

**U.S. IMMIGRATION AND CUSTOMS ENFORCEMENT
ICE Policy System (IPS)**

OFFICE OF PRIMARY INTEREST: OFFICE OF HUMAN CAPITAL

DISTRIBUTION:	ICE
DIRECTIVE NO.:	30006.1
ISSUE DATE:	12/12/2006
EFFECTIVE DATE:	12/12/2006
REVIEW DATE:	12/12/2009
SUPERSEDES:	None

DIRECTIVE TITLE: ICE Awards Program

- 1. PURPOSE and SCOPE.** This Directive establishes responsibilities and implementing procedures for administering an Awards Program for all eligible U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) employees and non-employees whose contributions to the ICE mission are significant enough to merit recognition. Subject to the availability of funds, it is the policy of ICE to recognize and reward employees promptly and equitably when they perform in an exemplary manner or make significant contributions to the efficiency and effectiveness of ICE and the federal service.
- 2. AUTHORITIES/REFERENCES.**
 - 2.1. Homeland Security, P.L. 107-296, November 25, 2002.
 - 2.2. Chapter 21 of Title 5, United States Code (USC), Section 2105.
 - 2.3. Chapter 43 of Title 5, USC.
 - 2.4. Chapter 45 of Title 5, USC, Section 4502(e).
 - 2.5. Chapter 53 of Title 5, USC, Sections 5335 and 5336.
 - 2.6. 5 CFR Part 531, Subchapter E.
 - 2.7. 5 CFR Part 451.
 - 2.8. 5 CFR Part 9701.
 - 2.9. 55 Comptroller General Decision 346 (1975).

3. **SUPERSEDED/CANCELLED POLICY/SUMMARY OF CHANGES.**
This Directive supersedes legacy policies pertaining to offices incorporated into ICE. Program Office-specific awards policies may continue or may be created to the extent they do not conflict with this policy.
4. **BACKGROUND.** In creating a high-performance workplace, recognition is a motivating factor that provides employees with increased job satisfaction and encouragement to perform their jobs more efficiently and effectively. All ICE supervisors have primary responsibility for the successful motivation of their employees' interest and participation in the ICE Awards Program. This responsibility includes maintaining a thorough understanding of all aspects of the program; recognizing deserving employees by initiating recommendations for awards; ensuring that their employees are aware of the opportunities the program offers for individual and team recognition; and, achieving high quality results and operational improvements through active encouragement of employee contributions and through their own efforts. The ICE Awards Program is designed to recognize the strong performance of an employee or a group of employees when they perform in an exemplary manner or make significant contributions to the efficiency and effectiveness of ICE and the federal service.
5. **DEFINITIONS.**
 - 5.1. **Assistant Secretary Awards** are a special category of prestigious awards that are bestowed upon ICE employees and, in some instances, other federal employees and entities, according to the eligibility and vetting criteria described in the attached handbook.
 - 5.2. **Availability of Funds** is the level of funding available to fund all types of monetary awards through ICE program budget execution (allocation).
 - 5.3. **Award** refers to an honor bestowed or an action taken to recognize and reward an individual or team achievement that contributes to meeting organizational goals or improving the efficiency, effectiveness, and economy of the Government or is otherwise in the public interest.
 - 5.4. **Awards Coordinator** is a representative of the staff of each Headquarters Program Office and Principal Field Office who reviews nominations for awards for compliance with nomination guidelines, monitors the awards account, and otherwise assists the Program Office Director or Principal Field Officer in the operation of the Awards Program.
 - 5.5. **Awards Program** describes the specific procedures and requirements established by ICE for granting awards under Subchapter I of Chapter 43 and Subchapter I of Chapter 45 of Title 5, United States Code, and 5 CFR Part 451.

