MILWAUKEE POLICE DEPARTMENT

STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURE

490 – MERIT AWARD PROGRAM

GENERAL ORDER: 2014-72 **ISSUED:** July 7, 2014	**EFFECTIVE:** July 7, 2014	**REVIEWED/APPROVED BY:** Captain Regina Howard **DATE:** June 13, 2014
ACTION: Amends General Order 2010-24 (September 7, 2010)		**WILEAG STANDARD(S): 4.1.1**

490.00 PURPOSE (WILEAG 4.1.1)

The department Merit Award Program is designed to recognize and honor the exemplary service of department members and citizens.

490.05 POLICY

A. Any department member is eligible for an award whether the incident occurred on or off duty.

B. To be eligible for any award, the conduct must be in keeping with sound judgment and reflect honorably upon the department.

C. The Chief of Police may confer upon any department member and/or citizen an award or recognition as he/she deems appropriate.

490.10 ADMINISTRATION OF PROGRAM

A. ADMINISTRATION

1. The executive command member acting as chair shall maintain an active Awards Selection Committee (ASC) roster comprised of department members in good standing.

2. The merit award coordinator shall collect all commendation requests and prepare the nominations for review by the ASC at the call of the chair.

3. The Risk Management Bureau is responsible for the venue and coordination of the program. The merit coordinator shall maintain all records associated with the award program in an electronic format.

4. Please refer to the separate Standard Operating Instruction (SOI), which details the assignment of each task associated with the program.

B. AWARD SELECTION COMMITTEE (ASC)

1. The ASC will review the award nominations to make a recommendation to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police will have the final approval authority.

2. Duties of the ASC include:

    a. Review and recommend award categories of nominations to the Chief of Police.

    b. Convene meetings at the call of the chair.

    c. The ASC shall also review and recommend award categories for any awards eligible for conversion. The ASC has the authority to recommend denial of a nomination.

    d. The ASC and/or coordinator is responsible to follow-up with command staff members on inquiries regarding award nominations for the purpose of obtaining additional information for the committee to consider.

    e. Submit recommendations to the Chief of Police for his/her approval.

3. ASC Chairperson

    a. An executive command staff member or any other member of the department as deemed appropriate by the Chief of Police shall have the ability to serve as the ASC chairperson.

    b. The chairperson shall offer guidance and continuity to ensure consistency in the decision-making process.

    c. The chairperson does not generally vote in the award recommendation phase, but may do so as determined by the needs of the service.

4. Committee Members

    The ASC shall consist of members from a range of districts and divisions to represent all members of the department. Active members in good standing may serve on the ASC for a term of two years as the needs of the service dictate. Good standing will be determined by a recommendation of the chair to the Chief of Police.

5. The terms of the committee members will be staggered.

6. Terms for committee members may be extended by the chairperson as needed.

7. A committee member may be replaced or removed at any time at the discretion of the chairperson or Chief of Police.

8. In all matters coming before the ASC for review, a quorum of five (5) members must be present for voting. Each session of the ASC shall vote by a means of verbal acknowledgement unless a majority decides to utilize other vote preferences (e.g., secret ballot or show of hands). Each member's vote is of equal value and a majority vote is required to render a recommendation.

9. The ASC will accept new member applications throughout the calendar year.

    a. Interested members can apply for consideration to the chairperson of the ASC via a *Department Memorandum* (form PM-9E) filed through the chain of command.

    b. Applicants will be reviewed and selected by the ASC chairperson or his/her designee.

10. Merit Service Awards

    The ASC can make recommendations to the Chief of Police for the following awards:

    a. Departmental Awards

        1. Medal of Honor
        2. Medal of Valor
        3. Lifesaving
        4. Purple Valor
        5. Purple Star
        6. Chief's Superior Leadership
        7. Meritorious Service
        8. Distinguished Service
        9. Excellence in Police Service

    b. Unit Service Award

        The Unit Service award submissions will be submitted through the chain of command to an assistant chief or inspector. The assistant chief or inspector will review, recommend and forward the nomination to the merit coordinator. The chairperson of the ASC shall convene a meeting with the assistant chiefs or other designated staff to prepare a recommendation to the Chief of Police for the issuance of this award. The Chief of Police will make the final decision. All Unit Service award submissions not granted during the current program session will be held over for consideration for one additional cycle.

    c. Other Law Enforcement Agency Awards

        Members who have received an award from another law enforcement agency may submit a *Department Memorandum* (form PM-9E) through the chain of command for consideration to wear the award on their Milwaukee Police uniform.

        For consideration, the member must have:

        1. Received a heroism-type award from another law enforcement agency while a member of the department issuing the award, or

2. Received formal recognition or an award from another law enforcement agency for a heroic act while employed by the Milwaukee Police Department.

