



FEDERAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT AGENCY

	Date	Number	
MANUAL	March 19, 2001	3600.1 Change 3	HR

FEMA REWARD AND RECOGNITION SYSTEM

1. Purpose: This transmits changes to FEMA Manual 3600.1, "FEMA Reward and Recognition System," dated March 27, 1997. These changes establish criteria and procedures to include CORE employees as recipients for non-monetary awards, including time-off awards.

2. Action Required: Holders of FEMA Manual 3600.1, shall file this transmittal sheet in front of the Manual for reference purposes.

Insert

New Table of Contents

Pages 1-1, 1-2, 1-3, 1-5 and 1-5

Pages A-1, A-2, A-3, A-4, A-5, and A-6

Revised FEMA Form 30-63,
Award Nomination, dated April 01

Remove

Old Table of Contents

Page 1-1,1-2,1-3, 1-4, and 1-5

Pages A-1, A-2, A-3, and A-4

Appendix C-FEMA Form 30-63
Award Nomination, dated March 97

3. Change lines. A vertical line in the right or left margins immediately opposite the new or revised material indicates new or revised material appearing on the change page.

/s/

Dianne Bona
Director
Office of Human Resources Management

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Chapter 1

General Information

1-1. Purpose. This manual establishes the policies and procedures for the Federal Management Agency's (FEMA) Reward and Recognition System. The FEMA Reward and Recognition System has two purposes:

a. To appropriately recognize those individuals who contribute to the achievement of FEMA's Strategic Plan and exemplify the Agency's values by demonstrating quality work and exceeding job expectations.

b. To provide an effective avenue that encourages employees to recognize and reward their peers, supervisors, staff, and teams on a continuous, timely, and equitable basis.

1-2. Applicability and Scope.

a. All employees are eligible for nonmonetary rewards.

b. All employees are also eligible for monetary awards; however, the following employees are *not eligible* for monetary awards under this Reward and Recognition System:

(1) Presidential Appointees paid under the Executive Schedule;

(2) Members of the Senior Executive Service, "career and non-career"; and

(3) Temporary employees hired under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistant Act [PL 93-288, as amended].

(4) Schedule C employees, except in limited circumstances. (Contact OHRM for additional guidance).

(5) Individuals and groups from outside of FEMA. However, these individuals may be eligible for a monetary suggestion award.

c. All employees, to include CORE employees, are also eligible for time-off awards; however, the following employees are *not eligible* for time-off awards under this Reward and Recognition System:

(1) Presidential Appointees paid under the Executive Schedule;

(2) Members of the Senior Executive Service, "career and non-career"; and

(3) Temporary employees hired under the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistant Act [PL 93-288, as amended], with the exception of CORE employees.

(4) Schedule C employees, except in limited circumstances. (Contact OHRM for additional guidance).

(5) Individuals and groups from outside of FEMA. However, these individuals may be eligible for a monetary suggestion award.

1-3. Supersession. This manual supersedes FEMA Manual 3600.1, Performance Management Plan/Superior Accomplishment Awards, dated September, 1987, Interim Time Off Awards Guidance.

1-4. Authority. Title 5, United States Code (U.S.C.), Chapter 43 and Chapter 45.

1-5. Reference. Title 5, Code of Federal Regulation (CFR), Parts 451 and 531.

1-6. Policy. FEMA is committed to maintaining a highly skilled workforce to achieve the organizational excellence necessary to guarantee quality service to the public. The Reward and Recognition System is designed to create an environment where employees actively and continually seek better ways to do their jobs and improve organizational performance, take great pride in their achievements and are recognized for their accomplishments, contributions and innovations in support of the Agency's goals and values.

1-7. Responsibilities.

a. Employees are responsible for:

(1) Recognizing the significant accomplishment and quality performance of peers in support of FEMA's Strategic Plan and Agency values; and

(2) Recommending deserving employees for recognition under the Reward and Recognition System.

b. Supervisors are responsible for:

(1) Developing nonmonetary award programs to recognize individual and group achievements within the work unit;

(2) Approving Time-Off awards up to 18 hours per award;

(3) Providing input to the Awards Review Team(s) on recommended Organization and Agency awards for their employees; and,

(4) Supporting the Employee Suggestion Program and recommending, or assisting in recommending, appropriate award amounts for adopted ideas.

c. Executive Associate Directors/Associate Directors/Administrators/Regional Directors/Chief of Staff/General Counsel/Office Directors are responsible for:

(1) Establishing Awards Review Teams for their organizations, ensuring a cross-section of member representation on the Team (recommended size is 5-9 depending on the size of the organization);

(2) Approving and presenting Organization Awards;

