

Department of Defense (DoD)-Level Honorary Awards Guide

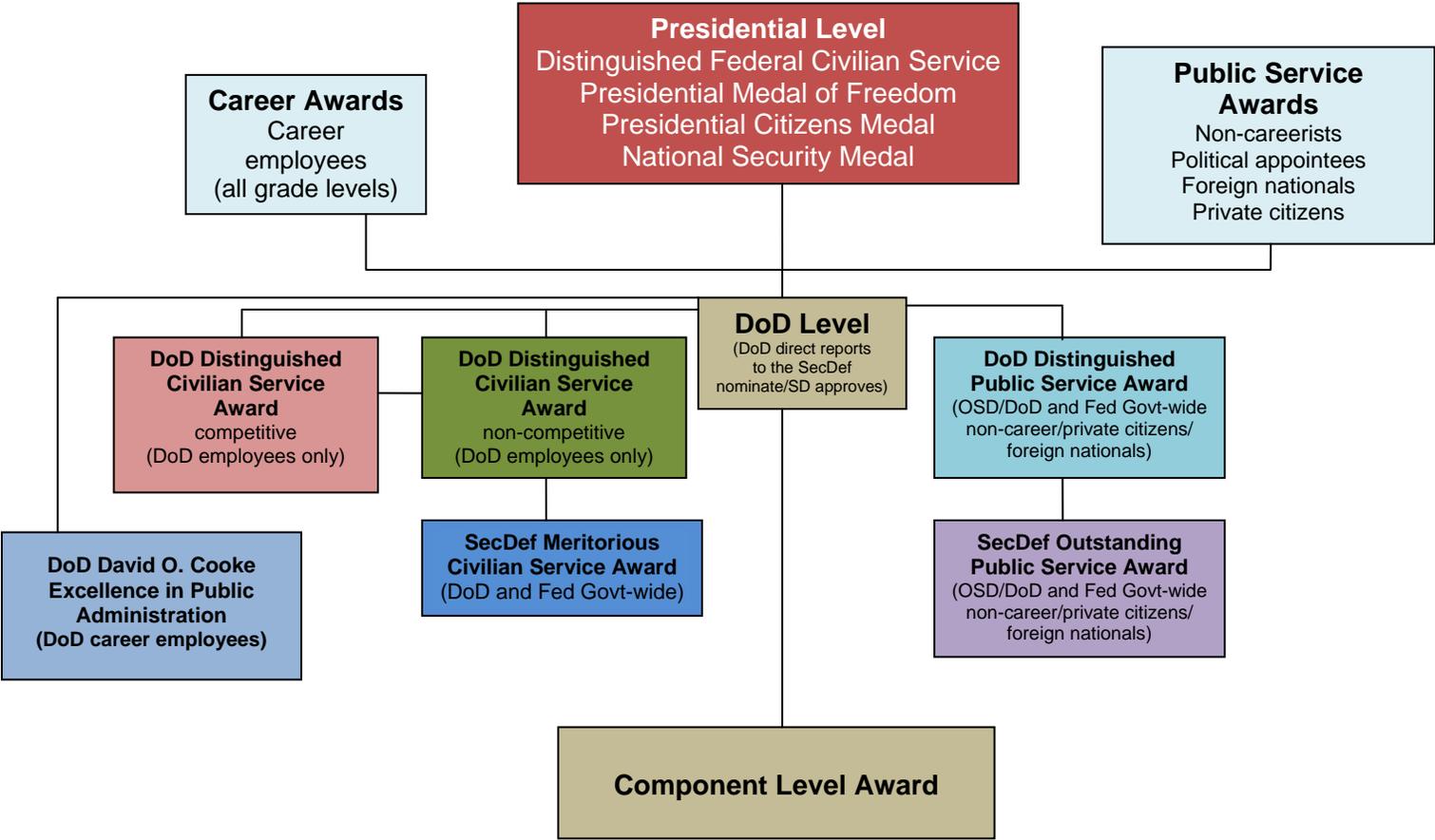


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DoD Honorary Awards Programs



DoD-Level Honorary Awards Guide

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I. INTRODUCTION

The DoD awards program has five different awards to recognize career DoD employees, employees from other government agencies, and non-career employees to include political appointees/private citizens/foreign nationals for contributions to DoD at large. There are three categories of DoD-level awards: Civilian Career Awards, Public Service Awards, and Competitive Awards.

