



# The Police Commission

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## CITY AND COUNTY OF SAN FRANCISCO

April 15, 2021

Chief William Scott  
Chief of Police

Dear Chief Scott:

MALIA COHEN  
President

CINDY ELIAS  
Vice President

PETRA DeJESUS  
Commissioner

JOHN HAMASAKI  
Commissioner

DION-JAY BROOKTER  
Commissioner

LARRY YEE  
Commissioner

At the meeting of the Police Commission on Wednesday, April 14, 2021, the following resolution was adopted:

Sergeant Stacy Youngblood  
Secretary

### RESOLUTION 21-28

#### **APPROVAL OF DRAFT DEPARTMENT GENERAL ORDER 3.09, "DEPARTMENT AWARDS," FOR THE DEPARTMENT TO USE IN MEETING AND CONFERRING WITH SAN FRANCISCO POLICE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION**

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RESOLVED, that the Police Commission hereby approves draft, dated March 3, 2021, of Department General Order 3.09, "Department Awards" for the Department to use in meeting and conferring with the San Francisco Police Officers Association.

AYES: Commissioners Cohen, Elias, DeJesus, Hamasaki, Brookter, Yee

NAYS: Commissioner Hamasaki

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, likely belonging to Sergeant Stacy Youngblood, is positioned above the typed name.

Sergeant Stacy Youngblood  
Secretary  
San Francisco Police Commission

1211/rct

cc: President A. Montoya/POA  
Deputy City Attorney Cabrera  
Director L. Preston/SFPD Labor Relations  
A/Captain E. Altorfer/PSPP



## GENERAL ORDER

Rev. 03/03/2021v.10

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**DEPARTMENT AWARDS**

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The purpose of this order is to define formal Department awards given to ~~sworn officers~~Department members, establish criteria for meriting awards, and outline procedures by which awards are processed. For purposes of this General Order, the term "member" means all Department members.

**I. POLICY TYPES OF AWARDS****A. TYPES OF AWARDS**

— **1 MEDAL OF VALOR.** There are three types of medals of valor:

- a1.** GOLD MEDAL OF VALOR. The Department's highest award for valor is merited when the following elements exist:

Outstanding bravery above and beyond that expected in the line of duty

- where failure to take such action would not justify censure.
- where risk ~~to~~ life actually existed and the ~~officer~~member had sufficient time to evaluate that risk.
- where the objective is of sufficient importance to justify the risk.
- where the ~~officer~~member accomplished the objective or was prevented from accomplishing the objective by incurring a disabling injury or death.

- 2b.** SILVER MEDAL OF VALOR. The Department's second highest award for valor is merited when the following elements exist:

- where the ~~officer~~member manifests outstanding bravery in the performance of duty under circumstances not within the provisions required for a Gold Medal of Valor.
- where the ~~officer~~member risks ~~his or her~~their life with full and unquestionable knowledge of the danger involved, or where a reasonable person would assume ~~his or her~~their life was in great danger.
- where the objective is of sufficient importance to justify the risk.
- where the ~~officer~~member accomplished the objective or was prevented from accomplishing the objective by circumstances beyond his or her control.

- 3e.** BRONZE MEDAL OF VALOR. The Department's third highest award for valor is the Bronze Medal of Valor. The members of the Awards



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Committee shall evaluate the objective, the risk, and the degree of danger, and determine by their vote whether a silver or bronze medal of valor shall be granted.

2B. MERITORIOUS CONDUCT AWARD. The Meritorious Conduct Award is merited by making an investigation and arrest in a serious felony case when it is shown that the arrest was made possible by diligent and painstaking research on the part of the ~~officermember~~, and it clearly appears that the ~~officermember~~ correctly weighed and evaluated all the clues and circumstances at ~~their~~ his/her disposal. This award does not consider arrests made solely on the information of an informant.

3C. LIFE SAVING AWARD. The Awards Committee may confer this award after review when the following criteria are met:

- a1. A member directly intervenes in a medical emergency by administering first aid, and
- b2. ~~The~~ intervention directly resulted in the saving of ~~the~~ a ~~victim's~~ life.

4D. CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM AWARD. The Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Award may be granted to any member who demonstrates excellence in the use of CIT principles during an incident, and the member resolves the incident with minimal to no use of force. The CIT Award is granted to members by the CIT Mental Health Working Group (see DO 5.21, THE CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM RESPONSE TO PERSON IN CRISIS CALLS FOR SERVICE.)

E. PURPLE HEART AWARD.

1a. The Awards Committee may award a Purple Heart to a member of the Department who is wounded or receives a serious injury while on or off duty in an incident within the course and scope of police related functions and/or responsibilities.

