



Tulsa Police Department

This policy statement and the procedures thereunder are intended for Police Department use only. The policies, procedures, and regulations are for internal Police Department administrative purposes and are not intended to create any higher legal standard of care or liability in an evidentiary sense than is created by law. Violations of internal Police Department policies, procedures, regulations, or rules form the basis for disciplinary action by the Police Department. Violations of law form the basis for civil and/or criminal sanctions to be determined in a proper judicial setting, not through the administrative procedures of the Police Department.

Policy # 311

Policy Name Awards

Approved by *Dennis Larsen, Chief of Police*

Effective Date 05/04/2026

Approved Date 05/04/2026

Previous Date 05/30/2024

PURPOSE OF CHANGE:

Updated reporting procedures for Axon.

POLICY:

The Tulsa Police Department recognizes officers and employees for meritorious service, bravery, and valor above and beyond the call of duty. Recognition may be in the form of awards, medals, and/or ribbons.

SUMMARY: Procedures for determining eligibility for awards, nominating persons for awards, and wearing medals and ribbons.

APPLIES TO: All police personnel.

DEFINITIONS:

AWARDS COMMITTEE – a committee established to make recommendations on the appropriateness of each nomination for an award. The members of the committee are listed in Procedure 7.

AWARDS COMMITTEE CHAIRPERSON – a division commander appointed by the Chief of Police to conduct the meetings of the Awards Committee.

CHIEF’S AWARD – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department for an outstanding accomplishment which has resulted in improved administration, improved operations, or substantial savings in manpower or operational costs, where the recipient has gone above and beyond the requirements of his or her normal assignment to contribute to a more effective and efficient police service. This award may also be given to any unit of the Tulsa Police Department that collectively meets the above criteria. Unit awards in this category will consist of a ribbon only.

CITIZEN APPRECIATION AWARD – an award to any citizen who through an act or acts has aided the Tulsa Police Department in its efforts to better serve the citizens of Tulsa. This act can be one of heroism, bravery, volunteer service, or any act that directly benefits the Department and the City of Tulsa.

COMBAT SERVICE RIBBON– an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department who served in any branch of the US military in an operational theater. Their separation document or *DD214* MUST reflect campaign/service award to establish eligibility.

DEPARTMENT COMMENDATION AWARD– an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department for an outstanding act of achievement which involves performance above and beyond that required by the recipient's basic assignment, or for outstanding police work which has brought great credit to the City of Tulsa and/or the Tulsa Police Department in a case of unusual public interest. This award may also be given to any unit of the Tulsa Police Department that collectively meets the above criteria. Unit awards in this category will consist of a ribbon only.

CHIEF'S LETTER OF COMMENDATION – a written commendation to any member of the Tulsa Police Department for a noteworthy act of achievement that brings credit to the City of Tulsa and/or the Tulsa Police Department.

LIFESAVING AWARD – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department for substantially sustaining or saving the life of any human being, either on or off duty, except while employed as a medic or ambulance attendant.

MARKSMANSHIP AWARD – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department who demonstrates a high level of marksmanship during firearms qualification. Officers who score 96 or 100 points will receive a Master Award. Officers who score 92 points will receive an Expert Award and officers who score 88 points will receive a Sharpshooter Award. Officers will have three (3) attempts to earn the bonus hours.

MEDAL OF HONOR – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department for an act of conspicuous gallantry above and beyond the call of duty while in a police situation where the recipient's life is in imminent danger. Recognition for actions meeting award criteria may be recognized posthumously by presenting the recipient's survivors with the award.

This is the highest and most prestigious department award and there must be no margin of doubt or possibility of error in awarding this honor. To justify the decoration, the actions must clearly render the individual conspicuous by an act so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes heroism beyond the call of duty from lesser forms of bravery. It must be the type of deed that, if not done, would not subject the individual to any justified criticism.

MEDAL OF VALOR – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department for an act of outstanding bravery or heroism through which the recipient demonstrates to some great degree characteristics of selflessness, personal courage, and devotion to duty.