General Information

- The information contained in DoD 1400.25-M, Subchapter 451, “Awards,” and Administrative Instruction 29, “Incentive and Honorary Awards Programs,” is the official source of responsibilities, procedures, and requirements pertaining to awards. This guidance supplements those official publications.
- The nominating authority for these awards is the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD) Principal Staff Assistant (PSA). For Defense Agencies and DoD Field Activities serviced by the Washington Headquarters Services, the OSD PSA is the nominating authority.
- The Incentive Awards Board (IAB) reviews and makes a recommendation for the career DoD-level awards. The IAB normally meets the second Wednesday of each month; however, special arrangements can be made for expeditious review.
- The DoD awards program does not include a specific award for retirement purposes. If an individual is nominated for an award at the time of their retirement, the nomination should be based upon contributions to the Department and not solely on the longevity of his/her career.
- The grade/pay band/level of a nominee should not be a primary factor when making a recommendation; it is the scope of the contributions and the impact to the Department that is important.

- Other than the competitive awards, it is the responsibility of the nominating organization to arrange presentation.
- Contributions that do not reach DoD-wide impact should be recommended for an OSD-level award.
- Nomination justifications can be written at the SECRET level; citations must be unclassified.
- Contractors are not eligible for a DoD-level award.
- The Director, Administration and Management has administrative authority for the DoD-level awards. The processing of these awards is through the Assistant Director, Labor and Management Employee Relations (LMER) Division, Human Resources Directorate (HRD), Washington Headquarters Services (WHS). The WHS Awards Team is responsible for:
 - reviewing nominations to ensure the criteria and eligibility have been met,
 - submitting nominations to the Incentive Awards Board for review, if applicable,
 - forwarding a complete nomination package for Secretary of Defense approval,
 - tracking award progress, and
 - providing signed certificate/citation and medal set to nominating office.
- This guide only addresses DoD/Secretary of Defense-level awards that are not delegated. For example, the Defense of Freedom and the Global War on Terrorism medals are DoD-level awards; however, the approval authority has been delegated to the Component level. Please refer to your individual organizations/Components operating/administrative instruction for specific Component-level awards, which are not outlined in this guide.

The following tables provide targeted information regarding the requirements and procedures for each category of award. If you need further information regarding DoD-level awards, please call Labor and Management Employee Relations at 571-372-3964 or e-mail at WHSawards@whs.mil.

II. CIVILIAN CAREER AWARDS

Non-Competitive DoD Distinguished Civilian Service Award (competitive award is located in Section IV)	
Overview	Department's highest level career award
Award Eligibility	Career civilian employees of DoD
Award Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions to the mission of the organization are of such major significance that immediate recognition is warranted (versus waiting for annual call for nominations for the competitive award, see Section IV). • Performance is characterized by extraordinary, notable, or prestigious contributions that impact the Department as a whole. • Normally requires a direct working relationship with most senior officials in Federal Government; e.g., Secretary of Defense; Deputy Secretary of Defense; Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff; Secretary of State; etc.
Award Device	Medal set, certificate signed by Secretary of Defense, citation
Process and Timelines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluation by the IAB who reviews nominations for DoD-wide contributions and impact to the Department. 2. IAB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can recommend approval to the Secretary of Defense • can request additional information to strengthen the justification if the nomination is weak • can recommend downgrade to a more appropriate award 3. A Secretary of Defense nomination package, which normally takes 3-5 days to prepare, is composed. The package must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cover memo to the Secretary of Defense • nomination memo and justification • memo from Chair, IAB • edited citation • final printed certificate ready for signature 4. After nomination package is completed, it is reviewed by the following and can take up to 4 weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS/HRD (2-step process) • Director, WHS • Director, Administration & Management • Executive Secretary to the Secretary of Defense • The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense • Secretary of Defense 5. LMER will coordinate pick-up of award with nominating organization.

Secretary of Defense Meritorious Civilian Service Award	
Overview	Department's second highest career level award
Award Eligibility	Career civilian employees of DoD and other Government agencies
Award Criteria	Contributions are exceptionally noteworthy or superlative and of major significance to the Department.
Award Device	Medal set, certificate signed by the Secretary of Defense, citation
Process and Timelines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Evaluation by the IAB who reviews nominations for DoD-wide contributions and impact to the Department. 2. IAB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • can recommend approval to the Secretary of Defense • can request additional information to strengthen the justification if the nomination is weak • can recommend downgrade to a more appropriate award 3. A Secretary of Defense nomination package, which normally takes 3-5 days to prepare, is composed. The package must include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cover memo to the Secretary of Defense • nomination memo and justification • memo from Chair, IAB • edited citation • final printed certificate ready for signature 4. After nomination package is completed, it is reviewed by the following and can take up to 4 weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS/HRD (2-step process) • Director, WHS • Director, Administration & Management • Executive Secretary to the Secretary of Defense • The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense • Secretary of Defense 5. LMER will coordinate pick-up of award with nominating organization.

III. PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS

DoD Distinguished Public Service Award	
Overview	Department's highest level public service award
Award Eligibility	Non-career employees to include political appointees, Schedule C employees, private citizens, foreign nationals, Intergovernmental Personnel Act (IPA) employees. Contractors are not eligible for nomination. Individual must not derive principal livelihood from the Federal Government.
Award Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions demonstrate exceptionally distinguished service of significance to DoD as a whole or distinguished service of such exceptional significance to a DoD Component or function that recognition at the Component level is considered insufficient. • The service or assistance may have been rendered at considerable personal sacrifice and inconvenience that was motivated by patriotism, good citizenship, and a sense of public responsibility. • Normally, it is required that nominees have a direct working relationship with the most senior officials in the Federal Government, e.g., Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary of Defense, Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff, Secretary of State, etc.
Award Device	Medal set, certificate signed by the Secretary of Defense, citation
Process and Timelines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WHS/HRD will review nomination and make recommendation to the Secretary of Defense based on previous award history and current guidance. No IAB review is required. A Secretary of Defense nomination package is composed and includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cover memo to the Secretary of Defense • nomination memo and justification • edited citation • final printed certificate ready for signature 2. Each nomination package is reviewed by the following and can take up to 4 weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS/HRD (2-step process) • Director, WHS • Director, Administration & Management • Executive Secretary to the Secretary of Defense • The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense • Secretary of Defense 3. LMER will coordinate pick-up with nominating organization.

Secretary of Defense Outstanding Public Service Award	
Overview	Department's second highest public service level award
Award Eligibility	Political appointees, Schedule C employees, non-career employees, private citizens, foreign nationals, IPA employees. Contractors are not eligible for nomination. Individual must not derive principal livelihood from the Federal Government.
Award Criteria	Contributions, assistance, or support to DoD functions that are extensive enough to warrant recognition, but are lesser in scope and impact that is required for the DoD Distinguished Public Service Award (above).
Award Device	Medal set, certificate signed by the Secretary, citation
Process and Timelines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WHS/HRD will review nomination and make recommendation to the Secretary of Defense based on previous award history and current guidance. No IAB review is required. A Secretary of Defense nomination package is composed and includes the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cover memo to the Secretary of Defense • nomination memo and justification • edited citation • final printed certificate ready for signature 2. Each nomination package is reviewed by the following and can take up to 4 weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS/HRD (2-step process) • Director, WHS • Director, Administration & Management • Executive Secretary to the Secretary of Defense • The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense • Secretary of Defense 3. LMER will coordinate pick-up with nominating organization.

Competitive DoD Distinguished Civilian Service Award	
Overview	Department's highest level award. Nominees from across the Department compete with 5-7 recipients approved.
Award Eligibility	Career civilian employees of the DoD
Award Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contributions must be at the highest level and reflect exceptional devotion to duty, efficiency, economy, or other improvements in the Department's operations that are of a significantly broad scope. • Continuation of career employment. • Receipt of a Presidential Rank Award within the past 3 years makes you ineligible as receipt constitutes DoD recognition.
Award Device	Framed citation with medal set
Process and Timelines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The call for nominations is usually sent DoD-wide in January. 2. Suspense for receipt of nominations is usually in April. 3. Nominations from the Office of the Secretary of Defense are reviewed by the IAB. The IAB will forward 3 nominees to compete. An Ad Hoc Committee is established to review nominations from across DoD. 4. After Ad Hoc Committee consensus is received, a Secretary of Defense nomination package is composed of the following and can take 3-5 days to write/collect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cover memo to the Secretary of Defense • nomination memo and justification • memo from Chair, Ad Hoc Committee • final printed certificate ready for signature 5. Each nomination package is reviewed by the following and can take up to 4-6 weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS/HRD (2-step process) • Director, WHS • Director, Administration & Management • Executive Secretary to the Secretary of Defense • The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense • Secretary of Defense 6. After approval is received, memorandum signed by the Director, Administration and Management will be sent to Component Heads expressing congratulations to the recipients and noting those who did not receive this award should be considered for a Component-level award. 7. A prestigious ceremony recognizing recipients is arranged with Secretary of Defense/Deputy Secretary of Defense presenting.