- 5.6. **Cash Award** is the monetary remuneration based on tangible or intangible benefits to the Government including Special Achievement and Special Act, Performance Awards, and On-the-Spot Awards.
- 5.7. **Contribution** is an accomplishment achieved through an individual or team effort in the form of a special act or service in the public interest, connected with or related to official employment. This effort is conducive to efficiency, effectiveness, or other improvement of Government operations, or results in a significant reduction in paperwork.
- 5.8. **Contractor** is a person who works for ICE under the terms of a contract in a commercial or profit-making relationship.
- 5.9. **Employee**, for the purpose of this Directive, is an individual as defined by 5 USC 2105.
- 5.10. **Field Office Principal** is the most senior official of an ICE Field Office who is responsible for directing operational and administrative functions within a designated geographic area of a component or Program Office. Field Office Principals are commonly referred to as Field Office Directors (FOD), Special Agents-in-Charge (SAC) or Regional Directors (RD), depending upon the Program Office's designated terminology for this position.
- 5.11. **Headquarters' Principal Staff** are members of the most senior management group within ICE. They are: Assistant Secretary; Deputy Assistant Secretary-Management; Deputy Assistant Secretary-Operations; Chief of Staff; Counselor to the Assistant Secretary; Principal Legal Advisor; and the following Directors: Office of Detention and Removal Operations; Office of Intelligence; Office of Investigations; Office of Policy and Planning; Office of Professional Responsibility; Office of the Chief Financial Officer; Office of the Chief Information Officer; Office of Training and Development; and the Director, Human Capital Office.
- 5.12. **Honorary Award** is a form of recognition of outstanding performance or achievement usually accompanied by a medal, certificate, plaque, citation, emblem, pin, or other similar item that can be worn or displayed.
- 5.13. The **ICE Assistant Secretary Awards Board (Awards Board)** receives, evaluates, and acts on Cash and Honorary Award nominations. The board consists of three members appointed by the Assistant Secretary.
- 5.14. The **ICE Performance Pool** is the final amount of funds budgeted for the issuance of awards, including Assistant Secretary Awards.

- 5.15. **Incentive Award** is a cash award, an honorary award, or both, but does not include a Quality Step Increase, Special Within-Band Increase, or performance rating.
- 5.16. **Interagency Award** is an incentive award for an approved contribution to an employee or employees from a federal, state, local or tribal agency that is not their own.
- 5.17. **Length of Service Awards** consist of a certificate and/or pin given for years of service in the Federal government. The recognized years of service are in 5-year increments beginning with the fifth year of service.
- 5.18. **Non-Employee** is an individual who is not a federal employee, and does not meet the criterion defined above in Section 5.8.
- 5.19. **Non-Monetary Awards for ICE Employees and Non-Employees** are a non-cash form of recognition for significant contributions and may include items such as tickets to the theater, sporting events and concerts.
- 5.20. **On-the-Spot Awards** are nominal value cash and non-cash awards presented to employees by supervisors for actions worthy of recognition where it is more meaningful to recognize achievement proximate to the event. A Time-Off Award (see section 5.27) may be used as an On-the-Spot Award, providing it will not disrupt operations.
- 5.21. **Performance Awards** are determined in accordance with ICE and Department of Homeland Security (DHS) policies and procedures. Employees in the excepted service will be afforded the same opportunities for monetary awards and Special Within-Band Increases (for employees in pay banding systems) and Quality Step Increases (for employees on the General Schedule pay system) as employees in the competitive service. These are employee cash awards linked directly to the annual performance appraisal. The Assistant Secretary designates an amount of award money to be used for performance awards.
- 5.22. **Quality Step Increase (QSI)** is an increase in an employee's rate of basic pay from one rate of the grade of his or her position in the General Schedule, to the next higher rate of that grade, in recognition of sustained high quality performance at a level that substantially exceeds an acceptable level of competence. No more than one QSI may be granted to an individual employee in the same 52-week period.
- 5.23. **Retirement Certificate** is originated when an employee submits his or her retirement package. The Human Capital Office confirms eligibility to receive the certificate. The certificate shows the number of years of service.

