

TEXAS DEPARTMENT OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE
PD-53 (rev. 7), “EMPLOYEE AWARDS AND RECOGNITION”
AUGUST 1, 2015
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TEXAS DEPARTMENT
OF
CRIMINAL JUSTICE

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SUPERSEDES: PD-53 (rev. 6)
December 1, 2010

EXECUTIVE DIRECTIVE

SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

AUTHORITY: Tex. Gov't Code §§ 493.001, 493.006(b), 493.007, 661.911, 2113.201

APPLICABILITY: Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ)

EMPLOYMENT AT WILL CLAUSE:

These guidelines **do not** constitute an employment contract or a guarantee of continued employment. The TDCJ reserves the right to change the provisions of these guidelines at any time.

Nothing in these guidelines and procedures limits the executive director's authority to establish or revise human resources policy. These guidelines and procedures are adopted to guide the internal operations of the TDCJ and **do not** create any legally enforceable interest or limit the executive director's, deputy executive director's, or division directors' authority to terminate an employee at will.

POLICY:

The TDCJ grants awards and extends special recognition to employees without regard to race, color, religion, sex (gender), national origin, age, disability, genetic information, or uniformed services status. The TDCJ has zero tolerance for all forms of employment discrimination and harassment or retaliation is prohibited. No employee shall be subjected to harassment or retaliation for opposing or reporting employment discrimination.

PROCEDURES:

I. Employee Service Awards

- A. An employee service award is an award such as a certificate or plaque presented to an employee in recognition of:
 - 1. Completion of 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50 or 55 years of state service;
 - 2. Retirement from the TDCJ; or
 - 3. As deemed appropriate by the executive director.
- B. The human resources director or designee shall determine the types of service awards to be presented.
- C. Employee Services, Human Resources Division shall provide an employee's service award to the employee's human resources representative. The human resources representative shall give the award to the employee's supervisor, and the award shall be presented to the employee in accordance with unit or department practice.

II. Unit or Department Employee Recognition Program

An employee recognition program established by a division, unit, or department should highlight and reinforce positive employee actions that are consistent with the mission, goals, and general expectations of the TDCJ. Division directors, wardens, or department heads are responsible for ensuring the employee recognition program is conducted in a fair and impartial manner at each division, unit, or department.

A. General Provisions

An employee or group of two or more employees may be recognized for outstanding service on a monthly basis or other timeframe as deemed appropriate by the division director, warden, or department head. Outstanding service may include, but is not limited to, the following:

- 1. Exceptional employee attendance or outstanding performance;
- 2. Contributing to a more efficient or economical operation of the division, unit, or department;
- 3. Improvements to the workplace;

4. Enhancement of the TDCJ's image through participation in community programs, organizations, and activities, including the State Employee Charitable Campaign; or

5. Acts of heroism, courage, valor, or other outstanding achievement.

B. Nominations

A nomination for special recognition of an outstanding employee or group of employees may be submitted by any TDCJ employee in writing. A special collection receptacle may be provided to protect the anonymity, if desired, of the person making the nomination. A nomination should describe the nominated employee's or group of employees' performance in general and include any acts, accomplishments, or special contributions to the operations of the division, unit, or department.

C. Selections

An outstanding employee or group of employees may be selected by the division director, warden, department head, or an awards selection committee. If an awards selection committee is established, it shall consist of division, unit, or department employees who are appointed by the division director, warden, or department head. The division director, warden, or department head shall determine the number of committee members.

Before an employee or group of employees is selected for an award, the committee may obtain an endorsement from the employee's or group of employees' immediate supervisor(s). The supervisor(s) may take an employee's most recent performance evaluation into consideration when determining whether to endorse the recommendation.

D. Employee Notification

The division director, warden, department head, or designee, together with the employee's or group of employees' immediate supervisor(s), shall notify the employee(s) of the selection.

E. Awards

Awards may consist of any or all of the following:

1. Certificate of merit;
2. Designated parking space;
3. Other non-monetary work-related privileges that may be determined by the unit or department; or

4. A purchased award that does not exceed \$100.00 for an individual employee.

F. Ceremonies

The division director, warden, department head, or designee, shall arrange appropriate award ceremonies to recognize employees who are honored as outstanding employees. Additionally, the division director, warden, or department head may post the results of the outstanding employee selection on a bulletin board in a common use area, such as a foyer, lobby, hallway, break room, or turnout room, accessible to all employees. Results may also be announced in a TDCJ newsletter.

