NETWORK 2 EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

1. PURPOSE: To establish Network policy on employee recognition and awards.

2. POLICY:

a. It is the policy of the VA and this Network to recognize individual employees and teams of employees who make contributions in support of the mission, organizational goals and objectives, and VA's and Network 2's Strategic Plan.

1. Goal sharing is Network 2's major strategic recognition methodology. This program recognizes and rewards productivity encompassing an approximate 12 month cycle.

2. Special Contribution Awards are granted in Network 2 throughout the year based upon outstanding individual or team achievements.

b. Network 2's recognition and awards program will be administered using the following principles and practices.

1. Recognition has its greatest impact when it is provided as soon as possible following the contribution or achievement.

2. The views of employees and employee representatives are critical to the program's effectiveness in motivating employees. Any employee can nominate an individual or team for a Network 2 recognition and awards program.

3. The form of recognition used should be appropriate to the contribution that was made.

4. When a desired outcome results from a group or team effort, all contributing members of the team should be recognized.

5. Appropriate presentation and adequate publicity are important to the program.

6. Employee union representatives will be involved in the development, implementation, and review of specific recognition programs. The VISN 2 Network Partnership Council is the coordination group for trending a program evaluation.

3. RESPONSIBILITIES:

a. Network Care Line Managers will provide leadership to the Network's recognition program by:

1. Providing maximum support by designating adequate resources for program administration and training.

2. Ensuring that the latest concepts in recognition are integrated when implementing organizational award programs.

3. Establishing and communicating organizational goals to employees across the Network and encouraging employees to contribute to meeting these goals.

4. Delegating to lower level officials appropriate authority to develop recognition programs and to act on award recommendations.

5. Evaluating the incentive awards program periodically to identify specific strengths and weaknesses, develop improved procedures, and establish goals and objectives to direct future program efforts.

6. Giving due weight to an award granted under this program in qualifying and selecting a Title 5 employee for promotion as required in Title 5, United States Code, Section 3362 and Part II, VA Handbook 5005, Staffing.

7. Designating an awards liaison(s) for the Care Line who will provide advice, assistance and other support to ensure the effective administration of care Line awards and recognition programs.

a. Medical Center Directors, Local Care/Service Line Manager, Supervisors, Group and Team Leaders: Being in the best position to identify achievements and improvements in customer service; medical center directors, local care/service managers, supervisors, group and team leaders are responsible for:

1. Being knowledgeable about the Employee Recognition Awards Program and organizational goals, and sharing this knowledge with employees to support the achievement of organizational goals.

2. Identifying and recommending awards promptly for employees whose performance, contributions or ideas merit formal recognition.

3. Providing support to the incentive awards program by utilizing awards in a consistent and equitable manner in accordance with applicable labor contract procedures, if any.

4. Instructing timekeepers on responsibilities for tracking receipt of and use of time off awards on subsidiary records to the electronic timecard, and for informing the servicing Human Resources office of any unused time off balance for employees transferring to other VA facilities.

5. Encouraging employees to submit suggestions and assisting them in the development and testing of ideas when requested.

6. Designating an awards liaison(s) who will coordinate local care line award nominations, suggestion evaluations, award ceremonies, award publicity, etc.

a. Human Resources Management (HRM): HRM at each site is responsible for administering the program, providing technical advice and assistance to managers, supervisors, and employees.

1. Each servicing HRM office will maintain incentive awards records, including the forms and justification/documentation to support award actions, for a period of two years from the approval date. Records of employee suggestions and action taken on them will be retained for a period of two years from the date of final action on suggestions.

2. Form SF50B, Notification of Personnel Action, which documents approved cash and honor awards, will be filed on the left side of the employee's Official Personnel Folder. Only form SF50B documenting QSI's will be permanently filed on the right hand side of the employee's Official Personnel Folder. A copy of the VA Form 4659, 4239 or equivalent form produced for use with a special award program with supportive documentation may be filed in the Employee Performance File and must be retained for a period of two years from approval. Records of employee suggestions and action(s) taken on them will be retained for a period of two years from date of final action on the suggestion.

3. A case number will be assigned by HRM for identification and coding purposes to each cash, honorary and time off award.

d. Award Panel: Facilities may establish an awards panel with representation from all care/service lines consisting of management and bargaining unit employees. The union(s) will designate bargaining unit panel members. Panels will, by consensus, establish fair and equitable mission related criteria for local special awards programs and forward recommendations to the Local Care/Service Line Managers and Medical Center Director. The panel will also review disapproved special contribution award recommendations and suggestions to ensure they were fully considered and fairly evaluated.

e. Network 2 Partnership Council: Will be provided annual reports regarding distribution of awards and may submit suggestions for improvement, elect union membership/representatives to VISN awards committee; will approve/disapprove VISN award initiatives through consensus.

4. PROCEDURES: Specific procedures are outlined below based upon the contribution being recognized.

a. Suggestion Awards

1. Submissions for suggestions must define a problem or objective, present a solution or plan for improvement and tell how the solution will improve the efficiency, economy or effectiveness of government operations or otherwise benefit the government.

2. Suggestions for improvement in VA operations are originated by the employee (or group of employees) via the DHCP computer system or VA Form 3951. Instructions for submitting a suggestion via the computer are provided below:

Access the VISTA system in the normal manner by inputting your access and verify code.