- (3) Approving Time-Off awards for amounts over 18 hours up to the limit of 40 hours.
- (4) Supporting the Employee Suggestion Program; and
- (5) Ensuring accurate financial record-keeping of funds allotted and expended on awards.

d. The Director or a designee is responsible for:

- (1) Ensuring consistent application of the Reward and Recognition System, Agency-wide;
- (2) Ensuring the System meets its stated objectives by rewarding employees based on the Agency's Strategic Plan and Values.
- (3) Determining, on a fiscal year basis, and in consultation with the Office of Financial Management and the Office of Human Resources Management:
 - (a) The annual funding level for the Awards and the Employee Suggestion Programs;
 - (b) The maximum dollar amount an employee may receive in Organization Awards; and,
 - (c) The number of Quality Step Increases (QSI) that may be processed by each organization.

e. Awards Review Teams are responsible for:

- (1) Reviewing nominations for Organization and Agency Awards;
- (2) Ensuring consistency in recommending awards;
- (3) Requesting additional information from first-level supervisors or others, as necessary, on individual nominations; and,
- (4) Making recommendations to the head of the organization on the approval, disapproval, and modification of nominations of awards.

f. Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) is responsible for:

- (1) Administering Reward and Recognition System, including Employee Suggestion Program;
- (2) Providing technical advisory services to all employees, supervisors and managers concerning the System;
- (3) Assisting work units in developing their own local awards;
- (4) Providing System monitoring, oversight, and evaluation;
- (5) Ensuring approved awards are properly and timely processed in accordance with Office of Personnel Management (OPM) instructions and Agency policies and procedures. Reporting award data to

OPM and maintaining records necessary to report program activities as required; and,

(6) Coordinating the annual awards ceremony.

g. Office of Financial Management (OFM) is responsible for:

(1) Determining and allocating all available award amounts to organizations upon Congressional approval of the Agency's operating plan; and,

(2) Allocating the funds for the Employee Suggestion Program to OHRM for administration.

h. Preparedness, Training and Exercises Directorate (PT) is responsible for:

(1) Orienting and training supervisors, managers and employees on the new System; and,

(2) Conducting ongoing training to update skills for supervisors and employees.

1-8. Definitions.

a. Nonmonetary Award. An award presented at the work unit, organization, or Agency level that recognizes exceptional efforts and contributions made by employees or groups. The award does not convey money. Recipients may receive certificates or other incidental items such as mugs, caps, balloons, etc. This award is the foundation of the new Reward and Recognition system. This award is intended to immediately recognize employees for contributing to the Agency's Values and Strategic Plan.

b. Monetary Award. An award presented at the work unit or organization level that recognizes significant efforts and contributions made by employees or groups. The award comprises money and can be in the form of a Quality Step Increase, or specific dollar amount. An employee may not receive more than one monetary award in recognition of the same contribution or achievement.

c. Time-Off Award. An award that provides immediate recognition to one-time and short-term efforts that result in exceptional contributions, services, achievements or quality work. Award amounts can range from 4 hours to 24 hours for CORE employees and from 4 to 40 hours for all other employees as indicated in paragraph 1-2c of this manual. Immediate supervisors can present awards up to 18 hours at the work unit level. The head of an organization can approve awards up to a maximum of 40 hours. (See Appendix A)

d. Quality Step Increase. A Quality Step Increase (QSI) provides appropriate incentives and recognition for excellence in performance by granting faster than normal step increases. To qualify for a QSI, GS/GM employees must be nominated by their supervisor, have a current performance rating of record of "Superior" and have not received a QSI within the previous 52 weeks. Wage Grade employees are not eligible for this award.

e. Work Unit Awards. Work Unit awards are both monetary and nonmonetary and are presented at the local work unit level. Awards in this category do not require the approval of the organization's Awards Review Team. Depending on the size and location of the work unit, the local level might be a division, branch or team.

f. Organization Award. A monetary or nonmonetary award that recognizes significant performance in support of the Agency's Strategic Plan and furtherance of Agency values. The new Reward and Recognition system is de-linked from the new Employee Performance System. Organization awards recognize employee accomplishments throughout the year and are not tied to year-end performance ratings. These awards require review by the organization's Awards Review Team and final approval by the head of the organization.

g. Agency Award. A nonmonetary award that represents the highest form of reward and recognition within FEMA. It is usually presented at an annual awards ceremony and is presented as the Director's Award by the Director of FEMA. The award is given in recognition of extraordinary accomplishments or quality performance in support of FEMA's strategic plan and/or the Agency's values. Agency Awards are reviewed by each organization's Award Review Team and require approval by the head of the organization before they are forwarded to the Director of FEMA.

h. Suggestion Program Award. A monetary or nonmonetary award that provides recognition for employees who submit recommendations for changes that lead to improved efficiency and effectiveness of Agency or Federal government operations. Monetary awards range from \$100 to \$2,500 depending on the value or benefit of the recommendation (i.e., suggestion). (*see Appendix B*)

1-9. Forms Prescribed. This manual prescribes the use of a single nomination form to nominate an employee or group for any of the Agency's monetary or nonmonetary awards, except for employee suggestions. The revised FEMA Form 30-63, Award Nomination Form, dated April 01, may be obtained through the Agency's Printing, Publications and Graphics Branch. Office of Personnel Management Optional Form 303 will continue to be used for employee suggestions and may also be obtained from the Agency's Printing, Publications and Graphics Branch.