III. Administrative Leave for Outstanding Performance (ALOP)

ALOP is a formal show of appreciation that may be granted by the executive director to dedicated TDCJ employees whose outstanding performance is supported by the employee's performance evaluation. A maximum of 32 hours of ALOP may be granted to an employee within a fiscal year. This includes ALOP granted for continuing formal education and ALOP granted for other demonstrations of outstanding performance.

A. Administrative Leave for Outstanding Performance – Continuing Education

1. General Provisions

The TDCJ desires to demonstrate its support and encouragement to employees who are striving to enhance their education while working full-time and maintaining certain performance standards. Such employees who meet the eligibility criteria in accordance with the provisions of this directive shall be granted eight hours of ALOP-Continuing Education.

2. Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for ALOP-Continuing Education, an employee shall:

- a. Be an active full-time employee and have been employed with the TDCJ in a full-time position for at least 12 continuous months;
- b. Have completed 12 hours of course credits from a college or university accredited by an organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or the United States Department of Education (USDE) within the previous 12-month period and achieved a minimum 3.0 grade points in each course;
- c. Have received a minimum rating of "somewhat exceeds standards" in all areas evaluated on the employee's current annual performance evaluation, including the supervisory functions area if the employee is a supervisor;

- d. Not be on disciplinary probation nor have had disciplinary probation imposed within the previous 12-month period or while attending the college courses being used to meet the eligibility criteria;
- e. Not have received eight hours of ALOP-Continuing Education within the previous 12-month period; and
- f. Not have received more than 24 hours of ALOP for other demonstrations of outstanding performance within the current fiscal year from September 1 – August 31.

3. Submission Process

a. Employee's Responsibility

In order to receive ALOP-Continuing Education, an eligible employee shall complete the PERS 510, Request for ALOP-Continuing Education (Attachment A), and submit the PERS 510 to the employee's human resources representative along with proof of college course completion and the required 3.0 grade points in each course.

b. Human Resources Representative's Responsibility

The human resources representative shall confirm the employee's eligibility, attach a copy of the employee's current annual performance evaluation to the PERS 510, and forward the PERS 510 and attachments to the appropriate warden or department head for signature.

4. Approval Process

- a. The warden or department head shall forward the signed PERS 510 to the appropriate division director for review and approval. If approved, the division director shall forward the signed PERS 510 to the human resources director for final confirmation of the employee's eligibility. Upon verification, the human resources director shall forward the PERS 510 to the appropriate approval authority for signature.

(1) The Texas Board of Criminal Justice (TBCJ) chairman shall be the approving authority for staff, departments, or divisions reporting directly to the TBCJ.

(2) The executive director shall be the approving authority for all other TDCJ employees.

- b. The approval authority shall return the signed PERS 510 to the employee's human resources representative, who shall provide a copy to the employee and file a copy in the employee's unit or department human resources file.

B. Administrative Leave for Outstanding Performance for Other Demonstrations of Outstanding Performance

1. General Provisions

Employees often display dedication to the TDCJ through various activities, such as striving for an exceptional overall job performance, accepting a special project and accomplishing the goals for that project, or performing notable deeds such as an act of courage, valor, or heroism. The TDCJ desires to recognize and acknowledge such employees through a formal demonstration of appreciation by granting a period of ALOP. The amount of such ALOP may differ and shall be determined on a case-by-case basis.

2. Guidelines

a. Eligibility

An employee who has been recommended for ALOP shall:

- (1) Have demonstrated outstanding performance;
- (2) Not currently be on disciplinary probation, nor have been on disciplinary probation within the previous 12-month period; and
- (3) Have received a minimum rating of "somewhat exceeds standards" in all areas evaluated on the employee's current annual performance evaluation, including the supervisory functions area if the employee is a supervisor.

b. Nominations

A supervisor may nominate an eligible employee for ALOP by submitting a decision memorandum (DM) through the supervisor's chain of management to the appropriate division director. The DM shall contain an explanation justifying the recommendation of ALOP, a description of the outstanding performance, and a recommendation for the amount of leave to be granted. A copy of the employee's performance evaluation, completed within the previous 12-month period, shall accompany the DM.

c. Approval Process

- (1) Once the warden or department head receives the DM from the nominating supervisor, the human resources representative shall verify the employee's eligibility. If the warden or department head approves, the DM shall then be forwarded to the remaining reviewing supervisors and appropriate division director.
- (2) Each reviewing supervisor or division director may elect to recommend or not recommend the nomination for ALOP. The DM shall be returned to the initiating supervisor if a nomination is not recommended by a reviewing supervisor or division director.
- (3) The appropriate division director shall forward recommended ALOP nominations to the human resources director for final confirmation of the employee's eligibility. Once the human resources director approves, the DM shall be forwarded to the deputy executive director.
- (4) The deputy executive director shall forward recommended ALOP nominations to the appropriate approval authority for signature.
 - (a) The TBCJ chairman shall be the approving authority for staff, departments, or divisions reporting directly to the TBCJ.
 - (b) The executive director shall be the approving authority for all other TDCJ employees.
- (5) The approved DM shall be returned to the initiating supervisor when the approval authority approves the nomination. The supervisor shall then inform the employee ALOP has been granted, provide a copy of the DM to the employee, and forward the original DM for placement in the employee's unit or department human resources file.

