

## **EMPLOYEE INCENTIVE AWARDS PROGRAM**

### **I. SUGGESTION AWARDS**

(A) **Purpose:**

Suggestion awards are, designed to motivate and reward employees who achieve excellence in customer service delivery and who through innovative suggestions significantly enhance the efficiency of their workplace. Employees will receive monetary awards for saving dollars, increasing safety, or increasing job efficiency.

(B) **Employee Awards Committee:**

The thirteen (13) member Employee Awards Committee oversees and regulates the submission, acceptance, and implementation of the Suggestion Awards Program. The Committee will be appointed by Human Resources and be composed of the following officials or their designees:

1. Representative of the Department of Human Resources, Chairperson
2. Labor Relations Manager
3. One member of AFSCME, Local 1632
4. One member of AFSCME, Local 2191
5. One member of the Fraternal Order of Police, Capital City Lodge No. 9
6. One member of I.A.F.F., Local 67
7. One member of CMAGE/CWA 4502
8. One member from City Council
9. One member of Civil Service Commission
10. Representative of the Department of Finance and Management
11. Three representatives from City departments or agencies
12. An additional representative if deemed necessary by the Chairperson

Seven (7) members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum. Each member of the Committee shall have one vote, and a majority vote of those present shall pass any matter requiring committee action.

Representatives of the Awards Committee have the right to investigate the eligibility of idea(s) submitted by an employee or group of employees.

Should there be a question as to the eligibility of an employee; the Department of Human Resources will have the final decision.

The Department of Human Resources oversees and regulates the submission, acceptance, and implementation of the Suggestion Awards Program. A representative of the Department of Human Resources will serve as chair of the

Committee and may cast a vote to break a tie. Upon approval of the Committee, the chair authorizes the disbursement of the monetary awards to the recipients through the benefiting department/division.

Savings to the City will be verified and documented in writing by the Finance and Management Department. The Finance and Management Department shall have the final determination as to the calculated dollar savings.

Responsibilities of the Awards Committee include:

1. Deciding suggestion appeals
2. Regulating the awards program
3. Adopting rules as necessary

The Awards Committee will meet as called by the Chairperson. Decisions of the Awards Committee are not final and can be appealed according to the appeal process outlined below.

(C) Eligibility:

A "Suggestion" is a written original idea proposed by an employee of the City of Columbus to the Employee Awards Committee that clearly describes a specific method to do any job or procedure better, quicker, easier, safer, or at less cost; to handle additional work load with the same staff, to produce a more efficient operation with better control, to increase revenue, or to improve the quality of service.

It is the responsibility of the Department of Human Resources to make the final determination regarding suggestion eligibility. Information and recommendations from the information contained in the departmental evaluation(s) will provide the basis for this decision.

(1) Subject Eligibility

- (a) **All** suggestions will be accepted for review and will be added to the employee's personnel file.
- (b) If a suggestion is not implemented, it is not eligible for an award but it too will be added to the employee's personnel file.
- (c) An employee who develops or creates a specific method to do any job or procedure better, quicker, easier, safer, or at less cost; to produce a more efficient operation with better control, to increase revenue, or to improve the quality of service **IS eligible**. This is in line with making performance matter. Should there be a question as to the eligibility of an employee the Department of Human Resources will have the final decision.

(d) Suggestions which are directly related to the following subjects are not eligible for awards:

- Personal grievance.
- Scheduling of work hours e.g. flex-time, job sharing
- Parking related matters.
- Ideas for reduction or increase of paid staff.
- Terms and conditions of employment.
- Matters within the scope of collective bargaining.
- Classification and compensation.
- Matters previously or currently under study or review by management.
- A duplicate of another suggestion already under consideration.
- Matters, which are the result of, assigned or contracted auditing, studies, surveys, reviews, or research. This **IS** different from taking the initiative to find the solution to a matter, even if it is considered within the scope of their job duties.
- Matters requiring legislative or Court action other than by City ordinance.
- Matters requiring the initiation of routine maintenance activities or adherence to prescribed safety practices. Minor safety problems such as loose carpeting, frayed electrical wiring, etc., should be reported through normal channels.
- Stricter enforcement of already existing rules, regulations, and laws within the City.
- New or newly modified or designed equipment (that part that is exclusively new), systems, procedures, or forms shall not be open to suggestions for the first ninety (90) days of actual use, or the warranty period (if applicable) of the equipment, system, procedure or form, etc., in the City operation.
- Suggestions recommending the use or purchase of a specific product brand.
- Idea awarded cash under a previous suggestion is not eligible for another cash award for a similar application of that idea.
- Excellent job performance. Job performance is assessed through the performance evaluation process.

