

Commendations and Awards

1015.1 PURPOSE AND SCOPE

This policy provides general guidelines for recognizing commendable or meritorious acts of members of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office and individuals from the community.

The awards system is established for the purpose of improving Sheriff's Office operations and to provide recognition, through the awards system, of employee contributions through superior achievement and performance above and beyond what is expected in their current assignment. The program is based upon three (3) premises:

- (a) The success of a supervisor or commander depends upon his/her ability to create and maintain a team spirit among his/her personnel. One of the best ways to motivate personnel to become a strong cohesive group is by recognizing and rewarding their achievements publicly and promptly.
- (b) Employees seek recognition and distinction regardless of their grade or status. The need to feel the work they are doing makes an important contribution to the agency. Personal recognition awards for suggestions and special work efforts help fill this need.
- (c) Effective use of incentive awards can result in increased productivity, better quality of work, less waste, and more efficient operations of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office.

1015.2 POLICY

It is the policy of the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office to recognize and acknowledge exceptional individual or group achievements, performance, proficiency, heroism and service of its members and individuals from the community through commendations and awards.

1015.3 COMMENDATIONS

Commendations for members of the Office or for individuals from the community may be initiated by any office member or by any person from the community.

1015.4 CRITERIA

A meritorious or commendable act may include, but is not limited to:

- Superior handling of a difficult situation.
- Conspicuous bravery or outstanding performance.
- Any action of performance that is above and beyond typical duties.

1015.5 OFFICE MEMBER DOCUMENTATION

Members of the Office should document meritorious or commendable acts. The documentation should contain:

- (a) Identifying information:

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1. For members of the Office - name, division and assignment at the date and time of the meritorious or commendable act
 2. For individuals from the community - name, address, telephone number
- (b) A brief account of the meritorious or commendable act with report numbers, as appropriate.
- (c) The signature of the member submitting the documentation.

1015.6 COMMUNITY MEMBER DOCUMENTATION

Documentation of a meritorious or commendable act submitted by a person from the community should be accepted in any form. However, written documentation is preferred. Office members accepting the documentation should attempt to obtain detailed information regarding the matter, including:

- (a) Identifying information:
1. For members of the Office - name, division and assignment at the date and time of the meritorious or commendable act
 2. For individuals from the community - name, address, telephone number
- (b) A brief account of the meritorious or commendable act with report numbers, as appropriate.
- (c) The signature of the person submitting the documentation.

1015.7 PROCESSING DOCUMENTATION

Documentation regarding the meritorious or commendable act of a member of the Office shall be submitted through the chain of command utilizing the Blue Team software Conference/Awards Nomination incident type. Documentation should then be forwarded to the awards committee for their review. After review, the committee shall forward their recommendation to the Sheriff for consideration. The final decision to award rests with the Sheriff.

The Sheriff or the authorized designee will present the commendation to the office member for his/her signature. The documentation will then be returned to the Administrative Secretary for entry into the member's personnel file.

Documentation regarding the meritorious or commendable act of an individual from the community should be forwarded to the members Division Commander. The documentation will be signed by the Division Commander and forwarded to the Sheriff for his/her review. An appropriate venue or ceremony to acknowledge the individual's actions should be arranged. Documentation of the commendation shall be maintained in a file designated for such records.

For procedures related to Processing Documentation, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Award Nominations](#)

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1015.8 AWARDS COMMITTEE

An Awards Committee has been appointed by the Sheriff to review all award nominations. The committee is composed of: one (1) Commander, serving as chair, and one (1) representative from Patrol, Special Operations, Criminal Investigations - Vice/Narcotics Division, Corrections and a Professional Staff Employee. The awards committee convenes quarterly to review nominations.

1015.9 AWARDS

Awards may be bestowed upon members of the Office and individuals from the community. These awards include:

- Purple Heart
- Awards for Valor
 - Gold Medal
 - Silver Medal
 - Bronze Medal
- Meritorious Awards
 - Meritorious Action
 - Life Saving
 - Distinguished Service Award
 - Meritorious Service
- Proficiency Awards
 - Safe Driving
 - Personal Appearance
 - Firearms Proficiency
- Quarterly Awards
 - Deputy Sheriff of the Quarter
 - Correctional Officer of the Quarter
 - Professional Staff Employee of the Quarter
 - Quarterly Commendations
 - Sheriff's Salute
- Employee of the Year Awards
 - Deputy Sheriff of the Year
 - Correctional Officer of the Year
 - Professional Staff Employee of the Year (Law and Corrections)
 - Deputy Sheriff Rookie of the Year

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- Correctional Officer Rookie of the Year
 - Sgt. Nolan Scully Memorial NCO Award
- Length of Service Awards
- Promotional Awards
- St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office Team Awards
- Citizen Awards
- St. Mary's County Incentive Awards Program

Criteria for each award and the selection, presentation and display of any award are determined by the Sheriff.

For procedures related to Awards, see the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Office LE Procedures Manual: [Descriptions of Awards](#)