This is the second highest department award and to warrant this distinctive decoration, the act must be performed in the presence of great danger or at great personal risk and by its nature involved the saving of a human life, or attempted saving of a human life, the prevention of a serious crime, or the apprehension of a person who committed a serious crime. The action must be performed in such a manner as to render the individual highly conspicuous.

PHYSICAL FITNESS AWARD – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department for achieving a qualifying score during the Cooper Fitness Test. Any officer who scores 48 to 50 points on the test will receive the Platinum Fitness Award. Any officer who scores 40 to 47.5 points on the test will receive the Gold Physical Fitness Award. Any officer who scores from 35 to 39.5 points will receive the Silver Physical Fitness Award.

PURPLE HEART – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department who is killed or seriously injured as a direct result of a police situation. This award will be reserved for injuries resulting from an attack by an assailant, an attempt to save a life by placing oneself in immediate peril, an attempted apprehension of a suspect, or in the performance of an act of valor. Reviewing authorities will not recommend this award lightly.

SAFE DRIVING AWARD – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department who has no chargeable (four point) or preventable (three point) collisions while operating a city vehicle for a minimum of five (5) years. The award will also be available in five-year increments of 10, 15, and 20. A chargeable or preventable collision will void the time accumulated toward the next five-year level and start the five-year clock over again.

THIRTY FIVE-YEAR SERVICE AWARD – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department who completes thirty-five years of active service.

THIRTY-YEAR SERVICE AWARD – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department who completes thirty years of active service.

TWENTY FIVE-YEAR SERVICE AWARD – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department who completes twenty-five years of active service.

TWENTY-YEAR SERVICE AWARD – an award to any member of the Tulsa Police Department who completes twenty years of active service.

PROCEDURES:

1. Any member of the Department may nominate any other member for an award. The recommendation should be as thorough as possible and include a description of the circumstances surrounding the incident and the specific actions of each employee nominated. Consideration should be given to what the probable outcome may have been if the person or group had not become involved.
2. The person making the nomination will complete an Award/Commendation form in Axon Standards. Once the report is completed, its author will forward the Award/Commendation form to the nominated employee's direct supervisor.
3. Within 10 days, the supervisor receiving the report will review the Award/Commendation form and will forward it to the next step up the nominated employee's chain of command, recommending approval of the award, modification of or addition to the award, or denial of the award. This process will be repeated by each member of the chain of command in receipt of the Award/Commendation form until it reaches the nominated officer's deputy chief.
4. Upon receipt of the Award/Commendation form, the nominated employee's division commander will additionally ensure that a copy of the Award/Commendation form is included in the nominated employee's departmental personnel file.
5. Upon receipt of the Award/Commendation form, the nominated employee's deputy chief will forward the case file with his recommendation to the Internal Affairs. Internal Affairs will then forward the nomination to the Awards Committee Secretary and copy the awards Committee Chair.
6. The Awards Committee will meet to review each nomination and determine if it meets the award criteria. The Awards Committee will consist of:
 - a. The Awards Committee Chairperson appointed by the Chief of Police.
 - b. The division commanders of Gilcrease Division (GID), Mingo Valley Division (MVD), Riverside Division (RID), Special Operations Division (SOD), and Training Division (TD).
 - c. A Lodge representative to be appointed by the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP) President.
 - d. A representative from each of the following divisions to be appointed by each division commander or director:
 - 1) Detective Division (DET)
 - 2) Special Investigations Division (SID)
 - 3) Gilcrease Division (GID)
 - 4) Mingo Valley Division (MVD)
 - 5) Riverside Division (RID)
 - 6) Information Services Division (ISD)
 - 7) Special Operations Division (SOD)
 - 8) Training Division (TD)
 - 9) Forensic Laboratory Division (LAB)
 - 10) Public Safety Communications (PSC)
 - 11) Police Information Technology Division (PTID)
 - 12) A Communications Unit (CU) representative (non-voting).
 - 13) The term of office for committee members will be one (1) year.