   Members meeting the above criteria must submit a *Department Memorandum* (form PE-9E) with supporting documentation attached through the chain of command to the awards committee care of the award coordinator. The ASC will convene a quorum, vote, and shall provide a recommendation to the Chief of Police. The Chief of Police will have final approval rights. Awards sought under this provision will be considered only once.

490.15 NOMINATION RESPONSIBILITIES

A. When nominating a member for an award, a supervisor shall submit a *Member Commendation Report* (form PC-38E) or for citizens using a *Citizen Commendation Report* (form PC-37E). Forms PC-37E and PC-38E are only found on the network.

   Any member may nominate his/her co-workers or him/herself by submitting a *Department Memorandum* (form PM-9E). Members must attach all supporting documents. If a member would prefer a supervisor submit the nomination, a supervisor may do so.

   Separate commendations on a *Department Memorandum* (form PM-9E) shall be completed for each individual when an incident involves multiple members and/or citizens worthy of departmental recognition.

   Upon completion of a *Member Commendation Report* (form PC-38E) and/or *Citizen Commendation Report* (form PC-37E), the report(s) shall be promptly forwarded through the chain of command to the coordinator. When an incident occurs that precipitates the filing of both reports, the reports shall be forwarded as one packet rather than individually. A notation should be made regarding related reports.

   With the exception of the Purple Valor or Star Award, only one award category may be selected per submission. The highest award applicable should be chosen that fits the award criteria selected. Multiple award categories on a nomination form or multiple award nominations for the same event will be removed from consideration and returned to the proper command for revision.

   Once an award has been submitted for consideration and is denied by the committee and chair, it may not be resubmitted unless extenuating circumstances exist. These circumstances must be documented in a memorandum format and must include additional information not previously documented within the nomination. If no new information is to be considered, the nomination will not be reconsidered.

B. A Commendation Report shall detail:

   1. The circumstances, actions, or reasons surrounding the nomination, e.g., date, time, any arrests, witnesses' names, any state charges with the district attorney's

disposition, squad/wagon audio and video. When multiple members are involved in an act worthy of recognition, the specific action or justification for each member must be recorded in their reports for consideration.

2. The nominating supervisor shall thoroughly investigate any case or circumstance in which members distinguished themselves by performing services over and above what is normally expected to determine whether or not such members are deserving of a nomination for a merit service award.

3. The nominating supervisor shall detail which award best represents the nominee's actions or circumstances.

C. The Chief of Police or his/her designee may assign the nomination to an ASC for consideration.

D. The chairperson shall arrange a meeting to review any commendation reports for merit awards. If necessary, the chairperson may require additional reports, squad video or other electronic media, and/or the appearance of witnesses at such meeting for verification of events reported.

E. All nominations shall be submitted as soon as practicable. Commendation reports must be submitted by March 1st for consideration in the May ceremony and by September 1st for the November ceremony.

F. Generally, two merit award ceremonies will be scheduled in a calendar year; during Law Enforcement Memorial Week in May and during the week of Veterans Day in November.

490.20 AWARDS

Awards are divided into two major categories: heroism and police service awards. In the hierarchy of awards, the heroism category contains the highest level awards, which have no time limit for nominations. The Police Service Awards appear in the order of hierarchy: Chief's Superior Leadership, Unit Service, Distinguished Service, Meritorious Service, and Excellence in Police Service. Service Award nominations must be submitted within 18 months of the rating period.

A. HEROISM AWARDS

1. Medal of Honor:

The Medal of Honor is considered to be the highest award granted by the Milwaukee Police Department. It is awarded to a member for exceptional bravery at the imminent risk of life or serious bodily injury.

a. The recipient must demonstrate exceptional courage by performing a voluntary action in an extremely dangerous situation.

b. The act may involve situations where deadly force is used against an officer and the officer prevails, or a rescue situation in which the risk of death or injury was substantial.

c. The award for a police member will consist of a medal, certificate, award bar, lapel pin and 5 merit days off.

d. The award for a civilian member will consist of a certificate and lapel pin.

2. Medal of Valor:

Combat

Rescue

The Medal of Valor (Combat or Rescue) is presented to a member who has performed a deed of personal bravery or self-sacrifice so conspicuous as to clearly distinguish himself/herself for gallantry and intrepidity, but not rising to the standards of the Medal of Honor.

a. The act must go beyond normal demands and be of such a nature that the member was fully aware of the threat to his/her personal safety and acted above and beyond the call of duty at risk of his/her own life.

b. The Medal of Valor shall generally be awarded for a combat or rescue action. Combat Valor and Rescue Valor medals shall be distinctive awards. Neither award holds higher significance in the placement hierarchy. In cases where a member has been awarded both medals, the higher placed award shall be the one most recently awarded.

c. The act may involve either risk of life or great bodily harm, or the performance of an act wherein the member was faced with more than ordinary hazards of the service.

d. The award for a police member will consist of a medal, certificate, award bar, lapel pin and 3 merit days off.

e. The award for a civilian member will consist of a certificate and lapel pin.

