

**FDA STAFF MANUAL GUIDES, VOLUME III - GENERAL ADMINISTRATION**

**PERSONNEL**

**INCENTIVE AWARDS**

**COMMISSIONED OFFICERS' RECOGNITION PROGRAM**

Transmittal Number: 78-74 -- Date: 08/25/1978

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Awards

**1. PURPOSE**

This Guide reiterates policies and requirements of the Public Health Service for its recognition of PHS commissioned officers and sets forth internal FDA procedures for nominating commissioned officers for awards.

**2. ELIGIBILITY**

This Guide applies to all officers, Regular and Reserve Corps, serving on active duty, under the jurisdiction of the Commissioner of Food and Drugs.

**3. REFERENCES**

- A. HEW, PHS, Commissioned Corps Personnel Manual, Chapter CC27.
- B. Staff Manual Guide FDA 1433.11, Public Health Service Commissioned Officers' Recognition Program.

**4. TYPES OF AWARDS**

There are four awards for which formal recognition is accorded commissioned officers under this program.

- A. Distinguished Service Medal (DSM).** This is the highest Commissioned Corps award. An exceedingly high level of achievement characterizes the award of this honor. This award is not necessarily made each year.
- 1. Nature of the Award.** The Distinguished Service Medal consists of a medal with ribbon, rosette, ribbon bar, miniature medal with ribbon, and a certificate.
  - 2. Criterion.** This award is bestowed upon an officer with a genuine sense of public service who has made outstanding contributions to the mission of the Public Health Service. Such achievement may range from a long and eminent career in the Service to a one-time heroic act resulting in great saving of life, health, or property. The magnitude of problems and responsibilities undertaken should be weighed in relation to the accomplishment.
- B. Meritorious Service Medal (MSM).** This award ranks just below the Distinguished Service Medal and the level of achievement required for this award must be definitely outstanding, but not of a degree of distinction warranting the award of the DSM.
- 1. Nature of the Award.** The Meritorious Service Medal consists of a medal with ribbon, rosette, ribbon bar, miniature medal with ribbon, and a certificate.
  - 2. Criterion.** The award of the MSM represents outstanding service on the basis of a particularly important achievement, a career notable for accomplishments in technical or professional fields, or high quality and initiative in leadership. A highly significant achievement in research, program direction, or program administration; a series of significant contributions; a continuing period of outstanding service; or exhibition of great courage in hazardous work or in an emergency are types of service which may merit this award.
- C. Commendation Medal (CM).** This award ranks just below the Meritorious Service Medal. This award requires a level of proficiency and dedication distinctly greater than that expected of the average commissioned officer, keeping in mind that a commission presupposes high standards of performance.
- 1. Nature of the Award.** The Commendation Medal consists of a medal with ribbon, rosette, ribbon bar, miniature medal with ribbon, and a certificate.
  - 2. Criterion.** The award of the CM recognizes sustained high quality work performance in scientific, administrative, or other professional fields, or

application of unique skill or creative imagination to the approach of solution of problems, or noteworthy technical and professional contributions that are significant to a limited area. A significant contribution to an outstanding research or operational project, a single courageous act in line of unusual duty, or a continuing period of excellent service are examples.

**D. PHS Plaque.** The award of the PHS Plaque represents a means, in addition to the honor awards described above, for the recognition of noteworthy accomplishments of officers in the performance of duty. The PHS Plaque ranks just below the Commendation Medal.

1. **Nature of the Award.** The PHS Plaque consists of a metal seal of PHS mounted on a walnut base along with a brass plate for engraving the officer's name and award citation.
2. **Criterion.** Examples of appropriate use of the PHS Plaque include recognition of noteworthy contribution(s) toward the attainment of program objectives; sustained above-average performance of duty; and, high quality performance of duty over a relatively short period of time, such as a short tour of duty (120 days or less). The PHS Plaque may be awarded incident to the retirement or separation of an officer.

## 5. **NOMINATING, ROUTING, APPROVING, AND PRESENTING PROCEDURES**

### **A. Time Limitations.**

1. **Distinguished Service, Meritorious Service and Commendation Medals.** Nominations for these medals must be formally initiated within six months after the act or period of service to be honored. If an officer has requested separation or retirement, or is within three months of mandatory retirement, the officer should not be nominated for these medals.
2. **PHS Plaque.** Nominations must be formally initiated within six months after the act or period of service to be honored.