C. Procedures for Use

1. It is an employee's responsibility to take ALOP within 12 months from the date it is awarded. ALOP that is not taken within such a time period shall lapse. The employee's supervisor shall ensure the employee has the

opportunity to use ALOP. Compensation shall not be paid for unused ALOP, and ALOP shall not be transferred to another state agency.

2. An employee shall submit a PERS 24, Leave Request, to the employee's supervisor prior to the workday(s) the employee desires to take ALOP. The employee shall:
 - a. Attach a copy of the PERS 510 or the approved DM for other ALOP to the PERS 24, Leave Request; and
 - b. Indicate on the PERS 24 that the category of administrative leave is "Other" and write "ALOP" as the description.
3. The supervisor shall review staffing requirements for the period covered by the PERS 24, attach comments, and forward the PERS 24 with the supporting documentation to the warden or department head for approval. The warden or department head shall approve or disapprove the PERS 24 in sufficient time for the employee to make plans accordingly.
4. If the warden or department head approves the PERS 24, the human resources representative shall mark the PERS 24 as approved by the executive director and write "See attached" on the signature line. The human resources representative shall ensure the employee receives a copy of the PERS 24 and file the original PERS 24 with required documentation in the employee's unit or department human resources file.

Brad Livingston
Executive Director

**Texas Department of Criminal Justice
Request for ALOP-Continuing Education**

I. To be completed by the employee:

Employee Name: _____ SSN: _____
 Please Print: Last First MI
 Payroll Title: _____ Unit/Dept.: _____

1. I certify that I meet the following eligibility criteria:
 - a) I am currently a full-time employee, and I have been employed with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) in a full-time position for at least 12 continuous months.
 - b) I have completed 12 hours of course credits from a college or university accredited by an organization recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) or the United States Department of Education (USDE) within the previous 12-month period and achieved a minimum 3.0 grade points in each course. **(Attach proof of college course completion and grade points for each class. College or university accreditation may be verified through the CHEA website at <http://www.chea.org/> or the USDE website at <http://www.ed.gov/>.)**
 - c) I am not currently on disciplinary probation and have not been on disciplinary probation at any time within the previous 12-month period or while attending the college courses being used to meet this criteria.
 - d) Within the previous 12-month period, I have not been awarded eight hours of ALOP-Continuing Education.
 - e) Within the current fiscal year (September 1 – August 31), I have not received more than 24 hours of ALOP for other demonstrations of outstanding performance.
2. I certify all the information provided by me in connection with this request is true and complete.
3. I authorize representatives from the college or university I attend(ed) to verify enrollment and transcript information to the TDCJ with regard to courses completed. I release all such representatives from all liability from any damages which may result from furnishing the requested information to the TDCJ. I further release the TDCJ from all liability from any damages which may result from furnishing this form to the college or university representatives.

Employee's Signature _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Note to Employee: With few exceptions, you are entitled upon request: (1) to be informed about the information the TDCJ collects about you; and (2) under Tex. Gov't Code §§ 552.021 and 552.023, to receive and review the collected information. Under Tex. Gov't Code § 559.004, you are also entitled to request, in accordance with TDCJ procedures, that incorrect information the TDCJ has collected about you be corrected.

II. HUMAN RESOURCES REPRESENTATIVE:

I certify that this employee meets does not meet (check one) the eligibility criteria listed in Section I of this request and the employee's current annual performance evaluation indicates a minimum rating of "somewhat exceeds standards" in all areas of the evaluation, including the supervisory functions area if the employee is a supervisor. The employee's performance evaluation shall be dated within the previous 12-month period from the date of the request.

Printed Name _____ Signature _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

WARDEN/DEPARTMENT HEAD

Printed Name _____ Signature _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

DIVISION DIRECTOR

Printed Name _____ Signature _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

Printed Name _____ Signature _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Printed Name _____ Signature _____ Date (mm/dd/yyyy)