3. Lifesaving:

The Lifesaving award is presented to a member who is directly responsible for saving a human life.

a. A member is eligible to receive this award if his/her actions led to the prolonging of the victim's life to the extent that the victim was released to professional medical care. The nomination must document the specific action taken by the member (e.g.., CPR, abdominal thrusts for a choking victim, physical extraction of an incapacitated individual from a burning building).

b. Documentation and other supportive evidence such as a physician statement or witness statement should be included in the *Member Commendation Report* (form PC-38E) or *Citizen Commendation Report (*form PC-37E)*.*

c. The award for a police member will consist of a certificate, award bar, lapel pin and 1 merit day off.

d. The award for a civilian member will consist of a certificate and lapel pin.

4. Purple Star or Purple Valor:

The Purple Star or Purple Valor are distinctive awards that are presented to a member who honorably in the line of duty, sustains any serious bodily injury or permanent disfigurement, permanent or protracted impairment of the function of any body part, or permanent or protracted health impairment. In situations where the injuries were sustained in a combat-related incident, a Purple Valor containing a "V" device shall be awarded. Neither award holds higher significance in the placement of hierarchy. If a member has been awarded both medals, the most recently awarded medal shall be placed above the previous award.

The Purple Star or the Purple Valor are the only two awards that may be granted in conjunction with another award.

a. The committee will review the totality of the circumstances surrounding the assault and/or the extent of the injuries received when a member is being considered for this award.

b. The award for a police member for a Purple Star or Purple Valor will consist of a certificate, award bar (with "V" device where appropriate) and a lapel pin.

c. The award for a civilian member for a Purple Star or Purple Valor will consist of a certificate and a lapel pin.

B. POLICE SERVICE AWARDS

1. Chief's Superior Leadership:

The Chief's Superior Leadership award is presented to any member at the discretion of the Chief of Police for leadership excellence in the performance of duty and/or honorable conduct and professionalism in pursuit of the department's mission.

a. The award shall be presented with marked appreciation and shall be directed to members where a form of recognition is deemed appropriate and is warranted for such superior achievement reflecting distinction and noteworthy praise on the individual and the Milwaukee Police Department.

b. The award for a police member will consist of a certificate, award bar and a lapel pin.

c. The award for a civilian member will consist of a certificate and a lapel pin.

2. Unit Service:

The Unit Service award is presented to a department unit whose actions through a combination of teamwork, diligence and perseverance is performed in an exemplary manner. The Chief of Police will generally grant only one Unit Service award during an award cycle.

a. The award may be presented to a team for excellence in the following areas:

1. Problem identification and solution.

2. Proactive measures.

3. Self-initiated activity.

4. Major case investigation / resolution.

5. Calls for service.

b. The award for a police member will consist of a certificate, award bar and lapel pin for each member in the unit.

c. The award for a civilian member will consist of a certificate and a lapel pin for each member in the unit.

d. Each Unit Service award that is not selected will be held for another reviewing cycle for a second opportunity for award consideration.

3. Distinguished Service:

The Distinguished Service award is presented to a member who has continuously distinguished him/herself by exceptional service in the performance of his/her duties or great or unusual responsibility wherein he/she has displayed unusual responsibility and initiative, marked ability, keen observation skills and exceptional energy.

a. To be considered for this award, service must exceed normal job requirements with at least one specific act of outstanding performance. This may include a member proceeding with a pre-determined plan, program, investigation or official act that exemplifies the Milwaukee Police Department.

b. The award will be presented to a member for outstanding performance in achieving departmental goals and objectives through projects, programs, or situations requiring exceptional dedication.

c. The award for a police member will consist of a certificate, award bar and a lapel pin.

d. The award for civilian member will consist of a certificate and a lapel pin.

4. Meritorious Service:

The Meritorious Service award is presented to a member who makes a significant contribution to the department's mission beyond the ordinary call of duty.

a. The award shall recognize those incidents wherein a member's courage, resourcefulness, tenacity, diligence and/or perseverance in the line of duty goes beyond that which is normally encountered by members in the protection of life or property, the prevention of a major crime or the apprehension of an armed and/or dangerous criminal.

b. The award for a police member will consist of a certificate, award bar and lapel pin.

c. The award for a civilian member will consist of a certificate and a lapel pin.

