

# **Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD)-Level Honorary Awards Guide**

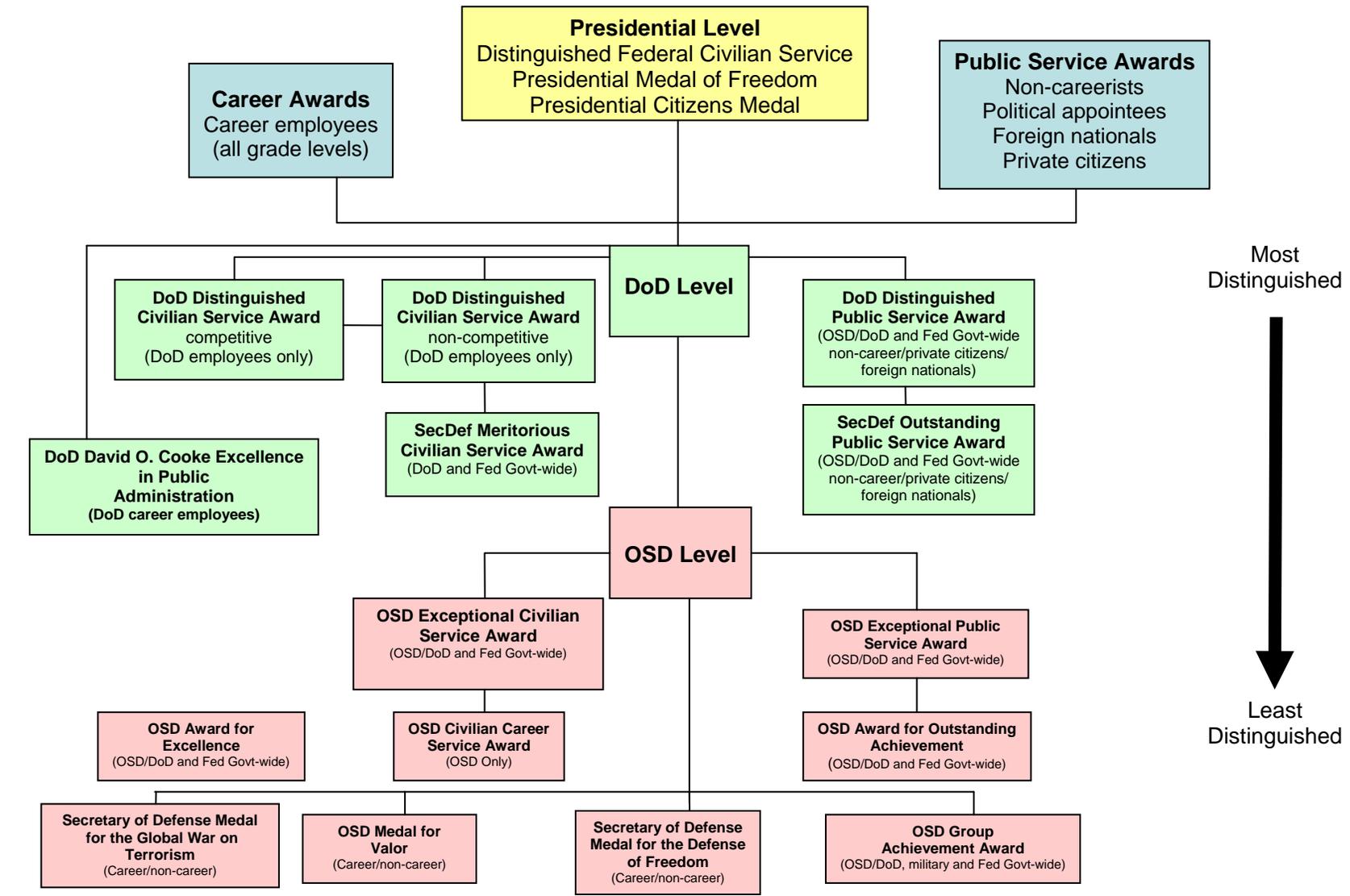


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# Honorary Awards Programs



## OSD-Level Honorary Awards Guide

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### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The OSD awards program offers several different awards to recognize career employees, employees from other government agencies, and non-career employees to include political appointees/private citizens/foreign nationals for contributions to OSD and in varying degrees of contributions.

