



# DEPARTMENT COMMENDATIONS

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## **I. POLICY & PURPOSE**

The Anne Arundel County Police Department expects a high level of professional conduct from members of the department. When members exceed the standards of the department, it is appropriate for them to be commended. The official commendation of such performance and the arrangement of appropriate publicity is provided by the department to give full public recognition to those who have brought honor to themselves and to the department.

## **II. COMMENDATION BOARD**

The Commendation Board consists of at least four (4) members who are appointed by the Chief of Police. The Board meets periodically and considers all recommendations for commendations. The Commendation Board is given access to all information regarding each recommendation, and may investigate the circumstances surrounding the recommendation in any manner it deems necessary. The Commendation Board forwards all recommendations and the results of their investigations to the Chief of Police.

The chairperson of the Commendation Board will be identified via inter-office correspondence to all personnel by the Public Information Office at least once annually and/or upon a change in the position.

## **III. DEPARTMENT COMMENDATIONS**

### **A. The Distinguished Officer Award**

The Distinguished Officer Award is awarded by the County Executive to an officer whose performance of duty during a specific police action is exceptional. The award consists of a "Distinguished Service" shoulder patch worn on the right shoulder of the uniform, and may include a monetary award provided by the county government. A certificate accompanies the award.

### **B. Department Medal of Honor**

The Department Medal of Honor is awarded when an officer, in the line of duty, performs an act of extraordinary heroism or bravery involving death, personal injury, or risk of imminent personal danger to life, in direct combat or in saving or attempting to save or rescue the life of another with knowledge of the danger assumed. The Department Medal of Honor may be awarded posthumously. The commendation ribbon is dark blue, light blue and white.

### **C. Department Silver Star Award**

The Department Silver Star Award may be awarded for:

1. An act of extraordinary police work involving grave personal danger, protecting the life of another, or effecting arrest where circumstances indicate that firearms or other deadly weapons could have been used against the member;
2. Extraordinary cases in which clues and circumstances are correctly weighed and evaluated and where diligent investigation leads to an arrest which terminated the career of one who, while at large, had been detrimental to the welfare and safety of the public;
3. An act of courage involving personal risk to one's self while protecting or saving the life of another.

The commendation ribbon is blue and silver.

**D. Department Commendation Award**

The Department Commendation Award may be awarded for:

1. An arrest of an armed adversary not necessarily at imminent risk to life, or under direct combat;
2. An act of extraordinary intelligence reflecting highly credible police accomplishment and displaying perseverance and devotion to duty, which results in the prevention or solution of a crime or act and apprehension of those responsible;
3. Saving the life of another without personal risk to one's self;
4. An arrest culminating in clearing one or more of a series of important cases through diligent investigation, alertness, and professional skill.

The commendation ribbon has a white background with red and blue stripes.

**E. Purple Heart Award**

This award is presented by the Chief of Police to a sworn member who is wounded by a weapon in the performance of his/her duty.

The Purple Heart commendation ribbon has a light blue background with red and white stripes.

**F. Chief's Award for Job Excellence**

The Chief's Award for Job Excellence is given to sworn or civilian members who the Chief of Police determines have performed their assigned tasks in a manner above and beyond the written job description. The recipients of this award are selected directly by the Chief of Police – not through the Commendation Board.

The commendation ribbon is red and white with a blue background.

**G. Department Unit/Section Award**

This award presented by the Chief of Police for those situations in which an entire Unit or Section, by displaying an extraordinary degree of teamwork, has made a significant contribution to the department's mission. The Department Unit/Section Commendation Award may be awarded for:

1. An act of extraordinary police work from a group of individuals in a particular Unit/Section that results in the prevention or solution of a crime or act and apprehension of those responsible.
2. An arrest culminating in the clearance of one or more important cases through the diligent investigation, alertness, and professional skill of a combined group of individual officers.
3. Activities, which have made a significant contribution to the Department's mission and to enhancing community welfare such as major crime prevention endeavors.

Those activities or actions cited should have occurred in the current calendar year, but may be submitted no later than January 31<sup>st</sup> of the next calendar year. Any supporting statistical information should also be based on the current calendar year; however, the Board chairperson retains the authority to consider exceptions.

The Unit/Section citation ribbon is red, white and blue. The Unit/Section Award also consists of a certificate embossed with a gold seal. Each member involved in the particular act will be named in the certificate and a letter of commendation is placed in each members' personnel file.

**H. Department Letter of Commendation**

A letter of commendation may be directed to a member for proficient performance of duty in circumstances which do not merit the aforementioned awards but where some form of recognition for distinguished service is warranted.

**I. Community Service Award**

The Community Service Award is presented by the Chief of Police for those situations in which an officer or a group of officers makes a significant difference in improving the quality of life for the citizens, the community or the neighborhood they serve.