- 5.24. **Special Achievement Awards** are monetary or non-monetary awards for exemplary acts or achievements such as tangible benefits or savings and/or intangible benefits to the Government for a non-recurring contribution either within or outside of job responsibilities.
- 5.25. **Special Within-Band Increase** may be awarded as a basic pay increase for employees within a Full Performance or higher band who make exceptional contributions to mission accomplishment or in other circumstances determined by DHS. Special within-band increases may not be based on length of service.
- 5.26. **Suggestion Awards** are monetary or non-monetary awards provided to an employee who submits an idea that improves agency operations and/or decreases costs that directly results in tangible or intangible benefits to the Government.
- 5.27. **Team or Group Awards** recognize two or more participants in a joint accomplishment. Employees share the award equally.
- 5.28. **Time-Off Award** is time off from duty without a loss of pay or charge to leave as recognition of superior accomplishment or other personal effort that contributes to the efficiency or effectiveness of Government operations. A Time-Off Award may be used as an On-the-Spot Award (see Section 5.20), providing it will not disrupt operations.
6. **POLICY.** Subject to the availability of funds, ICE shall encourage and reward innovation, dedication, and excellence by motivating individuals and teams to contribute to the accomplishment of ICE's mission and goals. ICE shall recognize and reward employees promptly and equitably when they perform in an exemplary manner or make significant contributions to the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. ICE shall honor those who have served the Government faithfully and well. Cash Awards, Time-Off Awards, QSIs, and Special Within-Band Increases are awards that can be considered in recognizing candidates' performance. Additionally, Special Achievement, On-the-Spot, Team, Honorary, Non-Monetary, and Assistant Secretary Awards shall also be used to reward ICE employees and, in special instances, non-ICE employees.
- 6.1. Within the limitations of applicable laws and regulations, this Directive also applies to the following employees with the specific provisions listed below:
- 6.1.1. Contractor personnel are not eligible to receive awards or recognition of monetary value under this Directive; however, contractors may be notified via letter of outstanding contract support and contribution to the achievement of the ICE mission. Outstanding contract support letters shall be coordinated through the appropriate Contracting Officers Technical Representative (COTR).

- 6.1.2 Members of the ICE Senior Executive Service are eligible for awards where they are specifically denoted in the ICE Awards Handbook (Attached); and
- 6.1.3 Private citizens and organizations shall be recognized for significant contributions with non-monetary awards, i.e., Honorary Awards. Individuals and organizations having a commercial or profit-making relationship with ICE shall not be granted monetary awards through this Directive.
- 6.2. ICE shall ensure that Incentive Awards are budgeted and administered fairly and equitably. Base program budgets shall allocate a certain percentage of their budget to fund awards. The Assistant Secretary shall establish the percentage of base budget to be allocated to awards.
- 6.3. Program Offices that are unable to allocate award funds in the amount established by the Assistant Secretary shall present the business-related reasons or the lack of sufficient funds availability to, and obtain approval from, the Assistant Secretary, who shall refer the matter to the ICE Chief Financial Officer to determine, in collaboration with the other program budget officials as necessary, the amount to be budgeted. Program Offices shall not reduce or increase the amount of funds set aside for awards without approval from the Assistant Secretary.
- 6.4. Funds for QSIs and Special Within-Band Increases shall be provided as a component of available payroll funding. The amount budgeted shall be determined through collaboration between program budget officials and the ICE Chief Financial Officer. Program Offices shall not overspend their allotted payroll budget.
- 6.5. Headquarters and field offices may purchase traditional non-cash Honorary Awards directly from approved vendors without first contacting the ICE Executive Branding and Marketing Committee.
- 6.6. The Government Purchase Card may be used for non-monetary awards in accordance with the appropriate rules, regulations, and authorities, including the Government Purchase Card Manual available on the Office of Acquisition Management Website.
- 6.7. Non-Monetary Awards, such as plaques and other similar forms of recognition, are expense costs funded out of Program Office activity operating funds.
- 6.8. Records relating to awards may be destroyed after 2 years, with the exception of Notifications of Personnel Actions (SF-50s).
- 6.9. **Equal Employment Opportunity and Adverse Action Certification.** When requested by the Awards Board, award nominations shall include certification of

findings of discrimination and certification of adverse action. The Office of Equal Employment Opportunity and the Director, Human Capital Office's Office of Employee and Labor Relations shall perform these certifications. Employee and Labor Relations shall coordinate with the Office of Professional Responsibility.

6.10. Rescinding of Nomination.

6.10.1. Before a nomination is reviewed by the Awards Board, only a Field Office Principal or an official of the Headquarters Principal Staff can rescind a nomination for awards approved by the Awards Board, i.e., Monetary and Assistant Secretary Awards.

6.10.2. All concurring officials shall provide comments on the nomination form or prepare and submit a memorandum with the nomination package.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES.

