

UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT
POLICY AND PROCEDURE

No. 1010

Supersedes: Pol. 85-35.4.1

Effective: March 21, 2018

Page: All Section: All

Page: 1 OF 5

Date: September 13, 1985

AWARDS AND COMMENDATIONS

- I. **PURPOSE:** To establish an official award and commendation program; to define each award and commendation; and to outline the procedures which will be used for the selection and presentation of awards and commendations.

- II. **POLICY:** The Upper Merion Township Police Department will officially recognize outstanding efforts of its officers and employees and, also, those efforts of citizens whose actions assist the Police Department accomplish its mission. Awards and commendations will be presented in recognition of extraordinary acts and for outstanding service in and for the community of Upper Merion Township.

- III. **DEFINITIONS:**
 - A. **AWARDS COMMITTEE:** This committee will consist of one command officer and four officers of the Upper Merion Township Police Department who will be appointed by the Chief of Police.

 - B. **UPPER MERION TOWNSHIP POLICE OFFICER OF THE YEAR:** In January of each year, the Awards Committee will accept nominations from department personnel for Police Officer of the Year for the previous year. After careful screening, the Awards Committee will recommend one of the nominees to the Chief of Police. With the approval of the Chief of Police, that officer will be presented this prestigious award. An officer's total performance, appearance and attitude will be considered when screening nominees; however, the following are some of the qualities which will be closely scrutinized:
 - 1. Dependability
 - 2. Initiative

3. Attendance Record
4. Department awards or commendations
5. Courteous cooperation with the public and coworkers

Historically, service clubs in Upper Merion Township present Police Officer of the Year awards. Should this occur and should the club request the Upper Merion Township Police Department to recommend a recipient, the Department will recommend the same officer who received the Upper Merion Township Police Officer of the Year Award.

- C. AWARD FOR VALOR: This award will recognize extraordinary acts of outstanding courage without regard for personal safety while in actual combat with an armed and dangerous adversary.
- D. AWARD FOR BRAVERY: This award will recognize outstanding performance while making an arrest where the officer's efforts are met by an armed and dangerous adversary.
- E. AWARD FOR HEROISM: This award will recognize those acts of heroism or outstanding courage, without regard for personal safety, which result in the saving of a life.
- F. CHIEF'S MERIT COMMENDATION: This award recognizes an act of intelligent and valuable police service demonstrating special faithfulness or perseverance, including an especially significant arrest, accomplished through highly intelligent performance of duty.
- G. WOUNDED IN COMBAT COMMENDATION: For serious injury received in the line of duty, inflicted intentionally by an armed adversary, resulting in severe wounds, lacerations, fractures, injuries, or concussions.
- H. LIFESAVING AWARD: This award will be given to the member who acted in a manner that saved the life of another human being, whether by oral communication or physical act.
- I. LETTER OF COMMENDATION: This commendation will acknowledge the performance of a creditable act which does not qualify for an award. It will also acknowledge performance which is continually above average and dedication to the Department and to the community.
- J. UNIT COMMENDATION: This commendation will acknowledge exceptional police service where the outstanding accomplishment is the result of teamwork rather than that of individuals.

- K. **CITIZENS AWARD OR COMMENDATIONS:** An award or commendation will be presented to any citizen who assists the Upper Merion Township Police Department to accomplish the Police Mission. Criteria for selection will be similar to that used for awards or commendations for police officers.
- L. **RETIREMENT COMMENDATION:** Upon retirement, under honorable conditions, officers will receive a commendation from the Board of Supervisors.
- M. **POSTHUMOUS AWARD OR COMMENDATION:**
 - 1. **Medal of Honor Award:** This medal will be awarded to the family of an officer or employee killed in the line of duty. This medal will be presented to the family at an appropriate ceremony.
 - 2. **Posthumous Commendation:** This commendation will be presented to the family of an officer or employee who dies while on active duty with the Upper Merion Township Police Department.

IV. **PROCEDURES:**

- A. The Awards Committee will review all nominations for awards and commendations. Nominations shall be submitted on the Upper Merion Police Department Awards Nomination Form and contain sufficient information so the committee can make an intelligent assessment of the facts.
- B. The Awards Committee will conduct a thorough investigation of the nomination and the facts pertaining to the incident. Follow-up phone calls, visits, correspondence with officers, victims, witnesses, or others involved in the incident should be completed to verify the account of the incident.
- C. The facts of the incident will dictate which particular award or commendation is appropriate, and the Awards Committee will make this determination and proper recommendation to the Chief of Police. All officers and employees are encouraged to submit nominations.
- D. The Awards Committee should convene as often as necessary to provide timely recommendations to the Chief of Police.
- E. Nominations for awards or commendations should be made to the awards Committee within 28 days from the date that the incident becomes known to the Police Department, or from the date of arrest.
- F. Awards or commendations will be presented at an appropriate ceremony at the earliest practical date by the Board of Supervisors or the Chief of Police. There may be occasions when commendations will be mailed to the recipient.

- G. Any award or commendation received by an employee will become part of the officer's or employee's personnel record.
- H. Recipients of designated awards will receive a citation bar and a certificate. The citation will be worn on the left breast of the police uniform by uniformed officers.
- I. Citation bars will differ in color depending on which award is received; however, only one bar will be worn on the uniform:
 - 1. Police Officer of the Year: Blue Citation Bar
 - 2. Award for Valor: Gold Citation Bar
 - 3. Award for Bravery: Red Citation Bar
 - 4. Award for Heroism: White Citation Bar
 - 5. Wounded in Combat Commendation: Purple Citation Bar

Should an officer receive several or all of the awards on different occasions, citation bars with a combination of the appropriate colors will be presented. Should an officer receive the same award on different occasions, an appurtenance will be attached to the citation bar to signify the second or subsequent award. The certificate will state the facts of the incident and signify the exact award which is appropriate.

- J. An Award/Commendation Register will be instituted and maintained by the Command Officer serving on the Awards Committee. It will list all the awards and commendations, the name of the recipient and the date of the presentation.
- K. Disapproved nominations will be forwarded to the Chief of Police. If the Chief of Police concurs with the action of the Awards Committee, a written disapproval notice will be sent to the person who submitted the nomination.

V. **RESTRICTIONS:**

- A. No award or commendation will be solicited.
- B. No award or commendation, other than official Upper Merion Township Police Department awards or commendations, may be accepted without written approval from the Chief of Police.
- C. No medals, bars or other items which are not consistent with approved department policy are permitted to be worn on the uniform.

APPROVED: _____
 Chief Thomas M. Nolan

DATE: _____

APPROVED: _____
 Captain Jeremy Johnson

DATE: _____

TO BE REVIEWED: ANNUALLY

DISTRIBUTION: All police officers
All police dispatchers
All civilian employees
Township Manager
File