The Community Service Award may be awarded for:

1. The development, organization, and management of a unique program specifically designed to provide the community with a service that was not previously available. Such a program will have made a significant impact upon the community or its residents by further enhancing their quality of life.
2. The consistent resolution of community conflict or problems by an individual officer. Such an officer would consistently demonstrate the ability to identify problems and seek appropriate solutions through his or her own creativity or the use of other resources. The actions of this officer will have made significant impact on the community or its residents by enhancing their quality of life.
3. The active participation of an individual officer in community events or services not directly associated with his or her employment as a police officer. The actions of this officer will have made a significant impact on the community or its residents by enhancing their quality of life.

The Community Service Award ribbon has a blue background with red and yellow stripes.

**J. Police Officer of the Year Award**

*The Police Officer of the Year Award is presented by the Chief of Police to those Field Operations Bureau officers who have performed at the highest level of expectations throughout a particular calendar year. Nominees for the award must have been recognized by their chain of command, with well-documented performance achievements, and should have been nominated for formal recognition by a bonafide community/civic, professional, fraternal, or law enforcement organization.*

*Each year, Field Operations Bureau "Division" Commanders will approve of one officer within their commands to be officially recognized and receive the department award at the annual banquet. Commanders will submit their supporting documentation to the Commendation Board Chairman by February 1<sup>st</sup> of the subsequent year.*

*The commendation ribbon is blue and white with a centered black stripe, and it may be worn indefinitely beginning with calendar year 2006 award recipients.*

**K. AWARDING OF CERTIFICATE**

In addition to the awarding of ribbons, a certificate is also given to all award recipients.

**IV. CITIZEN RECOGNITION POLICY**

A. The consistent, effective investigation, prosecution, and reduction of crime cannot be accomplished by the police without the support and cooperation of the citizens. Each citizen must recognize his or her obligation to the community and the shared responsibility for its welfare. The department seeks to further the acceptance of these duties through recognition of those citizens whose actions have contributed to the accomplishments of the department's mission or the safety of the community.

B. The award is known as the "Citizen Award for Outstanding Service to the Community". The certificate consists of a document properly inscribed stating the situation, type of assistance, and the result, and is presented by the Chief of Police.

**V. WEARING OF COMMENDATIONS**

A. Commendation ribbons are worn one half inch below the top seam of the right pocket, centered on the pocket flap button. The ribbon will be framed by a chrome or gold metal frame, depending on the rank of the officer. Members who receive more than one commendation in the same category receive a small star (silver or

gold as appropriate) for each additional commendation in that category to be placed on the ribbon. Civilian employees wearing uniforms are permitted to display ribbons on their uniform as previously stated.

B. If the Medal of Honor ribbon is worn, all other ribbons must be worn centered, directly below the Medal of Honor. If the Silver Star ribbon and the Commendation ribbon are both worn, the Commendation ribbon is worn next to and left of the Silver Star. The Purple Heart ribbon is worn to the right of the Silver Star. The Chief's Award for Job Excellence ribbon is worn to the right of the Purple Heart ribbon or Silver Star ribbon, whichever is appropriate.

#### **VI. NOMINATING PROCEDURES FOR AWARDS**

All members are encouraged to recognize outstanding performance of sworn personnel, civilian personnel and citizens. Any member who has knowledge of a commendable action deserving of recognition by one of the aforementioned awards, may submit a nomination to the Board chairperson.

A. Nominations should be submitted to the chairperson of the Commendation Board using PD form 301, "Report-Commendation Award". Nominations may be submitted as an inter-office correspondence using PD 301 as a coversheet and guide.

B. The Commendation Board chairperson will retain all submissions received for consideration. The chairperson will convene the Commendation Board as needed. All nominations for activities or actions occurring in the calendar year must be submitted by January 31<sup>st</sup> of the following calendar year.

C. At the conclusion of the Commendation Board review of a submitted nomination, a recommendation will be forwarded to the Chief of Police using PD form 301A, "Action of Commendation Board", by the Board chairperson. The appropriate PD form 301, "Report-Commendation Award", will be forwarded along with "Action of Commendation Board" form.

D. The Chief of Police will make a final ruling, which will be noted on the appropriate PD form 301A, "Action of Commendation Board". The Chief of Police will forward to the Public Information Officer (PIO) those nominations for which a final disposition has been made. The PIO will maintain a permanent file of the nominations approved by the Chief of Police. The PIO will coordinate with the Board chairperson to notify the affected personnel, and/or the nominator, in writing of the results of the nomination and the procedure to obtain their ribbon if appropriate. The PIO will forward a copy of the correspondence for the recipients of an award to both the Property Management Unit, which is responsible for distribution of the appropriate ribbons within seven workdays, and the Police Personnel Section for inclusion in the affected employee's personnel file.

E. The PIO and Police Foundation liaison officer are responsible for planning and making all the necessary arrangements for the Anne Arundel County Police Foundation Annual Awards Banquet, to be held in February of each year.

**VII. PROPONENT UNIT:** Staff Inspections Section.

**VIII. CANCELLATION:** This directive cancels Index Code 301, dated 01-15-05.