7.1. The Assistant Secretary is responsible for the effective administration of the ICE Awards Program. The Assistant Secretary approves ICE's most prestigious awards and cash awards in excess of \$5,000, but not more than \$10,000; all nominations of employees for awards granted by agencies and organizations other than DHS; and to recommend to DHS cash awards of more than \$10,000. In addition the Assistant Secretary:

7.1.1. Retains the approval authority on cash awards for Senior Executive Service employees within ICE;

7.1.2. Recommends employees for awards that require DHS approval or concurrence; and

7.1.3. Oversees the Awards Board and selects its three members.

7.2. Headquarters' Principal Staff.

7.2.1. Headquarters' Principal Staff members ensure effective administration of the ICE Awards Program within their program area. They have authority to approve awards for employees under their jurisdiction under this Directive not in excess of \$5,000. Additionally, the Headquarters' Principal Staff members:

(a) Recommend, approve, or deny nominations for the most prestigious Assistant Secretary Incentive Awards;

(b) Recommend, approve, or deny nominations for awards that require DHS approval or concurrence;

- (c) Retain authority to approve awards under this regulation not in excess of \$5,000 (or may re-delegate such authority, as they deem appropriate, to an internal program awards committee). All delegations must be in writing and a copy of each must be provided to the Director, Human Capital Office (See Section 7.6 below);
 - (d) Ensure the program's budget is prepared in accordance with the provisions of Section 6.2 above;
 - (e) Ensure that any and all collective bargaining obligations are fulfilled as nominations are made and considered; and
 - (f) As necessary, develop any program-specific procedures and criteria relating to the receiving, evaluating, vetting and acknowledgment of award nominations.
- 7.2.2.** Headquarters Principal Staff will annually review and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICE Awards Program within their Program Office and may submit recommendations for policy changes to the Director, Human Capital Office.
- 7.3.** The **Director, Human Capital Office** formulates and issues policies and guidance for the award process and serves as the chairperson of the Awards Board.
- 7.4.** The **ICE Assistant Secretary Awards Board** receives, evaluates and acts on Cash and Honorary Award nominations. The Awards Board consists of three members appointed by the Assistant Secretary, one of whom is designated as the Chairperson.
- 7.4.1.** The Awards Board considers and presents recommendations to the Assistant Secretary concerning:
- (a) Nominations for Cash and Honorary Awards that exceed designated Office Supervisor or Office Principal approval authority;
 - (b) Nominations that are competitive and involve the evaluation of accomplishments of several individuals or groups; and,
 - (c) Decisions on difficult, complex, or controversial cases.
- 7.4.2.** The Awards Board also assists the Assistant Secretary to:
- (a) Plan the ICE Awards Program activities;

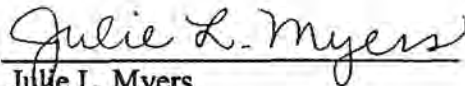
- (b) Determine aspects of the program to be given special emphasis;
 - (c) Implement new program features;
 - (d) Improve local administration; and,
 - (e) Evaluate the effectiveness of the program, including adhering to EEO aspects.
- 7.4.3.** If the Awards Board chooses, it may request participation by representatives from the Program Office for expertise in the evaluation of nominations. In addition, the Awards Board may request a Senior Specialist from the Office of Employee and Labor Relations and/or the Office of Professional Responsibility to attend the Awards Board meetings to assist in evaluating nominations and provide administrative support.
- 7.5.** **ICE Program Offices** are responsible for preparing budgets in accordance with any issued Departmental guidance and the policy contained herein (see Section 6.2), regarding the percentage of salary pool to be allocated for awards. Program Offices shall exercise fiduciary responsibility for the funds used in carrying out the awards program within their area of responsibility. Program Offices, in collaboration with their Awards Coordinators, shall ensure that adequate funds are available consistent with the policy outlined in this Directive and limits set by law and/or regulation. Program Offices shall ensure that any and all collective bargaining obligations related to awards are fulfilled. Each Program Office may create its own Awards Committee to receive, evaluate, verify, vet, and acknowledge its award nominations.
- 7.6.** **The Program Office Awards Coordinator** ensures that awards nominations requiring the Assistant Secretary's approval are forwarded to the ICE Awards Board Chairperson for consideration and recommendation by the ICE Awards Board.
- 7.6.1** The Awards Coordinator also:
- (a) Ensures regulatory correctness and compliance with law, in consultation with the Program Office's Human Capital Officer;
 - (b) Provides guidance to managers, supervisors, team leaders and employees on program requirements, award alternatives, procedures, documentation, and related awards issues;
 - (c) Prepares and maintains records, reports and files;