1-10. Evaluation of the Reward And Recognition System. The Reward and Recognition System is evaluated annually to ensure that it is accomplishing its stated goals. Modifications are made as needed as part of a continuous improvement process.

Appendix A

Summary of Time-Off Award Criteria

A-1. General. This guidance establishes criteria and procedures for granting Time-Off Awards to employees of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). A Time-Off Award is granted to an employee in recognition of the employee's contribution to the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of operations related to the Agency's Strategic Plan and for exemplifying the Agency's values. A Time-Off Award is an excused absence granted to an employee without charge to leave or loss of pay.

A-2. Criteria. Time-Off Awards are intended to increase the productivity and creativity of FEMA employees by providing for timely recognition of their contributions. A Time-Off Award is appropriate to recognize an employee who has exceeded normal job requirements or has otherwise made significant contribution(s) to organizational or Agency programs, priorities, or projects, and exemplified the Agency's values. Examples of appropriate uses of Time-Off Awards include but are not limited to:

- a. Display of innovative or creative solutions to difficult problems resulting in paper work reduction, streamlined procedures, or enhanced organizational performance;
- b. Improved quality of service to customers both within and outside the organization;
- c. Successful accomplishment of complex assignments in advance of target completion dates or with outcomes that surpass what was expected; and
- d. Performance of extra work assignments or projects in addition to regular workload to ensure that organizational goals and objectives are met.

A-3. Award Amount Limits.

a. CORE Employees

(1) The maximum time off awarded a full-time CORE employee may not exceed 24 hours for a single contribution and may not exceed a total of 40 hours during any one year.

(2) The maximum time off awarded a part-time CORE employee may not exceed 60 percent of the number of hours in the employee's weekly scheduled tour of duty for a single contribution and the total hours during any one year may not exceed 50 percent of the total hours worked in a biweekly pay period. For example, a time-off award for a part-time employee who works 30 hours per week and 60 hours per pay period is limited to 18 hours (30 hours x 60%= 18) for a single contribution and 30 hours (60 hours x 50%=30) in any one year.

b. All other employees as indicated in paragraph 1-2c of this manual

(1) Full-time employees may be granted Time-Off Awards in amounts up to 40 hours for a single contribution and up to a total of 80 hours during a leave year.

(2) A part-time employee, or employee with an uncommon tour of duty, may be granted Time-Off Awards in an amount up to the average number of hours of work in the employee's biweekly

scheduled tour of duty during a leave year and up to a total of one-half of that amount for a single contribution. For example, a part-time employee whose work schedule is 24 hours per week, or 48 hours per pay period, may be granted a Time-Off-Award up to 24 hours for a single contribution and up to 48 hours during a leave year.

A-4. Relationship to Other Awards. Time-Off Awards may be used in concert with other FEMA awards but may not be used:

- a. In lieu of monetary awards for adopted employee suggestions or inventions;
- b. To recognize an employee for performing additional duties when the employee received a temporary promotion for performing such duties;
- c. To compensate an employee for perceived discrepancies or inadequacies in the pay system;
- d. As a farewell gift; or
- e. To recognize an employee for the same achievements or contributions for which the employee has already received or will receive a monetary, non-monetary or honorary award.

A-5. Procedures.

a. Nominations for Time-Off Awards may be made by any employee or supervisor by completing a FEMA Form 30-63, Award Nomination. The employee making the nomination forwards the completed form to the nominee's supervisor of record for review and approval. The supervisor should provide a copy of the form to the nominee and nominee's timekeeper. Nominations should be prepared as soon as possible following the contribution to ensure timely recognition, generally within 90 days. Each nomination must include appropriate justification for the award.

b. Award justifications must describe the employee's contribution(s), explain why the contribution(s) warrant(s) recognition, describe the tangible and/or intangible benefits, and explain how the recommended amount of time-off was determined. The attached guidance table should be used to determine the amount of time-off for a single contribution.

c. Supervisors of record may approve Time-Off Awards up to a single award limit of 18 hours.