## (2) Suggestion Modification

If a department modifies an employee's suggestion and adopts the suggestion in a different form within a 24-month period of time, the employee shall be eligible for an award. If the final adopted suggestion does not allow for the quantifiable identification of the employee's

contribution, the award will be based on the quality of the resultant improvements to the working environment.

### (3) Employee Class

Any full or part-time City employee whose suggestion is approved by the Committee is eligible to receive a monetary award, with the following exceptions:

- (a) Elected officials, appointed advisory boards or commissions.
- (b) Any employee assigned to a position of conducting research and development, or assigned to a job requiring the solution of specific problems where the suggestion submitted is found by the Committee to be within the scope of such research, development, or problem.
- (c) Any employee who (voluntarily or involuntarily) separates from the City of Columbus before the designated date of disbursement of funds for the submitted suggestion. Excluded from this are individuals who are posthumous.

### (4) Time Period Eligibility

The employee who wishes to submit a suggestion must do so within a period of twelve (12) months, from the date of the implementation of the suggestion. The employee who submits a suggestion retains the right to any award during the period the idea is being evaluated, plus an additional period of twelve (12) months from the date of notification that the suggestion was rejected. To extend the eligibility period beyond twelve (12) months, an additional completed suggestion form may be submitted. The new suggestion must identify the former suggestion by number and request the extension of eligibility. Failure to resubmit the suggestion by the procedure will result in an automatic lapse of award eligibility at the end of twelve (12) months.

If an employee makes a suggestion that is denied, under review, delayed or is submitted as a test pilot program, but later implemented with or without modification within 24 months from date of the above mentioned, the employee is eligible for the award and the monetary compensation. It becomes the employee's responsibility to track any implementation of a denied, under review, delayed or test pilot program during the 24-month

period of time. It becomes the employee's responsibility to contact the Employee Awards Committee in writing with details of the subsequent events. The 24-month time period includes suggestions that were submitted 24 months prior to the passage of this ordinance.

#### (5) Suggestion Evaluation

The Department Director, under the policy guidelines set by the Committee, will decide what evaluation process will be used to determine cost effectiveness or the intangible benefits of a suggestion. Cost savings analysis will be done in conjunction with the Department of Finance and Management.

When requested by the Employee Awards Committee, departments will conduct a test of a suggestion. During the test period the department will maintain appropriate cost and/or savings information to allow the committee to evaluate the merits of the suggestion.

If duplicate suggestions are received by the Committee, the one bearing the earliest date of receipt shall be the one eligible for an award.

Awards will be split equally among eligible employees; if more than one individual submits the suggestion **NO** monetary award shall be less than \$100.00 (before taxes) per employee.

#### (6) Patentable or Non-patentable Inventions

Employees shall allow the City, without royalty or other forms of compensation, a nonexclusive license to any invention of an employee submitted through this program, whether or not a patent was obtained.

Awards for inventions shall be determined on the same basis as awards for other types of suggestions.

#### (7) Appeal Process

After the Employee Awards Committee rejects a suggestion, additional information may be submitted to appeal the Committee's decision. An employee who wishes to appeal this decision should submit evidence to support his/her claim. The Employee Awards Committee will review the new information and make a recommendation to the Mayor, the proper elected official and/or their designee. The Mayor, the proper elected official and/or their designee's determination on the suggestion is final and not able to be appealed.

#### (D) Suggestion Procedure:

Suggestions should, if possible, be submitted on the Employee Suggestion Form, which may be obtained from the Department of Human Resources, the intranet, any supervisory personnel or at any of the designated locations within each department. This form must be submitted directly to the Department of Human Resources. If the Department of Human Resources receives duplicate suggestions, the one bearing the earliest date of receipt shall be eligible for an award.

All suggestions will be acknowledged.

Except in special cases and for the sake of clarifying eligibility, the identity of the individual or individuals making the suggestion is not revealed outside of the Committee or staff other than for award purposes.