DoD David O. Cooke Excellence in Public Administration Award	
Overview	Created in memory of David O. Cooke, who had 45 years of DoD tenure and whose commitment to duty embodied the noble virtues of public service; one recipient
Award Eligibility	Career civilian employees (non-managerial) of the DoD with 3-10 years of Federal service
Award Criteria	Contributions demonstrate great leadership potential as a future Federal executive and who emulates Dr. Cooke's dedication to service while helping to promote and affect cooperation and improvement in the Department.
Award Device	Medallion encased in acrylic, certificate signed by the Secretary of Defense
Process and Timelines	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The call for nominations is usually sent DoD-wide in January. 2. Suspense for receipt of nominations is usually in April. 3. Nominations from the Fourth Estate are reviewed by the Fourth Estate Ad Hoc Committee. The Fourth Estate Ad Hoc Committee will forward one nomination to compete. An Ad Hoc Committee is established to review nominations for DoD-wide contributions and impact to the Department. 4. After Ad Hoc Committee consensus is received, a Secretary of Defense nomination package is composed including the following which normally takes 3-5 days to write/collect: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • cover memo to the Secretary of Defense • original nomination(s) • final printed certificate ready for signature 5. Each nomination package is reviewed by the following and can take up to 4-6 weeks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WHS/HRD (2-step process) • Director, WHS • Director, Administration & Management • Executive Secretary to the Secretary of Defense • The Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense • Secretary of Defense 6. After approval is received, memorandum signed by the Director, Administration and Management will be sent to Component Heads expressing congratulations to the recipient and noting those who did not receive this award should be considered for a Component-level award. 7. A prestigious ceremony recognizing the recipient is arranged with Secretary of Defense/Deputy Secretary of Defense presenting and is usually held in November.

V. NOMINATION FORMATS

Memorandum Format

Noncompetitive Awards

Include the following in the cover memorandum signed by the Component Head, addressed to Assistant Director, Labor and Management Employee Relations Division, Human Resources Directorate, Washington Headquarters Services:

- Name, title, series and grade/payband/level
- Organization and location
- Length of time with the organization
- Period covered by award
- Significant prior awards and approval dates
- Proposed presentation date
- Basis for nomination
- Citation
- Statement that certifies that recipient has no adverse personnel actions or investigations pending that could potentially discredit DoD
- Point of contact

Competitive Awards

Memorandum announcing call for nominations has specific requirements to follow and is usually distributed during January of each year DoD-wide.

Citation Format

- Approximately 200 word citation
- Unclassified
- Standard citation language is shown below and will be formatted as one paragraph

First sentence:

[Mr./Ms./Dr. first name, middle initial, last name] is recognized for [distinguished/meritorious/outstanding] [civilian/public] service as [title and organization], from [month/year] through/to [month/year].

Summarize contributions. Provide a minimum of three accomplishments including the results.

Last sentence:

The distinguished accomplishments of [Mr./Ms./Dr. first name, middle initial, last name] reflect great credit upon [himself/herself] and DoD.

VI. TIPS FOR WRITING AND SUBMITTING AN AWARD NOMINATION

Hints

- ★ Timeframe for a nominee who has previously received a DoD-level award normally should begin from date of the last award. Note for WHS-serviced components only--if the recipient has received the OSD Exceptional Civilian/Public Service Award, the DoD-level nomination should begin from that timeframe.
- ★ Justifications may be written in narrative or bullet style, normally no more than two pages. Each contribution should specifically include its benefit/impact to the Department.
- ★ Justifications containing the results of a specific project, versus a myriad of contributions, can include the purpose of the project, how the project was executed/managed, challenges faced and overcome, results of the project, and benefit/impact to the Department.
- ★ Justifications that read like a job description are insufficient. It is not enough to report that an individual has a given set of responsibilities. The Board wants to know specifically what was accomplished and why it was important to the Department. Contributions normally should be outside the scope of the position.
- ★ Contributions that cannot be validated by the Component Head recommending approval should not be included in the nomination. Prior achievements in a previous position should not be noted. Military background is not pertinent to a civilian award.
- ★ Submit nominations to WHSawards@whs.mil.
- ★ Request award nomination templates at WHSawards@whs.mil.
- ★ A complete award nomination package will include:
 - the original Microsoft Word documents for the citation and justification
 - the signed, scanned nomination memo
 - point of contact information
 - presentation date, if applicable