



# DEPARTMENT COMMENDATIONS

**INDEX CODE: 301**  
**EFFECTIVE DATE: 02-28-11**

---

Contents:

- I. Policy & Purpose
- II. Commendation Board
- III. Department Commendations
- IV. Citizen Recognition Policy
- V. Wearing of Commendations
- VI. Nominating Procedures for Awards
- VII. Proponent Unit
- VIII. Cancellation

## **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 are 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 *eight (8)* 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 Chief's Award ribbon is equal parts blue, white, and red.*

**G.  Department Unit/Section Citation**

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 member's personnel file.

*The Department Unit/Section Citation ribbon is blue with red and white stripes.*

**H.  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 red background with blue and white stripes.*

**I.  Police Officer/Employee of the Year Award**

The Police Officer/*Employee* of the Year Award is presented by the Chief of Police to those officers/*employees* who have performed at the highest level of expectations throughout a particular calendar year. Nominees for the award must be recognized by their chain of command, with well-documented performance achievements.

Each year, Commanders *of the following components* will approve of one officer/*employee* within their command to be officially recognized and receive the department award at the annual banquet: *Northern District, Eastern District, Southern District, Western District, Special Operations Division, Criminal Investigations Division, Special Enforcement Division and the Communications Section.* 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. *Non-sworn employees in a non-uniform assignment will be presented with a Department Certificate in lieu of the ribbon.*

*The Police Officer/Employee of the Year Award ribbon is blue with light blue, white and black stripes.*

**J.  September 11 Service Ribbon**

*The September 11 Service Ribbon is issued to commemorate the anniversary of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States. The ribbon serves as a reminder of the tragic events and recognizes the outstanding work effort put forth by Department members, both in New York City and in Anne Arundel County. The ribbon is authorized for any uniformed member of the department, sworn or civilian, who was a member of the department on September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.*

*Non-sworn employees in a non-uniform assignment will be presented with a Department Certificate in lieu of the ribbon.*

*The September 11 Service Ribbon has seven equal sized red, white and blue stripes.*

K.  *Special Events Ribbon*

*The Special Events Ribbon is authorized for any uniformed member of the department, sworn or civilian, who participated in an event that the Chief of Police determines to be a significant or historical event.*

*The ribbon is light blue with dark blue, white and gold stripes.*

*The following Special Events have been recognized as significant or historical:*

<u>2007 Annapolis Peace Conference</u>	<i>by order of Colonel James Teare, Sr., Chief of Police</i>
<u>2009 Presidential Inauguration</u>	<i>by order of Colonel James Teare, Sr., Chief of Police</i>

L.  *Physical Fitness Award*

*The Physical Fitness Award is authorized for any uniformed member of the department, sworn or civilian, who participates in the annual physical fitness assessment and achieves a level three or higher. (See Index Code 719.)*

*The ribbon is red with blue and yellow stripes.*

M.  *National Defense Ribbon*

*This ribbon is authorized for any member of the department who has been awarded the National Defense Medal, by any branch of the U.S. Armed Forces. Proof of the award must be submitted to Police Personnel.*

*The ribbon is red with yellow, blue, and white stripes.*

N.  *Commander's Award for Public Service*

*This ribbon is authorized for any member of the department who has been awarded the Commanders Award for Public Service Medal, by the United States Army. Proof of the award must be submitted to Police Personnel.*

*The ribbon is white with green stripes.*

O.  *Special Olympics Involvement Ribbon*

*This ribbon is authorized for any member of the department who has officially participated in a Special Olympics event as a certified law enforcement representative. Qualifying events include: the MSP Polar Bear Plunge, the annual Law Enforcement Torch Run and/or participation as an official at any Summer or Winter Special Olympics Games. (For uniform display purposes, the Special Olympics Involvement Ribbon is the equivalent to a Special Events Ribbon and is earned only once.)*

*The ribbon is light blue and orange.*

**P. 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.

**Q. Awarding of Certificate**

In addition to the awarding of ribbons, a certificate is also given to all award recipients, with the exception of the National Defense Ribbon and the Commanders Award for Public Service.

**R. Other Jurisdictions' Awards**

*Whenever an officer is recognized with an award from another jurisdiction, approval to wear the award must be sought from the Chief of Police. The Chief's approval (or denial) may include an alternate, similar or equivalent Anne Arundel County award. Such awards are not subject to the Commendation Board.*

**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 centered, 1/4 inch above the nameplate. Up to 12 ribbons (3 per row, 4 rows maximum) may be worn on class A and class B uniforms. The ribbon(s) will be framed by a silver or gold metal frame, depending on the rank of the officer. Military style ribbon bars are authorized for use.*

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, *up to a maximum of 4 stars (5 total awards)*. Civilian employees wearing uniforms are permitted to display ribbons on their uniform as previously stated.

B. *Ribbons will be worn in order of precedence from the wearer's left to right, with the highest in precedence on top and closest to the heart. If more than one row of ribbons is worn, the lower rows will consist of three ribbons and the next highest row will be centered above it. The following list indicates the order of precedence of ribbons.*

**DISPLAY BY PRECEDENCE**

1. Departmental Medal of Honor
2. Departmental Silver Star Award
3. Departmental Commendation Award
4. Departmental Purple Heart Award
5. Chief's Award for Job Excellence
6. Departmental Unit/Section Citation
7. Community Service Award
8. Police Officer of the Year Award
9. September 11 Service Ribbon
10. Departmental Special Events Ribbon\*
11. Departmental Physical Fitness Ribbon
12. National Defense Ribbon
13. Commander's Award for Public Service
14. Awards from other jurisdictions

<i>Commendation Award</i>	<i>Silver Star Award</i>	<i>Medal of Honor</i>
<i>Unit Citation</i>	<i>Chief's Award</i>	<i>Purple Heart Award</i>
<i>9-11 Ribbon</i>	<i>Police Officer of the Year</i>	<i>Community Service Award</i>
<i>National Defense</i>	<i>Physical Fitness</i>	<i>Special Events</i>

*Here is an example of the display order for an officer who was decorated with a Silver Star, Unit Citation, 9-11 Ribbon, Special Events Ribbon and earned the Physical Fitness Ribbon.*

	<i>Unit Citation</i>	<i>Silver Star Award</i>	
<i>Physical Fitness</i>	<i>Special Events</i>	<i>9-11 Ribbon</i>	

\*The Special Events and Special Olympics ribbons may be worn side-by-side.

**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. *An electronic copy of the nomination form and associated paperwork will also be forwarded to the Commendation Board chairperson through department email.*

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 *the 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter* of each year.

**VII. PROPONENT UNIT:** Public Information Office

**VIII. CANCELLATION:** This directive cancels Index Code 301, dated 03-23-07, and Written Directive Memorandum 09-017.