The Department of Human Resources will forward the suggestion to the appropriate department or elected office for evaluation. The evaluation should be completed within twenty-one (21) days after receipt. If the evaluation of the idea requires additional review time, the evaluating department shall notify the Department of Human Resources, Employee Resources Office.

The Department Director or elected official's office that is impacted by the suggestion will decide what evaluation process will be used to determine cost effectiveness or the intangible benefits of a suggestion

All recommendation for adoption or rejection must be signed by the Department Director or head of an elected official's office prior to forwarding to the Awards Committee for disposition. After receipt of the signed evaluation, the Department of Human Resources, Employee Resources Office will review the form for completeness and correctness. The Department of Finance and Management will verify the detailed cost savings of the suggestion recommended for adoption. A recommendation will then be completed and presented to the Committee for action.

The decision of the Employee Awards Committee will be communicated directly to the department or elected office and the employee submitting the suggestion.

#### (E) Suggestion Awards

The Employee Suggestion Awards will be given annually in the following categories:

- (1) Bronze Award

Awarded for suggestions that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operations to the City with a minimal calculable dollar savings of \$100.00 up to and including \$1,000.00. The suggestion must save the City up to and including \$1,000.00 in the first year of implementation.

The winning employee or team of employees will each receive \$100.00 (before taxes).

(2) Silver Award

Awarded for suggestions that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operations to the City with a calculable dollar savings of over \$1,000.01. The suggestion must save the City over \$1,000.01 in the first year of implementation.

The winning employee or team of employees will receive 10% of the savings, not to exceed a maximum award of \$2,000.00. If the award is given to a team of employees, the award will be split evenly among all employees on the team, with **NO** award being less than \$100.00 (before taxes) per employee. All savings to the City will be verified and documented in writing by the Department of Finance and Management.

(3) Gold Award

Awarded for suggestions that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operations to the City with a calculable dollar savings of over \$35,000.00. The suggestion must save the City over \$35,000.00 in the first year of implementation.

The winning employee or team of employees will receive 10% of the savings, not to exceed a maximum award of \$3,500.00. If the award is given to a team of employees, the award will be split evenly among all employees on the team, with **NO** award being less than \$100.00 (before taxes) per employee. All savings to the City will be verified and documented in writing by the Department of Finance and Management.

(4) Platinum Award

Awarded for suggestions that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of operations to the City with a dramatic calculable dollar savings of at least \$100,000.00. The suggestion must save the City at least \$100,000.00 in the first year of implementation.

The winning employee or team of employees will receive a maximum award of \$7,000.00. If the award is given to a team of employees, the award will be split evenly among all employees on the team, with **NO** award being less than \$100.00 (before taxes) per employee. All savings to the City will be verified and documented in writing by the Department of Finance and Management.

Cost savings will be calculated based on the estimated first year net cost avoidance/reduction or increased revenue resulting from the adoption and implementation of a suggestion.

The cost of capital expenditures shall be amortized over the usual life of the equipment or a period specified by the Department of Finance and Management. Direct labor costs of implementation will be considered first year costs. Indirect or administrative costs of implementation shall be amortized over a three-year period.

Upon adoption of the suggestion, an employee will receive the appropriate award, as well as monetary compensation. Monetary awards are funded through the benefiting division or department. Cash awards made to City employees for their suggestions are considered wages subject to income tax withholding.

## II. MAYOR'S AWARD OF EXCELLENCE (Outstanding Achievement)

All City employees have the opportunity to improve their workplace, increase job or operational efficiency, enhance the teamwork concept and provide exceptional customer service. All of these are invaluable in the deliverance of peak performance. To this end, all City employees will have the opportunity to contribute to the recognition of individuals or groups of individuals through a standardized format.

(A) The Mayor will recognize employees nominated by their peers and reviewed by the administration for the following awards:

(1) Lifesaving

Awarded to an unlimited number of one or more employees involved in saving a life or an act of heroism. The intention of this category is to recognize the actions of individual(s) who have gone above and beyond the call of duty.

(2) Humanitarian



Awarded to an unlimited number of one or more employees whose action significantly altered a situation's outcome in a positive way and who promoted human welfare, but where no life was in danger.

(3) Community Service

Awarded to an unlimited number of one or more employees who volunteer in the community or workplace.

(4) Outstanding Service Delivery

Awarded to an unlimited number of one or more employees who creatively utilize technology, community resources or partnerships to improve service delivery or customer service.