#### **General Information**

- The information contained in Administrative Instruction #29, “Incentive and Honorary Awards Programs,” is the official source of responsibilities, procedures, and requirements pertaining to awards.
- The nominating authority for these awards is the OSD PSA, unless delegated. All awards not approved by the Secretary of Defense can be delegated with a copy of the delegation provided to the Assistant Director, LMER, HRD, WHS.
- The WHS Awards Team is responsible for:
  - reviewing nominations to ensure the criteria and eligibility have been met and
  - providing certificate/citation/medal set or plaque or certificate to nominating office.
- 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 OSD that is important.
- It is the responsibility of the nominating organization to arrange presentation.
- Nomination justifications can be written at the SECRET level; citations must be unclassified.

- Contractors are not eligible for an OSD-level award; however, can be recognized with a letter of commendation, or a certificate of appreciation, or other certificate-based recognition.

The following tables provide targeted information regarding the requirements and procedures for each category of award. If you need further information regarding OSD or Department of Defense (DoD)-level awards, please call 571-372-3964 and request to speak with the awards coordinator.

## II. OSD CIVILIAN CAREER AWARDS

<b>OSD Exceptional Civilian Service Award</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	OSDs highest level career award and only medaled award.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	Career civilian employees of OSD, WHS, DoD, and the Federal Government.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Performance is characterized by exceptional civilian service to OSD as a whole or the specific OSD Component.
<b>Award Device</b>	Medal set, certificate signed by PSA (or designee).
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	Normally within 5 days of receipt of award, LMER will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review nomination for               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility,</li> <li>• criteria, and</li> <li>• appropriate approval authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Edit the citation using correct citation language and format.</li> <li>3. Produce the final certificate for PSA (or designee) signature and citation.</li> <li>4. Coordinate pick-up/delivery of award with nominating organization.</li> </ol>

<b>OSD/WHS Civilian Career Service Award</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Recognizes retirement or departure status.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	OSD/WHS career civilian employees.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Recognizes a civilian employee's career service extending over period of years (can recognize career within nominating organization or include other DoD-tenure).
<b>Award Device</b>	Engraved Plaque (name, office, from/to dates).
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	Normally within 20 days of receipt of award, LMER will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review nomination for               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility,</li> <li>• criteria, and</li> <li>• appropriate approval authority</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Submit request to WHS/Graphics Division for engraving.</li> <li>3. Produce the final plaque.</li> <li>4. Coordinate pick-up/delivery of award with nominating organization.</li> </ol>

<b>OSD/WHS Award for Excellence</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Recognizes achievement of a short term special project or similar efforts.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	Career civilian employees OSD, WHS, DoD, and the Federal Government.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Recognizes contributions to a specific one-time project or a detail assignment (approximately 6 months in duration).
<b>Award Device</b>	Engraved Plaque (name, office, from/to dates).
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	<p>Normally within 20 days of receipt of award, LMER will</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review nomination for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility,</li> <li>• criteria, and</li> <li>• appropriate approval authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Submit request to WHS/Graphics Division for engraving.</li> <li>3. Produce the final plaque.</li> <li>4. Coordinate pick-up/delivery of award with nominating organization.</li> </ol>

### III. OSD-LEVEL PUBLIC SERVICE AWARDS

<b>OSD Exceptional Public Service Award</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	OSDs highest level non-career award and only medaled award.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	Non-career civilian employees of the Federal Government, foreign nationals, private citizens.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Performance is characterized by exceptional public service to OSD as a whole or the OSD Component.
<b>Award Device</b>	Medal set, certificate signed by PSA (or designee).
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	Normally within 5 days of receipt of award, LMER will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review nomination for               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility,</li> <li>• criteria, and</li> <li>• appropriate approval authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Edit the citation using correct citation language and format.</li> <li>3. Produce the final certificate for PSA (or designee) signature and citation.</li> <li>4. Coordinate pick-up/delivery of award with nominating organization.</li> </ol>