2b. In determining whether to grant a Purple Heart Award, the Committee must consider all of the circumstances, but primarily the degree of injury and factual situation facing the ~~officermember~~ during the incident.

a The injury or wound must have caused a serious impairment or physical condition requiring professional medical treatment, including but not limited to loss of consciousness, concussion, bone fracture, protracted loss of any bodily function or organ, extensive suturing, ~~and/~~ or serious disfigurement.

b. The ~~officermember~~ must have sustained the injury as a direct or indirect result of action that the ~~officermember~~ believed necessary

to prevent the loss of life or serious injury to civilians or other ~~officermembers~~, and that falls within the parameters of all Department rules and regulations.

~~The Award Committee should avoid granting this award based on questionable situations that might dilute the Award's importance.~~

~~3e.~~ ~~The Awards Screen Committee shall submit their recommendations to the full Awards Committee for final disposition.~~ The Awards Committee may determine what, if any, compensation should be considered for the recipient(s) of a Purple Heart Award.

~~d4.~~ The Awards Committee is not precluded from awarding any other medal of valor that the Awards Committee believes is justified to an ~~officermember~~ who is awarded a Purple Heart.

~~5F.~~ POLICE COMMISSION COMMENDATION. The Police Commission or the Department's Awards Committee may grant this commendation to members for extraordinary acts or contributions done in the performance of their duties. ~~The Awards Committee may also grant this commendation for noteworthy acts or contributions which, in their judgement, do not fall within the criteria of the Medal of Valor or the Meritorious Conduct Award.~~ Examples of these acts include, but are not limited to:

1. actions performed while in a uniform or plainclothes assignment that do not fall within the criteria of the Medal of Valor or the Meritorious Conduct Award; or
2. employing de-escalation techniques during an incident involving a subject armed with a weapon, exhibiting violent behavior, or making a credible threat of violence; and the member resolves the incident with minimal to no use of force; or
- e3. contributing to the development of programs, policies or procedures that support the Department's mission and goals.

G. COMMUNITY-ORIENTED POLICING/PROBLEM-SOLVING AWARD.

There are two types of community-oriented policing/problem-solving awards:

1. The Strategic Problem-Solving Award is granted to a member for developing an original approach to solving a significant, on-going problem in an effective way. The problem must be material and must relate to crime, disorder, or quality of life concerns.
2. The Community Engagement Award is granted to a member for developing a creative, innovative, original, and self-initiated community engagement project. The project must center on connecting the Department and its members with the community with the goal of building relationships and fostering trust. The project should be sustained for a duration of time and does not include limited or one-time actions.



- H. UNIT CITATION AWARD.** The Unit Citation Award may be conferred for outstanding performance by an organizational unit of the Department. The accomplishment must be the result of combined efforts by members of the unit. The Chief of Police will confer the award after his/her review of the nomination.
- I. OFFICER OF THE MONTH/YEAR.** The Officer of the Month recognizes one sworn member each month (January through December) who uses good community policing practices and advances the "police officer as guardian" culture. On a rotating basis throughout the calendar year each Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief, or Executive Director from their respective bureaus will designate one sworn member from their command (Officer, Inspector, Sergeant, or Lieutenant) as Officer of the Month. The Commander of the Community Engagement Division is responsible for notifying the Assistant Chiefs, Deputy Chiefs, or Executive Director of their assigned month. Sworn members from the Chief of Staff, Field Operations, Investigations, Administration, Special Operations, Strategic Management and Airport Bureaus are eligible for this award. -In January of the following year, the Department will recognize one Officer of the Month as the Officer of the Year. The Officer of Year is awarded by a majority vote of the civil service rank Captains and sworn members of the Command Staff.
- J. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE GRADUATE.** This recognition is awarded to Department members who graduated from the San Francisco Police Department ("SFPD") Leadership Development Institute Program.
- K. CAPTAIN'S COMPLIMENTARY REPORT.** This report will be merited by a member who performs ~~his/her~~their duty in a manner showing dedication and service above that normally demanded by the Department, but not meeting the qualifications necessary for a Medal of Valor, Meritorious Conduct Award, Life Saving award, Crisis Intervention Team award, Police Commission Commendation, Community Oriented Policing/Problem Solving awards, or Unit Citation. The member's Commanding Officer may make a complimentary report of the incident to the Chief of Police. After approval by the Chief, the report shall become a part of the member's permanent personnel record.

## **II. POLICY**

### **BA. NOMINATING RULES**

1. **TIME LIMIT.** Except when specifically exempted by the Chief of Police, nominations for Medal of Valor, Meritorious Conduct Award or Life Saving Award must be submitted no later than 60 days after the occurrence of the action for which the application has been made.