(5) Enrichment Award

Awarded to an unlimited number of one or more employees who increase employee morale.

(6) Department of the Year Award

The nominations for this award must be submitted by the Chief of Staff, a Director or elected official and is awarded to one department, division or elected officials office who constantly exemplifies throughout the year the goals and objectives of the City of Columbus.

- (B) All full-time and permanent part-time employees of the City are eligible for these awards except for the following individuals:
- 1) Employees who have pending disciplinary actions.
  - 2) Employees who have received disciplinary action within 2 years of the date the committee convenes for selection in any given year. The 2 year period begins the date the discipline is issued.
- (C) Each individual award winner will receive \$250.00. The numbers of awards presented (except for the Departmental Employee or Team of the Year Award) are unlimited.
- (D) Anonymous nominations will not be considered. Nomination forms are available from the Department of Human Resources and must be forwarded to the Employee Awards Committee for verification and acceptance or rejection. The Employee Awards Committee will select the winners and categories based on the nominations submitted.
- (E) A nominated employee's top executive (Mayor, Elected Official, Judge, or Director) will be required to sign-off on the nomination before it will be

considered valid for consideration. If a denial for consideration occurs the executive will be required to put into writing their decision for the denial.

- (F) Nominations forms are available from the Department of Human Resources or on the city's intranet site under the Department of Human Resources and must be forwarded to the Employee Awards committee for verification and acceptance or rejection. The Employee Awards Committee will select the individual(s) or team(s) of individuals to receive each of the Mayor's Award of Excellence.
- (G) If an appeal is requested, the Director (or designee) of the Department of Human Resources shall consider the recommendation of the Employee Awards Committee and make the final determination.

### III. EMPLOYEE SERVICE AWARD

(A) Eligibility: All full-time City employees.

(B) Structure:

Employees will be recognized for years of service as follows:

5 years of continuous service

10 years of continuous service

15 years of continuous service

20 years of continuous service

25 years of continuous service

30 years of continuous service

35 years of continuous service

40 years of continuous service

45 years of continuous service

50 years of continuous service

Years of continuous service will be determined by service dates, as recorded in the City's personnel system. All employees with continuous years of service as previously outlined will be recognized. The form of

recognition will be determined and funded by the Department of Human Resources. Recognitions on an individual basis will not exceed \$100.00 (one hundred dollars).

#### IV. OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY INCENTIVE PROGRAM

The Occupational Safety Incentive Program is a year-around incentive to recognize and reward the efforts of employees or teams of employees throughout the city who strive to ensure a safe work environment that fosters teamwork, innovation and continuous improvement. The recipients, categories, forms of recognition; including food will be determined and funded by the Department of Human Resources. Recognitions on an individual basis will not exceed \$100.00 (one hundred dollars) per employee per recognition.

#### V. QUALITY OF WORK LIFE (QWL) AWARDS

In July 1976, an agreement was signed by the City of Columbus, A.F.S.C.M.E. Local 1632 and the Ohio State University to develop a Quality of Working Life Program to improve both the quality of the work environment of municipal employees and the service provided by City government.

The communication and trust that QWL fosters between management and labor leads directly to ideas and experiments to improve City services to the citizens of the City of Columbus.

A QWL Outstanding Service Award will be granted annually to one employee from labor and one from management for their outstanding service in the Quality of Working Life Program. The recipients of these annual awards will be determined by A.F.S.C.M.E. Local 1632. The type of award presented to the recipients will be determined and funded by A.F.S.C.M.E. Local 1632.

#### VI. SKILLS DEVELOPMENT RECOGNITION

The Department of Human Resources, Citywide Office of Training and Development, offers employees Skill Development Programs as a means to improve work skills in a particular area of study. The courses necessary for completion include content that will enhance an employee's opportunity to obtain knowledge, skills and abilities. Each employee who completes a Skill Development Program will be presented with a form of recognition determined and funded by the Department of Human Resources. Recognitions on an individual basis will not exceed \$100.00 (one hundred dollars) per employee per recognition.

SECTION 3. That Ordinance No. 2541-94 is hereby repealed in its entirety.

SECTION 4. That this ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after the earliest period allowed by law. Pending suggestions shall be grandfather under the 2541-94 unless the monetary award would be greater under the revised ordinance.