

1 Article 17

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3 Monetary Awards

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6 Section 1. Purpose

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8 Recognition of employees through monetary awards reflects the parties' efforts to
9 promote quality service and to recognize employee contributions to Agency
10 performance. Employee recognition is based on achievement and acknowledges the
11 individual and collaborative accomplishments of employees to promote the success of
12 the Agency mission, goals and objectives. Strong emphasis is placed on recognition of
13 efforts to improve service to the public. The program recognizes the accomplishments
14 of employees both as individuals and as members of groups or teams. Those who
15 contribute to the success of their work unit, and thus, the Agency, deserve recognition
16 of their accomplishments. Recognition of group accomplishments also promotes and
17 acknowledges the value we place on working together.

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19 The program provides for various forms of recognition, enabling the award recipient to
20 be recognized in a meaningful manner. It provides the flexibility necessary to adapt to a
21 changing work environment and unanticipated circumstances. The intent of this
22 program is that employees will be appropriately rewarded regardless of changes in the
23 Agency's organizational structure, work processes or work initiatives.

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Section 2. Policy

A. Except for Recognition of Contribution Awards (ROC), there is no limit on the number of awards that an individual employee may receive or frequency with which he/she may receive awards during an appraisal period. The timing and frequency is determined by the type of award. No more than one Recognition of Contribution Award can be granted for an appraisal period. Executive Recognition Awards and Exemplary Contribution or Service Awards will normally be granted as close as possible to the event being recognized.

B. When employees are eligible to be considered for an award, the relative significance and impact of their contributions will be considered in determining which type of award(s) would constitute appropriate recognition, and the amount of money to be awarded. Funding availability must also be considered in the granting of monetary awards.

C. Awards will be processed in a timely and expeditious manner.

D. The Agency will provide an award recipient with documentation of the award received which may include a certificate. For awards other than ROCs, the acknowledgment will include a justification statement.

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E. The Administration will make reasonable efforts to allot awards funding in proportion to the number of bargaining unit employees within each component.

Section 3. Eligibility Requirements

To be eligible for an award an employee must be in good standing and have a rating of record with an Element Average of at least 4.0 for ROCs, and an Element Average at least 3.0 for all other awards.

An employee is in good standing when he/she has a rating of record (an appraisal) of at least summary Level 3 and his/her current performance is at least successful.

Element Average is a computation summary derived in the performance evaluation process. Each performance element in the employee’s appraisal is assigned a rating of 1, 3, or 5. The individual performance element ratings are added together and the total is divided by the number of performance elements and the resulting number is the Element Average. An Element Average is not computed for those employees with a Level 1 rating because they are not eligible for awards.

Section 4. Types of Awards

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A. Recognition of Contribution (ROC) – ROC recognizes employees who have maintained high quality performance. It may be awarded in the form of a Quality Step Increase (QSI) or cash award. To be eligible for a cash ROC an employee must have a rating of record with an Element Average of at least 4.0. To be eligible for a QSI an employee must have a rating of record with an Element Average of 5. Employees with an Element Average of 5.0 will be considered for a ROC and employees with an Element Average of 4.0 or greater but less than 5.0 may be considered for a ROC. The following are ROC restrictions:

- Probationary employees are not eligible;
- Employees with an Element Average of less than 4.0 are not eligible;
- Employees may not be granted more than one ROC for an appraisal period;
- Employees may not be granted more than one QSI within a 52 week period; and,
- Employees may not be serving on a temporary promotion when a QSI is to take effect.

93 Recognition of Contribution Awards will be granted after all appraisals have been
94 distributed. Recognition of Contribution Award amounts for employees with an
95 Element Average of 5.0 will be greater than the amount for employees with lower
96 Element Averages at the same grade level in the same component.

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98 B. Executive Recognition Award (ERA) – An ERA is a cash award in which an
99 executive recognizes as exceptional or outstanding a team or group achievement
100 and/or contribution to the Agency and component objectives. ERAs are intended to
101 recognize exceptional or outstanding group contributions to public service. To be
102 eligible for an ERA each group/team member must have made a substantial
103 contribution to the group/team’s success and each member must have an Element
104 Average of at least 3.0. Whenever possible, distribution of ERAs will be timed as
105 close as possible to the contribution being recognized. Each employee within a
106 group receiving an ERA will receive the same amount of money, irrespective of
107 grade level or Element Average.

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109 C. See note at top of article. Discuss putting in on the spot awards. Exemplary
110 Contribution or Service Award (ECSA) – An ECSA is a cash award which recognizes
111 individual contributions to group achievement and performance that have promoted
112 the mission of the Agency or extraordinary acts performed while on duty. Award
113 amounts should be linked to the significance and impact of the accomplishment or
114 contribution. The minimum amount to be awarded for an ECSA is two hundred
115 dollars. To be eligible for an ECSA an employee must perform an extraordinary

116 service or act in connection with or related to official duty, or demonstrate exemplary
117 contributions to group performance. ECSAs may be granted and distributed
118 throughout the appraisal period and as close to the contribution or extraordinary
119 service or act as possible.

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121 NOTE: A group or team is defined as two or more individuals working together toward a
122 common purpose or goal. Examples include work groups within Field Offices, modules
123 in Program Service Centers, branches in Headquarters, inter-component teams and
124 special workgroups formed to develop or execute a specific activity.

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126 D. Suggestion Award

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128 1. The administration will encourage employees to submit suggestion awards,
129 using the SSA Suggestion Program. Suggestion awards will be appropriate
130 for tangible and intangible suggestions as defined in the SSA Suggestion
131 Program and the Memorandum of Understanding Regarding Changes in the
132 SSA Suggestion Program dated January 25, 2002.

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134 2. Employees will normally receive a final decision regarding a suggestion
135 award within 90 days after receipt by the central suggestion staff.

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137 3. If the decision is "not adopt" the evaluation report will provide the basis for the
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4. If the idea set forth in a rejected suggestion is later adopted, the appropriate suggestion coordinator will, if the matter is brought to his/her attention within the 2 year period after the rejection notice, reopen the case for award consideration.

5. An employee who informally submits a suggestion (i.e., orally gives his/her idea to a staff or management person) that is adopted, must submit the suggestion in writing within 1 year of the date the suggestion is placed in effect, in order for the suggester to be considered for a suggestion award.

6. Suggestion award amounts will be in accordance with government-wide rule and regulation, and agency guidelines.

Section 5. Award Information

The administration will provide the union with an electronic annual report on the awards program for bargaining unit employees. This report will show the distribution of cash awards and QSIs by grade and organization for headquarters, OHA central office, and regions by components, DOC and PSCs.