<b>OSD Award for Outstanding Achievement</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Recognizes contributions to an OSD Component or OSD as a whole.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	Non-career civilian employees, foreign nationals, private citizens.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Performance benefiting an OSD Component or OSD as a whole.
<b>Award Device</b>	Engraved Plaque (name, to/from dates).
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	Normally within 20 days of receipt of award, LMER will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review nomination for               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility,</li> <li>• criteria, and</li> <li>• appropriate approval authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Submit request to WHS/Graphics Division for engraving.</li> <li>3. Produce the final plaque.</li> <li>4. Coordinate pick-up/delivery of award with nominating organization.</li> </ol>

#### **IV. COMPETITIVE AWARD**

<b>Spirit of Hope Award</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Competitive award within the 4 <sup>th</sup> Estate (OSD, Joint Staff, Defense Agencies, and DoD Field Activities) created in memory of Bob Hope epitomizing selfless service and dedicated commitment to the military, six recipients of this award representing OSD, Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps, and Coast Guard.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	Civilian employees, military members, private citizens.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Contributions demonstrate Mr. Hope's values, enhancing the quality of life of Service members and their families, contributes an extraordinary amount of time, talent, or resources to benefit U.S. Armed Forces, and embodies the values of freedom, the Constitution, and the military.
<b>Award Device</b>	Medallion
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Call for nominations submitted January; suspense normally April. Specific format will be included with the call for nominations.</li><li>2. Incentive Awards Board or other Ad Hoc Board reviews nominations and selects one recipient; forward to Director, WHS for final approval; no further vetting at the DoD-level.</li><li>3. A ceremony recognizing recipients is scheduled for the early fall.</li></ol>

**V. SECRETARY OF DEFENSE MEDALS** (delegated to PSA for approval)

<b>Secretary of Defense Medal for the Defense of Freedom</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Recognizes sacrifice of those injured or killed due to hostile action against the United States or killed or wounded while rescuing or attempting to rescue any other employee or individual subjected to injuries sustained under such conditions.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	LMER-serviced employees; non-Defense personnel.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Award is considered an entitlement and justification must prove serious injury and record of treatment of injury by a medical officer.
<b>Award Device</b>	Medal set and certificate signed by PSA (or designee).
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	Normally within 5 days receipt of award, LMER will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review nomination for               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility,</li> <li>• criteria to include copy of treatment record, and</li> <li>• appropriate approval authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Produce the certificate for PSA (or designee) signature.</li> <li>3. Coordinate pick-up/delivery of award with nominating organization.</li> </ol>

<b>Secretary of Defense Medal for the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT)</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Recognizes contributions in a foreign country designated by the military's GWOT Expeditionary medal (entitlement award). Employees can receive the GWOT more than once for a different military operation, but not the same.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	LMER-serviced activities.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Contributions in direct support of members of the Armed Forces engaged in operations to combat terrorism.
<b>Award Device</b>	Certificate signed PSA (or designee) and medal set.
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	Normally within 5 days of receipt of award, LMER will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review information for               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility,</li> <li>• criteria to include number of days of direct support in designed foreign area, and</li> <li>• appropriate approval authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Produce the certificate for PSA (or designee) signature.</li> <li>3. Coordinate pick-up/delivery of award with nominating organization.</li> </ol>

## VI. OTHER OSD RECOGNITIONS

<b>OSD Medal for Valor</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Recognizes the act of heroism or sacrifice with voluntary risk of personal safety in the face of danger either on or off the job.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	LMER-serviced activities.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	The act of bravery may be recognized if the act is connected with a DoD employee or activity; the DoD in some way benefits from the act; the employee either is saved by an individual or the employee saves an individual from danger.
<b>Award Device</b>	Certificate signed PSA (or designee) and medal set.
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	Normally within 5 days of receipt of award, LMER will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review nomination for               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility,</li> <li>• criteria,</li> <li>• appropriate approval authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Produce the certificate for PSA (or designee) signature.</li> <li>3. Coordinate pick-up/delivery of award with nominating organization.</li> </ol>