d. A Time-Off Award in excess of 18 hours must be approved by the organization director (Executive Associate Director, Associate Director, Administrator, Regional Director, Chief Of Staff, General Counsel, Office Director).

e. All approved nomination forms must be forwarded to the Office of Human Resources Management (OHRM) for processing and record-keeping. Immediate supervisors forward a copy of approved Time-Off Awards to the timekeeper of employees for tracking accrued and used Time-Off Awards and for retention with time and attendance records.

f. The OHRM prepares a Notification of Personnel Action, Standard Form (SF) 50, to document the Time-Off Award. The SF-50 is forwarded to the employee and a copy is placed in the employee's Official Personnel File.

g. Individualized Time-Off Award certificates may be prepared and presented by the nominating office or by the FEMA organization in which the recipient works. In either case, the nominating employee should sign the certificate to be presented to the award recipient.

h. Time-Off Awards must be scheduled and used no later than one year from the effective date of the personnel action. Use of Time-Off Awards is subject to approval by the employee's immediate supervisor. Employees should submit requests to use Time-Off Awards in advance to allow supervisors adequate time to plan for office coverage. Supervisors will make every effort to honor requests to use awarded time-off.

i. Use of awarded time-off must be requested by completing SF-71, Application for Leave. Employees must indicate that the request is for awarded time-off by checking "Other" in Item 5 and specifying "Time-Off Award" in the space provided. Approved SF-71's are forwarded to the employee's timekeeper to be reported and retained with time and attendance records.

j. If an employee becomes physically incapacitated while using a Time-Off Award, the supervisor may grant sick leave in lieu of the award time for the period of incapacitation. In this instance, the balance of the awarded time-off could be used to extend the time-off, if approved, or be rescheduled at another time.

k. Awarded time off will be reported during the pay period in which it is used. Timekeepers will record the number of awarded time-off hours using Transaction Code (TC) 66 with a Prefix 61. Timekeepers, under the direction of supervisors, will be responsible for tracking awarded time-off accumulated and used in the remarks sections of FEMA Form 30-50, Time and Attendance Worksheet. The amount of time-off used and reported on biweekly Time and Attendance Reports is deducted from an employee's Time-Off Award balance as maintained in the US Department of Agriculture's personnel/payroll system.

l. By regulation, Time-Off Awards may not be converted to cash payments under any circumstances. Employees who have been granted Time-Off Awards are responsible for using the time-off prior to separation or transfer to another agency. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of the awarded time-off.

A-6. Evaluation.

a. The OHRM monitors the use of Time-Off Awards to ensure consistency, equity, and fairness.

b. Time-Off Awards are included in periodic reviews and assessments of the Agency's Reward and Recognition System.

A-7. Information and Assistance.

a. The OHRM provides advice and assistance on Time-Off Awards.

b. Additional information regarding Time-Off Awards is provided to employees and supervisors through training, reports and a variety of media.

Appendix A

A-8. Guidance For Time -Off Award Amounts For CORE Employees

(See A-3 a(1) (2))

Single Contribution

VALUE OF CONTRIBUTION	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT OF AWARD
MODERATE	A contribution to a program, priority, project, or service that is of sufficient value to merit recognition.	
	A beneficial change or modification of principles or practices that result in more efficient and effective operations.	1 to 6
	An important contribution to a program, priority, project, or service.	
SUBSTANTIAL		7 to 12
	A significant change or modification of principles or practices that result in more efficient and effective operations.	
	A highly significant contribution to a program, priority, project, or service.	
HIGH		13 to 18
	Complete revision of principles or practices with considerable impact on efficiency and effectiveness of operations.	
	A superior contribution to the quality of a program, priority, project, or service.	
EXCEPTIONAL		19 to 24
	Initiation of a new principle or major practice with significant impact on efficiency and effectiveness of operations.	

Appendix A

A-9. Guidance For Time -Off Award Amounts For All Other Employees

(See A-3 b(1) (2))

Single Contribution

VALUE OF CONTRIBUTION	DESCRIPTION	AMOUNT OF AWARD
	A contribution to a program, priority, project, or service that is of sufficient value to merit recognition.	
MODERATE	A beneficial change or modification of principles or practices that result in more efficient and effective operations. An important contribution to a program, priority, project, or service.	4 to 10
SUBSTANTIAL	A significant change or modification of principles or practices that result in more efficient and effective operations. A highly significant contribution to a program, priority, project, or service.	11 to 20
HIGH	Complete revision of principles or practices with considerable impact on efficiency and effectiveness of operations. A superior contribution to the quality of a program, priority, project, or service.	21 to 30
EXCEPTIONAL	Initiation of a new principle or major practice with significant impact on efficiency and effectiveness of operations.	31 to 40