2. BY WHOM. Any supervisory officer who considers an action by a member deserving of an award may nominate the member. Members may also nominate themselves.
- ~~EB.~~ REWARD. The Police Commission may reward any member for valor, ~~or~~ meritorious conduct or crisis intervention. The form or amount of reward shall be discretionary but must not exceed the member's monthly salary.
- ~~DC.~~ SUCCESSIVE AWARDS. Successive awards for Medals of Valor, Meritorious Conduct, Life Saving, Crisis Intervention Team award, Police Commission Commendation, Purple Heart, Community Oriented Policing/Problem Solving awards and Unit Citation, shall be accompanied by bronze stars placed on the ribbon. A silver star shall signify 5 awards of the same type, and a gold star 10 or more.
- ~~ED.~~ AWARDS SCREENING COMMITTEE
  1. COMPOSITION. The Awards Screening Committee shall be comprised of ~~3-five~~ (5) Captains serving a term of ~~6 months one year, with the senior~~ The senior Captain shall serve as the Chair. The Chief of Police shall ensure that the composition of the Awards Screening Committee reflects the diversity of the Department.
  2. TERMS. At the end of their terms, the members of the Awards Screening Committee shall be replaced by the next three senior Captains not serving in exempt positions.
  3. ROTATION. When all Captains have had an opportunity to serve on the Awards Screening Committee, selection shall resume at the top of the seniority list.
  4. REVIEW. The Awards Screening Committee shall review the Commanding Officer's submitted documents for each nominated member. The Awards Screening Committee may request, through the Police Commission office, supporting documentation (e.g., letter from paramedics, medical records, Firearms Discharge Review Board (FDRB) findings, Department of Police Accountability (DPA) investigative findings, body worn camera footage, etc.) to corroborate a member's nomination for any award.
  5. The Police Commission office shall ensure that all nominated members' identifying information has been redacted prior to providing the nomination packages and supporting documents to the Awards Screening Committee.
  6. CONSENSUS. A majority of the members on the Awards Screening Committee must agree to refer the nomination to the Awards Committee. A nomination denied by the Awards Screening Committee will be heard by the Awards Committee only with the personal approval of the Chief of Police.



FE. AWARDS COMMITTEE

1. COMPOSITION. The Awards Committee shall consist of the following:
  - a. ~~One member of the Police Commission~~ The Assistant Chief from Chief of Staff Bureau acting as the Chair. In ~~his or her~~ the Assistant Chief's absence, the ~~Chief of Police committee members present~~ shall designate ~~elect~~ the Chair for that particular meeting.
  - b. All civil service police Captains and sworn members of the Command Staff. ~~Captains granted leaves of absence to accept appointed positions within the Department shall remain members of the committee.~~
  - c. The Secretary of the Police Commission shall serve as the Secretary.
2. RULES. The Awards Committee shall be governed by the following rules:
  - a. Twenty-one ~~Six~~ members shall constitute a quorum.
  - b. Applications shall be heard and voted upon separately; however, if two or more members are nominated for awards resulting from joint actions, their applications may be heard and voted upon at the same time.
  - c. A member of the Awards Committee who makes an application on behalf of a member may participate in the hearing and be a witness but cannot vote on that application.
  - d. Two thirds of the members must agree upon a specific grade of award. Votes that were cast for a higher ~~grade~~ award but did not total a two thirds' majority will be applied to the next lower grade of award until a two thirds' majority is reached. The Meritorious Conduct Award shall be voted as a single grade.
  - e. Voting shall be made by secret ballot. ~~unless waived by unanimous approval of the members present.~~
  - f. All applications approved by the Awards Committee shall be forwarded to the Chief of Police for his/her approval.

GF. CHIEF OF POLICE CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATIONS

1. The Chief of Police and two Police Commissioners appointed by the Police Commission President shall convene and certify the nominations for -Medals of Valor and Meritorious Conduct Awards. The panel shall review the following when considering the members listed in each nomination:
  - a. open Internal Affairs Division – Administrative (IAD-A) complaints;
  - b. open DPA complaints;
  - c. open civil suits arising from employment in the Department; and
  - d. for cases involving an officer-involved shooting (OIS), prior to certifying the nomination, the panel shall confirm the IAD-A and the DPA have concluded their investigations, and the OIS has been reviewed by the FDRB and found to be in



policy; or eighteen (18) months have passed from the date of the OIS, whichever is sooner.

2. The Police Commission office shall provide the panel information related to F.1.a.-d. above for each member listed in a nomination.
3. If a nomination cannot be certified, the Chief of Police and two Commissioners shall reconvene and reconsider the nomination every sixty (60) days, until such time as the panel either certifies or denies the member's nomination.
4. The Chief of Police shall provide the list of certified nominations for Medals of Valor and Meritorious Conduct Awards to the Police Commission for a vote to approve the nominations.