5. Excellence in Police Service:

The Excellence in Police Service award is presented to any member who makes a significant contribution, above and beyond the ordinary call of duty over a period of time in pursuit of the department's mission.

a. The award recognizes those instances over a period of time wherein the member's diligence, teamwork, perseverance and problem-solving ability

exemplified the highest standards.

b. Three commendation letters received within a one-year period, authored by the Chief of Police, will result in an Excellence in Police Service award and the member will be invited to attend the semi-annual ceremony.

490.25 MILITARY SERVICE RECOGNITION

The military service recognition pin is presented to a member that has been or is currently assigned to any branch of the U.S. military service. Multiple device(s) shall be worn side-by-side in a horizontal line, centered under the nametag. A member having been discharged dishonorably from military service is disqualified from wearing a military service recognition pin.

A. For consideration to wear this pin, the member shall submit a *Department Memorandum* to his/her commanding officer, along with proof of service (form DD-214 Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty). However, in absence of this form, any other form proving service past or present in a particular branch of military will be accepted.

B. The commanding officer shall verify military service and forward all paperwork directly to the Police Academy.

C. The Police Academy shall notify the member when the device is ready for issue. The member will be required to report to the Police Academy to pick up the device.

D. After issuance, all paperwork shall be delivered to the Human Resources Division for placement into the member's personnel file.

Note: The initial device will be paid for by the department. Replacements and/or any additional issuances of a device will require a form PO-1A to be filed and the replacement cost will be the responsibility of the member.

490.30 WEARING OF AWARD BARS AND LAPEL PINS

A. WEARING OF AWARD BARS AND LAPEL PINS

1. The wearing of award bars and/or lapel pins is optional.

2. The award bars may be worn at anytime on any uniform Class A blouse, uniform jacket or uniform shirt.

3. The award bars must be worn using the department issued black leather citation and badge holder. The holder must accommodate the exact number of award bars to be displayed.

4. Lapel pins may be worn when in business attire on the left side of the suit or sport coat.

B. PLACEMENT ORDER

1. The quartermaster will maintain a chart with the correct order for award bar placement.

2. The quartermaster shall be responsible for issuing the correct new and repeat award.

3. The award bars must be displayed from highest to lowest as indicated in the proper placement guideline.

4. If approved by the Chief of Police, awards from outside agencies may be worn on the uniform in a manner consistent with this policy.

5. Only applicable departmental award bars and lapel pins will be issued. Awards previously earned but no longer issued may still be worn in a manner consistent with this policy.

Note: Medal of Valor Combat or Rescue and Purple Star or Purple Valor are equal in weight in the placement hierarchy. In cases where a member has been awarded both medals, the higher placed award shall be the one most recently awarded.

C. REPEAT AWARDS

1. Repeat awards of the same category received by police members for heroism and/or police service, are authorized 3/16-inch stars. Stars will be gold, silver, or bronze in color.

2. A star will be issued for any subsequent award and no more than 1 star will be allowed on an applicable award bar. Awards 2 through 4 will be a bronze star.

3. If a 5th repeat award is issued, the bronze star will be removed and a silver star will be issued for repeat awards 5 through 9.

4. If a 10th award is issued the silver star will be removed and a gold star will be issued for all repeat awards 10 and above.

490.35 CITIZEN AWARDS

A. The following awards may be presented to individuals not employed by the department.

1. Valorous Conduct

   A certificate is awarded to a non-member in situations where the same conduct by a member would have resulted in recognition of the Medal of Honor, Medal of Valor or Lifesaving Award. These award recipients are invited to attend the semi-annual award ceremony to receive their award from the Chief of Police.

2. Meritorious Conduct

   A certificate is awarded to a non-member in situations where the same conduct by a member would have resulted in recognition of a category of service award. These award recipients are invited to attend the semi-annual award ceremony to receive their award from the Chief of Police.

3. Certificate of Appreciation

   A certificate is awarded to a non-member in situations where the same conduct by a member would have resulted in recognition of a Distinguished Service Award, Unit Service Award, Meritorious Service Award, Excellence in Police Service Award or the Chief's Superior Leadership Award.

B. The Merit Award Committee shall review and recommend the award for each non-member to the Chief of Police.

490.40 DEATH OF A MEMBER

Pending awards may be granted posthumously. In the event a department member meets his/her death on or off duty, pending awards will be presented in the order set forth below:

1. Widow/widower
2. Oldest surviving child
3. Mother
4. Father
5. Oldest sister or brother

Family members of the deceased member with a pending award will be invited to attend the semi-annual awards ceremony for award presentation by the Chief of Police.

EDWARD A. FLYNN
CHIEF OF POLICE

EAF:mfk