSFA)
Hall of Fame Award (Distinguished Service to MSFA/Dept)
Josiah A. Hunt, MD: EMS Person of the Year Award
Robert H. Shimer Administrative Person of the Year Award
Silver Spring Trophy (Recognizes fire prevention efforts of individual)
Smith N. Stathem, Jr. P.P. Memorial Safety Award (Recognizes contributions to firefighter/EMS safety)

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Miscellaneous Awards

Ocean City Police Department Awards/Commendations

(Sworn Office of the Fire Marshal Personnel)

Ray Downey Courage and Valor Award (Fire Engineering)

Heroism & Community Service Awards (Firehouse Magazine)

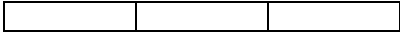
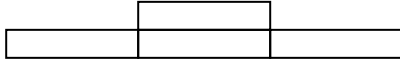
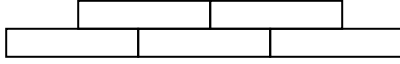
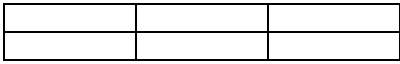
Green Cross (Hale Products Corporation.

Additional awards, as determined by the Committee.

- C. Ribbons & Medals: For Commendations where both ribbons and medals are awarded (Medal of Valor, Honorable Discharge), only the ribbon shall be displayed on the uniform.
- D. Ribbons will be worn on the right breast (left side when facing the uniform) and arranged starting at the top left (closest to the arm seam), moving right across the top row towards the lapel, then down to second and subsequent rows, in the following order of importance:
1. Medal of Honor
 2. Medal of Valor
 3. Life Saving Commendation
 4. Green Cross
 5. Honorable Service
 6. Distinguished Service
 7. Firefighter/Paramedic of the Year
 8. Master Blaster Commendation
 9. Special Commendation
 10. Member of the Year
 11. Training Award
 12. Chief's Award
 13. President's Award
 14. Unit Citation
 15. Incident Citation
 16. Resuscitation Award
 17. Special Operations Unit Ribbon
 18. Emergency Management Operations
 19. Years of Service Award
 20. Additional non-Ocean City Awards

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- E. Ribbons shall be worn in rows of no more than three (3) wide, with partial rows (1 or 2 ribbons) centered above the lower row of three, as diagrammed below:

3 Ribbons	Row of 3 Ribbons	
4 Ribbons	Single Ribbon (centered above) Row of 3 Ribbons	
5 Ribbons	Two Ribbons (centered Above) Row of 3 Ribbons	
6 Ribbons	Row of 3 Ribbons Row of 3 Ribbons	

The uppermost row of ribbons shall be affixed to the uniform on the right breast, centered between the lapel and arm seam, and located on the same vertical plane (even with) the top of the uniform badge.

- F. Authorized Special Operations Unit Badges-
1. A maximum of two (2) Special Operations Unit badges may be displayed on the uniform at one time, and should be displayed side-by-side.
 2. Special Operations Unit badges shall be worn on the right breast, centered 1/2" above the uppermost row of commendation ribbons.

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