<b>OSD Group Achievement Award</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Recognizes group accomplishments.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	LMER-serviced activities.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Group may consist of members of the Armed Forces, career employees of any Government agency, non-career employees who work together on a program or project, or the mission in general.
<b>Award Device</b>	Certificate signed PSA (or designee).
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	Normally within 5 days of receipt of award, LMER will <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review nomination for               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility,</li> <li>• criteria,</li> <li>• appropriate approval authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Produce the certificate for PSA (or designee) signature.</li> <li>3. Coordinate pick-up/delivery of award with nominating organization.</li> </ol>

<b>OSD/WHS Length of Service (LOS) Certificates</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Recognizes Federal length of service.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	LMER-serviced employees.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Recognizes length of service in five year increments, beginning with 10 years through 50 years; combined military and civilian years.
<b>Award Device</b>	Certificate and pin denoting years of service.
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. LOS 25 years and below: certificates prepared by the employee's respective Administrative Office for appropriate signature.</li> <li>2. OSD/WHS certificate paper available in WHS Graphics; pins available through WHS LMER Division.</li> <li>3. LOS 30 years and above: certificates (signed by Secretary of Defense) prepared by LMER.</li> <li>4. Certificates 30 years and above are prepared on a monthly basis with coordination of pick-up/delivery of award with nominating organization.</li> </ol>

<b>Certificate of Appreciation, Letters of Appreciation and Commendation</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Recognizes organization/office contributions.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	Government employees, private citizens, contractors.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Recognizes notable contributions.
<b>Award Device</b>	Certificate signed by any level in supervisory chain of command.
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Organizations prepare certificates.</li> <li>2. OSD/WHS certificate paper available in WHS Graphics.</li> </ol>

<b>Non-Governmental Awards</b>	
<b>Overview</b>	Awards from private sector organizations solicit nominees from Federal Government.
<b>Award Eligibility</b>	LMER-serviced activities.
<b>Award Criteria</b>	Recognizes notable contributions in specific areas; i.e., leadership, specific position.
<b>Award Device</b>	Varies by award.
<b>Process and Timelines</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. LMER will announce awards as information is received from outside sources with a suspense date noted.</li> <li>2. OSD PSA will submit nomination.</li> <li>3. Review nomination for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• eligibility,</li> <li>• criteria, and</li> <li>• appropriate approval authority.</li> </ul> </li> <li>4. Submit nomination(s) to host organization.</li> </ol>

## **VII. NOMINATION FORMATS**

### **Memorandum Format**

#### **Awards**

Include the following in the cover memorandum signed by the PSA (or designee), 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
- Justification (separate page)
- Citation (if applicable) (separate page)
- Statement that certifies that recipient has no adverse personnel actions or investigations pending that could potentially discredit OSD
- Proposed presentation date
- Point of contact

### **Citation Format (for OSD Exceptional Civilian/Public Service Awards)**

- 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 exceptional [civilian/public] service as [title and organization], from [month/year] through/to [month/year].

Summarize contributions.

Last sentence:

The accomplishments of [Mr./Ms./Dr. first name, middle initial, last name] reflects great credit upon [himself/herself] and the Department of Defense.

## **VIII. TIPS FOR WRITING AND SUBMITTING AN AWARD NOMINATION**

### **Hints**

- ★ Timeframe for a nominee who has previously received an OSD/DoD-level award normally should begin from date of the last award.
- ★ Justifications may be written in narrative or bullet style, normally no more than two pages. Each contribution should specifically include its benefit/impact to OSD.
- ★ 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 OSD.
- ★ Justifications that read like a job description are insufficient. It is not enough to report that an individual has a given set of responsibilities. Contributions normally should be outside the scope of the position.
- ★ Contributions that cannot be validated by the PSA recommending approval should not be included in the nomination (i.e., if an individual has worked in a previous OSD organization, the PSA cannot validate those contributions as being true). Prior achievements outside of OSD in a previous position should not be noted. Military background is not pertinent to a civilian award.
- ★ Submit nominations to [WHSawards@whs.mil](mailto:WHSawards@whs.mil).
- ★ Request award nomination templates at [WHSawards@whs.mil](mailto:WHSawards@whs.mil).
- ★ A complete award nomination package will include:
  - the original Microsoft Word documents for the citation and justification, if applicable
  - the signed, scanned nomination memo
  - point of contact information
  - presentation date, if applicable