

# INDIAN AFFAIRS DIRECTIVES TRANSMITTAL SHEET

(modified DI-416)

DOCUMENT IDENTIFICATION NUMBER NPM-HR-11	SUBJECT Non-Monetary Recognition	RELEASE NUMBER # 07-11
FOR FURTHER INFORMATION Office of Human Resources		DATE JUL 27 2007

**EXPLANATION OF MATERIAL TRANSMITTED:**

To establish Indian Affairs' policy on non-monetary recognition awards granted to employees to recognize their contributions to Indian Affairs.



Debbie L. Clark  
Deputy Assistant Secretary Indian Affairs –  
(Management)

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**FILING INSTRUCTIONS:**

Remove: None

Insert: NPM-HR-11 (New)



# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
Washington, D.C. 20240



## National Policy Memorandum

### Assistant Secretary - Indian Affairs Deputy Assistant Secretary-Management Office of Human Resources

**Number: NPM-HR-11**  
**Title: Non-Monetary Recognition**

**Effective: JUL 27 2007**  
**Expires: JUL 27 2008**

#### 1. Purpose

To establish Indian Affairs' policy on non-monetary recognition awards granted to employees to recognize their contributions to Indian Affairs.

#### 2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees in the Office of the Assistant Secretary-Indian Affairs, the Bureau of Indian Affairs, and the Bureau of Indian Education.

#### 3. Policy

It is the policy of Indian Affairs to grant non-monetary recognition and informal honors to employees to recognize their contributions to the organization. The contributions may be for superior accomplishment of regularly assigned duties, exceptional achievement of project goals, noteworthy accomplishments over a sustained period, or specific contributions to the organization's mission. The Guide for Nominating and Processing Awards is included as Attachment 1.

#### 4. Roles and Responsibilities

The Deputy Assistant Secretary-Management is responsible for administering this policy.

The Office of Human Resources is responsible for providing information and guidance to managers, supervisors, and employees.

Supervisors are responsible for identifying and approving non-monetary awards for deserving employees, and completing Attachment 2, Recommendation and Approval of Awards, Form DI-451, revised October 2006.

#### 5. Approval

/sgd/ Debbie L. Clark  
Debbie L. Clark  
Deputy Assistant Secretary-Management

JUL 27 2007

Date

#07-11  
New

## Guide for Nominating and Processing Awards

# Non-Monetary Recognition and Informal Honors

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Non-monetary recognition is a means of providing immediate, non-cash rewards to employees for contributions to the Department of the Interior, Indian Affairs, individual office or team. The non-monetary recognition selected should be commensurate with the effort expended, the behavior exhibited, and/or the results achieved. As a key element of a rewarding environment, non-monetary recognition can be tailored to employees' interests by talking with employees and learning about their personal interests, hobbies, or activities, or by asking them how they would like to be rewarded. Gift certificates may be presented as non-monetary recognition; however, the IRS requires that they be reported as taxable income (see below).

While non-monetary recognition carries fewer administrative requirements than cash awards, managers are no less responsible for reasonable and appropriate use of this program. Non-monetary recognition may not be presented in advance or in anticipation of a contribution that has not yet occurred. Non-monetary recognition items may not be used as personal gifts, visitor tokens of appreciation, or for teambuilding, goodwill, outreach, or promotional purposes. Non-monetary recognition should not be used in a way that would cause embarrassment to Indian Affairs or given so often as to create the appearance of abuse of this authority. If there is any concern, a STAR Award should be considered as an alternative.

## Eligibility

This program is authorized by the Government Employees Incentive Awards Act (GEIAA). Eligibility is limited to employees of Indian Affairs, the Department of the Interior, and other Federal agencies.

Contractor personnel, tribal employees, volunteers, foreign visitors, and other members of the public are not eligible. Students whose services are acquired outside of student hiring programs are also not eligible. Individuals who are not eligible for non-monetary recognition may, however, be presented with Informal Honors.

## Non-monetary Recognition Items

The Department of the Interior has established a \$50 limit for non-monetary recognition of nominal value, including shipping and handling. Presentation of more than a single item is acceptable as long as the cumulative value of the items does not exceed \$50. If buying multiple items, see also Purchase and Storage below. Non-monetary recognition items may include:

**Merchandise.** Merchandise including but not limited to briefcases, tote bags, coffee cups, pen and pencil sets, clocks, T-shirts and other similar items may be presented. Clothing marked with the Indian Affairs identifier may be presented as long as (1) colors reserved for official wear/identification clothing are avoided (see Survey Manual Chapter 408.3); and (2) it is not worn in work situations requiring official wear/identification clothing.

