



**NORTHERN WAKE FIRE
DEPARTMENT**

**STANDARD OPERATING
PROCEDURES**

**TITLE: Awards and
Accommodations**

SECTION/TOPIC: General Administrative

NUMBER: 200-36

ISSUE DATE: 02/08/2023

REVISION DATES:

APPROVED BY:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Vickerson".

**Gary Vickerson
PRESIDENT – BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Blake S. Wright".

**Blake S. Wright
FIRE CHIEF**

I. Purpose

- A. To establish a program for recognition and acknowledgement of the volunteer and career members of the Northern Wake Fire Department.

II. Scope

- A. Recognition shall be given to events that include, but are not limited to, acts of heroism, valor, bravery, merit, years of service, education, or other exemplary service by members during either emergency or non-emergency service.

III. Definition(s):

- A. Good Standing: Any member who has met, or exceeded, the Membership requirements as outline in department policy, and has had no disciplinary action in their personnel file in the last 12 calendar months.

IV. Service Awards

A. Department Awards

- A. Medal of Valor – The Medal of Valor may be awarded to a member who performs a personal act in a courageous manner in the protection of life or lives, under EXTREME personal risk, while engaged in the mediation of a fire, medical emergency, rescue, hazardous materials incident, or other type of response.

- B. Purple Cross – The Purple Cross is awarded to any member who is injured while engaged in the mediation of a fire, medical emergency, rescue, hazardous materials incident, or other type of response. The injury could not be self-inflicted or by negligence, and all protective equipment and safety procedure must have been in use. The Purple Cross may be awarded posthumously to the family of a member who dies of injuries obtained, or while engaged in the same criteria listed above.

- C. Distinguished Service Award – The Distinguished Service Award is presented to any member who, on or off duty, performs an act (s) above and beyond the call of duty under MODERATE personal risk that involves bravery and/or a high degree of initiative and/or capability. It must be worthy of recognition that promotes good will and reflects highly on the Fire Department.

- D. Unit Citation – The Unit Citation is awarded to any group of two or more members for exemplary performances of duties by the group in overcoming difficulties or obstacles under unusual or adverse conditions in the completion of a task or duty.

- E. Community Service Award – The Community Service Award is presented to any member or group of members who may commit acts of merit or service in a non-emergency function that bring honor and distinction to the department or that increase department efficiency or effectiveness.

- F. Code Save Award – Presented by Wake County EMS to any members who participate in a “Code Save” as defined by Wake County EMS. Northern Wake Fire Department is not involved in the selection of this award. Mention of this award in this context is to establish a CSA as acceptable award for display on the dress uniform.

- G. County or State Meritorious Service Award – Included to establish recognition for display purposes any meritorious service award bestowed by a county or state government or agency.

- H. Lifetime Achievement Award – The Lifetime Achievement Award may be presented to any member; so long as they are a member in good standing. Recommended tenure for this award is 15 years of service to the Northern Wake Fire Department but may be awards regardless of tenure, if the Awards Committee deems the documentation provided would be equal to 15 years of service to the Northern Wake Fire Department. This award is presented to the member in recognition of their total body of work while at the department.

- I. Firefighter of the Year – Awarded annually based on a vote of the membership. There will be three of these awards, one for Volunteer members and one for Paid staff and one for Officers. The vote will take place on the first Monday night in November. All full members of the department are eligible, except for the Fire Chief.

- J. Years of Service – A Years of Service award will be given to any member who serves for a five (5) year period at Northern Wake Fire Department. This award is cumulative and will be awarded for each 5-year period. Upon receipt of your first YOS award, your commendation bar will reflect all years in the fire service regardless of department in 5-year increments. For example: If you served 7 years with another department and then joined Northern Wake; after 5 years at Northern Wake, you would receive a commendation bar that would signify 10 YOS and then after 3 more years you would receive a 15-year commendation bar. From that point forward you would get a new bar every 5 years.

V. Education Recognition

- A. To encourage continuing education each of the following Certifications will be recognized when completed: EMT, Firefighter 1 & 2, Driver Operator (D/O and/or Aerials), NC Water Rescue, NC Technical Rescue, NC Fire Instructor, Collegiate Achievements (Associates, Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate Degrees).

VI. Application and Award Procedure

- A. Any person – including but not limited to civilian and sworn personnel of the department, and the general public – may make a recommendation for a medal or award. Recommendations shall be in writing, dated, signed, and include sufficient information to contact the submitter. Recommendations should include a narrative describing the action specifically.
- B. The Medals & Awards Committee shall convene no less than once annually (and more often as directed by the Chief of the Department) to review recommendations and confer service awards or medals.
- C. The committee shall consist of 5 members including one of each:
 - A. Chief Officer
 - B. Captain
 - C. Lieutenant/Engineer
 - D. Member of the Board of Directors
 - E. Member at Large

Note – Members of the committee may be volunteer and/or paid personnel.