**B. Who may nominate.** The nomination of an officer as a candidate for these awards may be initiated by the immediate supervisor, by an associate, or by someone outside the service. Nominations may also be made by other agencies for officers on detail to those agencies.

### **C. Format and Routing of Nominations.**

- 1. Distinguished Service, Meritorious Service, and Commendation Medals.** Nominations for these medals are to be prepared in the format shown in Attachment A. Properly prepared nominations should be transmitted by memorandum to the FDA Awards Coordinator, Division of Personnel Management (HFA-400). Nominations are to go through the nominee's supervisory channels up to and including, as appropriate, an Associate Commissioner; the Director, National Center for Toxicological Research; a Bureau Director; a Regional Food and Drug Director; the Executive Director for Regional Operations; or an OC Office Director, for signature on the transmittal memorandum acknowledging the nomination and indicating endorsement, nonendorsement, and/or comment, as appropriate. Nominations for field employees must go through the Executive Director of Regional Operations as well as the appropriate Regional Food and Drug Director.
- 2. PHS Plaque.** Nominations for this award are also to be prepared in the format shown in Attachment A. Properly prepared nominations should be transmitted to the appropriate approving official by memorandum. Nominations are to go through the nominee's supervisory chain up to the approving officials' level for signature on the transmittal memorandum acknowledging the nomination and indicating endorsement, nonendorsement, and/or comment, as appropriate.

### **D. Who Reviews and Approves Nominations and Presents Awards.**

- 1. Distinguished Service and Meritorious Service Medals.** The FDA Policy Board reviews nominations and makes recommendations. The Commissioner signs off (endorsing or nonendorsing) and forwards nominations to the Public Health Service (PHS) for further consideration by the Commissioned Corps Honor Awards Board, and the PHS Honor Awards Board. The Assistant Secretary for Health approves Meritorious Service Medals and recommends approval of the Distinguished Service Medals to the Secretary of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare (HEW). The Secretary of HEW, or designee, will present Distinguished Service Medals at the annual HEW Secretary's Honor Awards Ceremony. The Assistant Secretary for Health, or designee, will present Meritorious Service Medals at the annual PHS Honor Awards Ceremony.
- 2. Commendation Medals.** The FDA Policy Board reviews nominations and the Commissioner approves or rejects. The Commissioner, or designee, will present these medals at the annual FDA Honor Awards Ceremony.

**3. PHS Plaque.** Nominations for the PHS Plaque are acted upon by the appropriate approving official listed in SMC FDA 1433.11 who will indicate their decisions on the transmittal memorandum. Requests for plaques should be made in writing to the FDA Awards Coordinator, Division of Personnel Management (HFA-400) and must enclose the original signed copy of the approved nomination which will be placed in the officer's official personnel folder. A minimum of three weeks should be allowed to obtain an engraved plaque. A letter documenting the award should be prepared to the recipient for the signature of the approving official. The approving official, or designee, shall arrange an appropriate presentation of the Plaque and letter.

#### **6. DUE DATE FOR SUBMISSION OF NOMINATIONS**

Nominations for all of these awards may be submitted year-round, however, because the medals are presented at ceremonies held in the spring of the year, it is suggested that nominations for the medals be submitted by November 1 of each year.

## ATTACHMENT A

### Format for Making Recommendations for PHS Commissioned Corps Awards

The information in parentheses describes the data to be entered. Use plain bond paper and single space the justification statement. Try not to exceed three pages.

(Actual size 8" x 10 1/2")

**NOMINATION FOR** (Distinguished Service Medal)  
(Meritorious Service Medal)  
(Commendation Medal)  
(PHS Plaque)

**Name of Officer:** (Robert F. French, Jr.)

**Organization:** (HEW/PHS/FDA/Bureau of Radiological Health  
Division of Compliance)

**Organization Position Title:** (Radiation Control Officer)

**Present Grade:** (Senior Sanitarian (T) (05) )

**Other Honors Received:**

**Proposed Citation:** (Twenty-five (25) words or less describing the  
accomplishments. Begin the citation with -- In  
recognition of... --or-- For...)

**Justification Statement:** (Concisely, clearly, and completely describe  
the officer's accomplishments and explain how  
these accomplishments meet the criteria set  
forth for the award. Do not include the  
biographical sketches, education, training and  
experience unless it is necessary for an  
understanding of the officer's  
accomplishments)