**Tickets.** Tickets to sporting events, movies, etc. can be used as non-monetary recognition.

**Food.** Food or meals may be used as non-monetary recognition as long as they (1) are used to recognize specific contributions and accomplishments, and (2) would not jeopardize the credibility and integrity of the awards program. When food is used as non-monetary recognition (e.g., a pizza lunch for an employee or employees who have made special contribution in completing a difficult assignment), the supervisor /presenter must use personal funds for his/her own meal.

Likewise, others attending who are not being recognized must use personal funds for their own meals. This authority must not be used as a pretense to provide food at meetings, office parties or other events.

A separate authority exists regarding refreshments at awards ceremonies (see Presentation).

## Gift Certificates

Gift certificates redeemable for merchandise, services or events may be presented as non-monetary recognition; however, IRS rules require that gift certificates be reported as taxable income (see instructions). Examples include but are not limited to: certificates redeemable for a particular item such as a ham, turkey, or other specified food items; certificates redeemable for a particular service, such as a car wash; and gift certificates issued by banks or credit card companies.

## Items Inappropriate For Non-monetary Recognition

The following items may not be used as non-monetary recognition:

- Work supplies that are provided by the government in connection with the employee's job, including Indian Affairs official wear/identification clothing and protective clothing or equipment;
- Excess government property not for public sale; and
- Items that are barred in the federal workplace by statute or regulation, violate the Secretary's Policy on Zero Tolerance for Harassment, or are otherwise inappropriate (i.e., alcohol. calendars using inappropriate language or nude models, etc.).

## Nomination and Recordkeeping

Any Indian Affairs employee aware of an achievement that he/she believes deserves recognition may make an award recommendation to the award recipient's supervisor. The recommendation must be signed by an official having delegated authority to approve non-monetary awards.

Items of nominal value and informal honors may be awarded as appropriate without completion of form DI-451, Recommendation and Approval of Awards.

Items that exceed nominal value should complete form DI-451, Recommendation and Approval of Awards. Before finalizing and granting a non-monetary award that exceed nominal value, it is suggested that the employee be advised that the award would be taxable to determine if the employee concurs in the granting of the taxable award item.

Time Off Awards are an alternative method of recognizing the superior accomplishments or contributions of employees; therefore, the decision to grant a Time-Off Award is based on the same criteria or circumstances as defined above for any other award.

## Purchase and Storage

The only individuals who may purchase non-monetary award items are charge card holders with purchase authority, and warranted Contracting Officer (CO's). The procedures for documentation of the purchase will apply. The cardholder/CO must insure that the cost of the purchase is coded in FFS under Budget Object Class (BOC) 115E (Awards-Non Monetary).

A small number of non-monetary recognition items may be kept on hand to allow for immediate recognition. Offices choosing to keep items on hand are responsible for their tracking and safekeeping. Non-monetary recognition items on hand must be stored in a locked box, desk, or cabinet. Non-monetary recognition items presented at the end of the fiscal year must be given to recognize specific contributions and not simply distributed to deplete existing supplies.

## Reporting Gift Certificates as Taxable Income

The IRS considers gift certificates as employee fringe benefits and subject to tax. Therefore, anyone who is giving an employee a gift certificate must report the gift certificate to the Payroll Operations Division (POD) so that it can be included in the employee's taxable income. To report a gift certificate as taxable income, fax a copy of the signed form DI-451, Recommendation and Approval of Awards to the Denver Payroll Office at 303-969-7411 at the time the gift certificate is being given to the employee.