VII. Appointment to Awards Committee

- A. Appointment of all members to the Medals and Awards Committee shall be made at the July Business Meeting yearly:
 - A. Chief Officer: By the Fire Chief
 - B. Captain: Voted on by Captains of NWFD. Result presented at July Business meeting.
 - C. Lieutenant/Engineer: Voted on by Lt/Engineers of NWFD. Result presented at July Business meeting.
 - D. Board of Directors Member: Appointed by the Fire Chief
 - E. Member At Large: Voted on at the July Business Meeting
- B. The Member at Large will be elected to the committee via a membership vote at the July Business Meeting. Voting members may include volunteer, Paid, Probationary and Junior members of fire department.
- C. The committee shall meet in formal and recorded session. The committee shall be responsible for reviewing all medal and award recommendations for accuracy and merit. This process should be as thorough as possible and include review of pertinent reports, interviews of witnesses and/or any other action necessary to determine if an award or medal is warranted. Only one award or medal should be considered for each event with exceptions to be determined by the Chief of the Department.
- D. After discussion of each recommendation, a vote to approve or deny the recommendation shall be held. A simple majority will rule the vote. When approving or denying a recommendation, the committee shall attach written justification to the recommendation. The committee shall have the right to amend the recommendation to a different level if, during investigation they deem that necessary.
- E. Awards and medals must be conferred in a manner that will maintain the integrity and sanctity of the Medals & Awards Program. No award or medal will be granted for spurious or dubious conduct or due to unwarranted political or other pressures. For this reason, the Chief of the Department shall hold the right to veto or commute to a lesser award the recommendations of the Medals & Awards Committee. Veto or commutation should occur only with due cause and must be justified in writing.

VIII. Award Display and Appearance

- A. Entitlement – Upon receipt of notification signed by the Chief of the Department, award recipients are vested with the award and may display ribbons or associated items. Actual medals, certificates or other items may be withheld for presentation during formal ceremonies, for press release or other purposes.
- B. Award – The recipients of the following awards are entitled to a full medal, commendation bar and certificate: Medal of Valor and Purple Cross. The recipients of the following awards are entitled to a commendation bar and certificate: Distinguished Service Award, Unit Citation, Community Service, and Years of Service. Recipients of the following awards are entitled to a commendation bar and a plaque, Lifetime Membership and Firefighter of the Year. The recipients of the following awards are entitled to a certificate only, Educational Recognition. See the display section for proper protocol reference display of awards presented by other agencies.
- C. Display – Medals and certificates may be displayed at home or the department at the discretion of the recipient. Full medals shall not be worn on clothing or uniform unless an exception is granted by the chief of the department. Exceptions are case by case and must be granted each time a full medal is to be worn. By accepting commendation bars, sworn members agree that they will add and maintain the appropriate commendation bar to the appropriate uniform.
 - A. Commendation bars; should be displayed on Class A (full dress) uniform and Class B (modified dress) uniform and Class C (short sleeve dress) uniform by using a commendation bar holder. The holder shall be opposite the badge, level with the center of the badge and centered on the coat seam Class A uniform. On the Class B uniform, the holder shall be centered above the name plate.
 - B. Awards will be arranged on all uniforms according to the order of importance (highest ranking closest to the center of the body working out, and top to bottom if more than one row). Said order is outlined in Appendix A. No more than 3 commendation bars will be on a single row.

- D. Repeat Awards – The receipt by an individual of the same award a second time will be designated by a small silver star upon the medal and commendation bar. The method shall be used for the second, third, and fourth instances an individual receives the award. With the fifth instance, gold stars will replace silver.
- E. Outside Agency Awards – In addition to the County or State Meritorious Service Awards and the Code Save award outlined in section A; Northern Wake FD will allow display of any other awards that have been presented to Northern Wake members by other Fire/Rescue/EMS agencies. See Appendix A for display criteria. The Fire Chief will have authority to reject any outside agency award if deemed un-appropriate.

IX. Appendix A

- A. This section is intended to define Medal Specifications and determine the order of display from top to bottom.
- B. Medals and Ribbon Bars are designated based on the Blackington Fire and Rescue Catalog.

- ❖ Medal of Valor

- Medal model A5499 w/ RC-3 Ribbon
- Commendation Bar. A6267 Blue/White/Red/White/Blue left-to-right

- ❖ Purple Cross

- Medal model A2629B w/ RC-45 Ribbon
- Commendation Bar. A7140 Solid Purple

- ❖ Distinguished Service Award

- Commendation Bar A10842
Blue/Yellow/White/Black/White/Yellow/Blue

- ❖ Unit Citation

- Commendation Bar A7140 Solid White

❖ Community Service Award

- Commendation Bar A10842
White/Green/White/Green/White/Green/White

❖ Code Save Award

- Commendation Bar A7142 Red/White/Red as issued by Wake County

❖ County or State Meritorious Service Awards

- As awarded by the agency. In any situation where no color scheme is defined by the agency, the Medal and Awards committee will assign a color scheme for that award and add it to this Appendix for future use. Should any outside award duplicate the color scheme of any Northern Wake award the Medal and Awards Committee will be charged with deciding how that award is to be displayed. All awards are required to be unique for the purpose of display.

❖ Lifetime Achievement Award

- Commendation Bar. A6265 Red/Green/White/Yellow/Blue left to right

❖ Fire Fighter of the Year

- Commendation Bar. A7142 Red/Blue/Red left to right

❖ Years of Service

- Commendation Bar. A7142 White/Blue/White left to right with your YOS Number in the middle