7. For each award nomination reviewed by the Awards Committee, the Awards Committee Secretary will forward the corresponding Axon Standards case file and supporting documents to the Chief of Police designee, noting the Committee's comments and recommendation.
8. The Chief of Police designee will return the Axon Standards case files to IA with comments indicating final approval or denial of the award. The Chief of Police may authorize a different or additional award.
9. Upon approval by the Chief of Police, the Chief of Police designee will prepare the awards and certificates for distribution. The Chief of Police designee will notify the nominee's division commander and the Awards Committee Chairperson of the Chief's decision and shall provide approved ribbons and/or medals for the appropriate award to the respective Division Commander. The Division Commander of the nominee will notify the nominee's chain of command of the award decision.
10. The nominee's division commander or designee will then present the ribbon, medal, or commendation at the nominee's squad meeting. All documentation in reference to the nomination and recommendations for the award or letter of commendation will be forwarded to Police Personnel/Budget to be placed in the employee's personnel file. A copy will be placed in the employee's divisional file.
11. Any member of the Department may nominate any citizen for the TPD Citizen Appreciation Award.
 - a. The procedure to follow will be the same as any other award nomination.
 - b. If approved, the award will be returned to the nominating employee to present to the citizen.
12. Nominations should be made as soon as possible following the event so that awards may be presented in a timely manner.
13. When the Chief of Police receives correspondence from an individual (internal or external source) seeking to praise an officer's actions, the letter will be forwarded to the officer's chain of command for consideration of what, if any, level of recognition is appropriate for an award nomination.
14. The immediate supervisor will obtain two copies of the completed award document and place one copy in the employee's divisional file. The second copy will be forwarded to Police Personnel/Budget and placed in the employee's personnel file.

WEARING OF MEDALS:

1. Only one medal shall be worn at a time. The highest medal awarded shall be worn for formal occasions in conjunction with the formal uniform or when so instructed by a superior officer.
2. Ribbons shall be worn horizontally, centered immediately above the nameplate on the uniform shirt, and:
 - a. Worn in rows of two with the order of precedence being left to right, top to bottom from the wearers point of view.
 - b. When an odd number of ribbons are worn, the highest award shall be displayed on the top row and centered.
 - c. Except for the Lifesaving and Purple Heart Awards, gold ¼ inch stars will be given for second and subsequent awards and will be centered on the original ribbon bar. When an officer receives more than four of the same awards, a ¼ inch silver star will be worn in lieu of four gold stars.
 - d. Officers receiving second, and subsequent Lifesaving and Purple Heart Awards will be given a citation and medal only.
3. The Field Training Officer (FTO) Ribbon, Combat Service Ribbon, Years of Service Ribbon, Special Operations Team (SOT) Ribbon, Advanced Traffic Investigator (ATI) Ribbon, Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) Ribbon, Dive Team Ribbon, and Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Ribbon will be worn in the same manner as an award in accordance with this policy.

4. Specialized units and organizations that have Specialty Insignia Pins approved by the Chief of Police may wear a Specialty Insignia Pin centered above the nameplate or above any other award worn. Only one Special Insignia Pin may be worn. Officers shall hold a current membership in the unit or organization to display the Special Insignia Pin.
5. The following list shows the order of precedence for each ribbon as it is displayed on the uniform:
 - 1) Medal of Honor Ribbon
 - 2) Medal of Valor Ribbon
 - 3) Purple Heart Ribbon
 - 4) Chief's Award Ribbon
 - 5) Lifesaving Award Ribbon
 - 6) Department Commendation Ribbon
 - 7) Combat Service Ribbon
 - 8) Military Service Ribbon
 - 9) St. Francis Health Systems Department Ribbon
 - 10) ATI Ribbon
 - 11) Defensive Tactics Instructor Ribbon
 - 12) Dive Team Ribbon
 - 13) DRE Ribbon
 - 14) FBI National Academy Ribbon
 - 15) FTO Ribbon
 - 16) Honor Guard Ribbon
 - 17) Incident Management Ribbon
 - 18) USAR Ribbon
 - 19) Marksmanship Ribbon
 - 20) CIT Ribbon
 - 21) Physical Fitness Ribbon
 - 22) Safe Driving Ribbon
 - 23) SOT Service Ribbon
 - 24) SRT Ribbon
 - 25) Years of Service Ribbon

REGULATIONS:

REFERENCES:

201A, *Uniform Equipment and Specifications*
201A Att., *Uniform Equipment and Specifications – Attachment*
Uniform Specifications Manual