Note: The individual giving the gift certificate is responsible for obligating the face value of the certificate plus the tax on the gift certificate since the tax will not be withheld from the employee's salary. Because the tax for FERS employees includes Social Security, the total amount that must be obligated for a gift certificate is higher for FERS employees than for CSRS employees. This chart lists the tax that must be obligated for gift certificates ranging from \$5 to \$50 in face value:

**GIFT CERTIFICATES**  
**Face Value, Tax, and Total Value**

Face Value of Gift Certificate	Total Value of Gift Certificate including tax (CSRS Employee)	Total Value of Gift Certificate including tax (FERS Employee)
\$50	\$79	\$87
\$45	\$71	\$78
\$40	\$63	\$70
\$35	\$55	\$61
\$30	\$47	\$52
\$25	\$39	\$44
\$20	\$31	\$35
\$15	\$24	\$26
\$10	\$16	\$17
\$5	\$8	\$9

The employee's next Leave and Earning Statement will include the face value of the gift certificate as part of the employee's biweekly earnings, and tax will be included as part of the taxes withheld. Because the tax that has been obligated to cover the gift certificate is based on a standard rate that is higher than the actual tax rate for some employees, those employees may receive a small additional amount in their pay for that one pay period.

## Presentation

The presentation of non-monetary recognition and/or gift certificates should suit the achievement and respect the wishes of the recipient. Generally, the presentation of non-monetary recognition items should be informal. If non-monetary recognition is presented in conjunction with a formal awards ceremony, Indian Affairs' policy regarding refreshments at employee awards ceremonies will apply.

## UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR RECOMMENDATION AND APPROVAL OF AWARDS

Agency/Bureau	Name Of Employee (Last, First, Middle Initial)	
Social Security No.	Position Title	Pay Plan-Series/Grade/Step
Duty Station	Period Covered For Award (MM/DD/YY) From _____ To _____	Cost Account Number

### COMPLETE THE APPROPRIATE AWARD SECTION BELOW

**MONETARY AWARD:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Performance-Based Cash Award
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Exceptional (Level 5) Performance Rating
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Superior (Level 4) Performance Rating
- \_\_\_\_\_ Quality Step Increase  
(Employee Must Have Received An Exceptional Level 5 Performance Rating)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Star Award
- \_\_\_\_\_ Productivity Improvement Award
- \_\_\_\_\_ Invention/Patent Award

**NON-MONETARY AWARD:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Time-Off Recognition  
Number of Hours: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ Non-Monetary Recognition  
Cash Value of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**HONOR AWARD:**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Distinguished Service Award
- \_\_\_\_\_ Conservation Service Award
- \_\_\_\_\_ Meritorious Service Award
- \_\_\_\_\_ Outstanding Service Award
- \_\_\_\_\_ Unit Award for Excellence of Service
- \_\_\_\_\_ Superior Service Award
- \_\_\_\_\_ Citizen's Award for Exceptional Service Award
- \_\_\_\_\_ Valor Award
- \_\_\_\_\_ Citizen's Award for Bravery
- \_\_\_\_\_ Exemplary Act Award

**BUREAU-SPECIFIC AWARD:**

Name of Award: \_\_\_\_\_

### **RECOMMENDATION AND APPROVAL**

Recommending Individual (Signature)	Date	Reviewing Official (Signature)	Date
Title:		Title:	
Approving Official (Signature & Title)			Date

**JUSTIFICATION**

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**Summary of Accomplishments/Contributions Being Recognized by Award**

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**FINANCIAL INFORMATION**

Monetary Award:

Amount of Cash Award \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Pay Period to be processed by payroll \_\_\_\_\_

Non-monetary Award of Significant Value:

Cash Value of Award \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Gross Amount

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## INSTRUCTIONS

### Performance-Based Cash Award

For a performance-based cash award, a level 4 or 5 performance rating is required. Attach a copy of the performance appraisal supporting the award.

### Quality Step Increase

An employee must have received a performance rating of level 5, and the employee's exceptional performance is expected to continue in the future. Attach a copy of the employee's performance rating of record on which the QSI is based, and a justification providing brief examples of how expectations were exceeded for each element.

### Invention/Patent Award

For an Invention/Patent Award, attach a description of the contribution or patent being recognized and the resulting benefits to the Government.

### Non-Monetary Award

For a non-monetary award of significant value, provide a brief description of the contribution(s) if the award is of significant value.

### Other Recognition Awards

For a STAR award, a Productivity Improvement award, or a Time-Off award, provide a brief summary of the accomplishments/ contributions being recognized by this award in the space provided.

### Group Award

Attach a list of names of group members. If group members are to receive different award amounts, describe the individual group member's specific contribution(s).

### Honor Award

For an honor award, attach a citation.

### **Processing Instructions**

Submit this form with required attachments to the employee's servicing Human Resources Office, and provide a copy to award recipient.