- (d) Ensures the availability of certificates, plaques and appropriate informal recognition items;
 - (e) Solicits nominations and coordinates the selection process for Honorary Awards (i.e., Assistant Secretary Awards), and forwards recommendations for ICE-wide and above awards;
 - (f) Ensures the proper approvals, authorizations, endorsements and timeframes are met;
 - (g) Coordinates the processing of awards with the Program Office's Human Capital Officer and/or the Director, Human Capital Office.
 - (h) Monitors the awards account and advises the Program or Field Office Director of its status over the course of the fiscal year.
- 7.6.2.** The Awards Coordinator will maintain a record of the following information for reporting purposes for awards not recorded in existing systems of records:
- (a) Name of Recipient;
 - (b) Type of Award;
 - (c) Value of Award;
 - (d) Unit and/or Program Office that originated award; and,
 - (e) Background Information of Awardee (Gender, Minority Status, Handicapped, Veteran).
- 7.6.3.** Records relating to these awards, other than Notifications of Personnel Action (SF-50s), may be destroyed after 2 years.
- 7.7.** **ICE Chief of Staff's Office** assists the Assistant Secretary with the Assistant Secretary Awards and provides other leadership and support to the ICE Awards Program as deemed necessary by the ICE Assistant Secretary.
- 7.8.** **Headquarters' Principal Staff and Field Office Principals** are responsible for the successful implementation of the ICE Awards Program within their scope of supervision. They retain authority to approve awards under this Directive not in excess of \$5,000. They may delegate this authority to their direct reports. Responsibilities include:

- 7.8.1. Ensuring the award or recognition is based solely on merit and granted commensurate with the value of the employee's contribution or accomplishment;
- 7.8.2. Selecting the most appropriate form of recognition and awarding it on a timely basis;
- 7.8.3. Ensuring equity of consideration for awards and/or recognition within their organization; and
- 7.8.4. Preserving the Program Office's credibility by documenting the justification for the award or recognition.
- 7.9. **Team Leaders and First-Line Supervisors** shall recommend members of their organization to their appropriate Office Supervisors (through the appropriate chain of command to ultimately reach their Office Supervisor) for awards. They shall provide direct input to Office Supervisors regarding an employee's performance and recommend either non-monetary or monetary awards, as appropriate. They should plan early and continuously collaborate with Office Supervisors on awards throughout the performance cycle.
 - 7.9.1. Team Leaders and First Line Supervisors may provide awards to their subordinates using award funds originally allocated to their organizational unit. The approval is required of their Office Supervisor and the manager who has fiduciary responsibility for the funds used.
 - 7.9.2. Team Leaders and First-Line Supervisors are encouraged to use non-monetary and informal recognition awards such as coffee mugs, plaques, T-shirts, etc., to timely recognize employee accomplishments.
- 7.10. **Supervisors (in general)** are responsible for motivating their employees' interest and participation in the ICE Awards Program. This responsibility includes maintaining awareness of all aspects of the program; recognizing deserving employees by initiating recommendations for awards; ensuring that their employees are aware of the opportunities the program offers for personal and group recognition; and achieving high quality results and operational improvements through active encouragement of employee contributions as well as through their own efforts. In addition, they shall perform any other procedures deemed necessary by their internal Program Office awards procedures.
- 7.11. **Employees** share the responsibility for efficient and effective Government operations. Each employee should endeavor to make contributions to Government operations of such significance as to warrant recognition under the awards program.

8. **PROCEDURES.** Implementing procedures for the ICE Awards Program are contained in the Attachment: ICE Awards Handbook.
9. **ATTACHMENT.** ICE Awards Handbook.
10. **NO PRIVATE RIGHT STATEMENT.** This Directive is an internal policy statement of ICE. It is not intended to, and does not create any rights, privileges, or benefits, substantive or procedural, enforceable by any party against the United States; its departments, agencies, or other entities; its officers or employees; or any other person.

Approved


Julie L. Myers
Assistant Secretary