**HG.** ~~POLICE COMMISSION APPROVAL. The Police Commission shall exercise independent judgement and may re-investigate a nomination when considering the Medal of Valor or the Meritorious Conduct Award. The approval or disapproval by the Awards Committee or the Chief of Police for a Medal of Valor or a Meritorious Conduct Award shall not be binding on the Commission.~~ The Medal of Valor or the Meritorious Conduct Award shall not be awarded until approved by the Commission.

### **III. PROCEDURES**

#### **A. NOMINATION PROCESS**

1. **NOMINATION/MEMORANDUM.** The nomination for an award must be submitted on a memorandum forwarded to the member's Commanding Officer. It must describe in detail the actions of the member, showing how those actions come within the criteria established by this order and include any ~~Supporting documentation. (e.g., letter from paramedics, medical records) is required to nominate a member for the Life Saving Award.~~
2. **COMMANDING OFFICER'S REVIEW.** The member's Commanding Officer will review the nomination and conduct a personal investigation to determine if the award is warranted. If not, it shall be returned to the nominating member with the reasons for rejection.
3. **COMMANDING OFFICER'S MEMORANDUM.** If the Commanding Officer approves the nomination, he/she the Commanding Officer shall prepare a memorandum to the Chief of Police requesting the type of award. The memorandum should summarize the member's actions and the reason those actions come within the criteria set forth in this order.

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4. FORWARDING. The Commanding Officer shall send the nomination package (nomination, memoranda and any supporting documents) through the chain of command to the Chief of Police who will forward it to the Police Commission Office for screening procedures.
5. UNIT CITATION AWARD. A nomination for the Unit Citation Award shall be submitted on a memorandum forwarded to the members' Commanding Officer. The memorandum shall contain a detailed description of the unit's accomplishment and show how it affected the Department. The Commanding Officer shall forward the memorandum through the chain of command to the appropriate ~~deputy Assistant e~~Chief, who will submit it to the Chief of Police for review. After reviewing and approving the nomination, the Chief of Police shall confer the award.

B. SCREENING PROCESS. The Police Commission Office shall send all nomination packages to the Awards Screening Committee ~~members who~~ which will review them and take one of the following actions:

1. Approve and return the nomination package to the Police Commission Office.
- ~~2.~~ Return the nomination package to the ~~commanding officer~~ Police Commission Office and request for further investigation.
- ~~3-2.~~  
3. ~~3.~~ Deny the nomination and return the nomination package to the Police Commission office.

### C. AWARDS COMMITTEE HEARING

1. PACKAGE. After receipt of approved applications, the Secretary of the Police Commission Awards Committee will send a copy of each nomination package to every Captain at least 14 days before the hearing. The Secretary will also set a date for the hearing ~~on the first month of each quarter, or sooner if warranted,~~ and notify each Captain and the nominated member of the date at least 7 days prior to the hearing.
2. SUMMARY. At the awards hearing, the Commanding- Officer who submitted the nomination ~~Secretary of the Awards Committee~~ will read the Commanding Officer's summary of the application in the presence of the nominated member(s).
3. WITNESSES. The Awards Committee may also call and examine witnesses regarding matters to be heard and determined.
4. DISCUSSION. The nominated member shall leave the hearing room while the committee discusses the matter and votes on it.



D. POST HEARING PROCEDURES. The Chief of Police shall forward the approved nominations to the Police Commission, indicating confirming the nominations have been certified pursuant to section II.F. above. his/her approval or disapproval.

E. OUTSIDE AWARDS NOMINATIONS. Members are encouraged to nominate fellow Department members for awards conferred by outside organizations (California Peace Officers Association Award, International Association of Chiefs of Police Awards, California Highway Patrol "10851" Award, etc.).

1. Members shall submit a memorandum and any supporting documents to their Commanding Officer nominating the member for an outside award. The memorandum shall describe the actions of the fellow member and explain how those actions fall within the criteria for award established by the outside organization.
2. The Commanding Officer shall send the memorandum and any supporting documents through the chain of command to the Chief of Police who will forward it to the outside organization, if approved. The nomination for an outside award does not require Awards Committee or Police Commission approval.
3. A member nominated for an outside award is not precluded from being nominated for an internal award described in section I.A – K above.

F. U.S. ARMED FORCES SERVICE RIBBON. Members who served in the military prior to joining the SFPD or who are currently serving as a Reservist or National Guard are authorized to wear the Department's U.S. Armed Forces Service Ribbon in recognition and appreciation of their service.

G. SUPPLY. The ~~Office of the~~ Police Commission office shall maintain a supply of medals and ribbons.

References:

DGO 5.21, THE CRISIS INTERVENTION TEAM (CIT) RESPONSE TO PERSON IN CRISIS CALLS FOR SERVICE