Type "SUG" and press, Enter.

At this time, the screen will look similar to the e-mail screen. Type in your suggestion. Be sure to explain (1) how the process is currently done; (2) your idea for improvement; (3) the benefit including estimated dollar savings (if any) of the new method. **Suggestions which are not constructive proposals offering specific means for improving operations or which contain unsupported statements will not be accepted for consideration under the suggestion program.**

When you finish, press the "F1" key, then "E" to exit or "PF1" key, then "E" to exit or just press Enter (depends on the keyboard). You will see the following message: *Shall I file this suggestion?* Yes//. Type "yes" or press Enter if you wish to submit your suggestion or type "no" if you want to delete your suggestion.

Employees who need assistance submitting suggestions via this method may call their designated Care/Service Line Incentive Awards Liaison.

Employees are encouraged to utilize the computerized method to input their suggestions. However, employees may continue to submit suggestions on the Incentive Awards Program Employee Suggestion form, VA Form 5-3951. Completed forms may be forwarded to Human Resources.

3. Training regarding the DHCP suggestion evaluation process is available by calling HRM or your Care/Service Line Incentive Awards Liaison.

4. Disapproved suggestions will be forwarded by Human Resources to the Awards Panel, if applicable, for review to ensure that full and proper consideration was given the idea.

5. Suggestions adopted locally which are believed to be useful elsewhere in VA or the Government will be forwarded by Human Resources to VA Headquarters for consideration.

a. Special Contributions

1. General Provisions. Recognition through a cash award, time off award, or other honorary, or non-monetary means may be granted to an individual employee, group, or team of employees in recognition of a contribution, act, service or achievement that benefits VA or beyond, or for overall sustained performance beyond normal job requirements. The type and amount of award will be based on the value of the contribution to the organization. (See Att. D) Members of the Senior Executive Service are not eligible under this part for awards based on an overall sustained high level of performance.

NOTE: *Because recognition has its greatest impact as a motivational tool when it follows closely the contribution being recognized, every effort should be made by supervisors and managers to submit a recommendation immediately after the contribution is made.*

a. There is no limit on the number of special contribution awards that may be granted to an employee in any given period, either as an individual or as a member of a group or team.

b. When a special contribution award is based on a group contribution, each contributing employee, including supervisors, should share in the award. The award may be granted in equal shares or in shares which reflect actual demonstrated differences in contribution to the group effort.

c. Because the basis for monetary recognition is the contribution that was made and resulting benefits and not the number of people in a group effort, the total amount of a group award generally will not exceed the amount that could be authorized if the contribution had been made by one individual. Exceptions to the total amount of a group award may be approved by Care/Service Line Managers for award amounts within their delegated approval authority. Reason(s) for the exception must be documented in the award recommendation.

d. Some examples of contributions for which a special contribution award may be appropriate are:

1. High level performance on a particular assignment or project over a sustained period of time.

2. Creative efforts that resulted in an important contribution to the efficiency or economy of VA operations or improved customer service such as streamlining processes or procedures or a significant reduction in paperwork.

3. A major medical advancement.

4. Overcoming unusual or unique circumstances in the performance of duties with exceptional results that warrant recognition.

5. Enhanced service delivery to customers through re-engineering of work processes or procedures.

6. Significant improvements in the quality of services and products for VA customers, and

7. An act or heroism or unusual courage or competence in an emergency situation, which was connected with or related to official employment.

e. Generally, award recommendations will be submitted as soon as possible following the contribution. Cash and time off award recommendations should be submitted using VA Form 4659, Incentive Award Recommendation (Att. A), and will contain a justification that summarizes the contribution and include a description of the benefits to VA or beyond from the contribution which serve as the basis for the award. The justification may be completed directly on VA Form 4659 or on Form 4659a, Special Contribution Checklist, as an attachment to VA Form 4659. Recommendations for special awards programs, such as “On-the-Spot” awards, may be submitted on alternative forms as indicate in the procedures for the special awards program.

2. Types of awards for special contributions:

a. Special Contribution Awards of up to $3,000 per employee to recognize outstanding individual, group, or team efforts.

b. Instant Awards provide immediate recognition of on-time, short-term efforts that do not meet the minimum requirements for a special contribution award. Instant Awards may be cash or non-monetary, or both.

c. Time Off Awards are an excused absence granted to an employee without charge to leave or loss of pay. Time off may be used alone or in combination with other forms of special contribution awards.

d. Non-Monetary Awards are of nominal cost from a certificate of appreciation to a gift certificate, tee-shirt, calculator, etc. Such incentives, when used to

immediately reinforce an employee contribution of limited impact and value can be as effective as cash in motivating employees.

3. Quality Step Increase (QSI)/Special Advancement. A quality step increase is an increase to an employee's rate of basic pay from one step of the grade to the next step that is granted in recognition of excellence in performance during the last appraisal cycle. The purpose of such increases is to recognize consistently high achievers by granting faster than normal step increases.

a. Only General Schedule employees are eligible to receive quality step increases. Employees in Hybrid Title 38 occupations are eligible for one-step advancements for performance, subject to meeting the criteria for QSI's. Title 38 Special Advancements for Performance/Achievement are outlined in VA Handbook 5017, Part V.

b. Quality Step Increases are not required but may be granted to employees whose overall performance is deemed exceptional as demonstrated by making significant contributions to the accomplishment of organizational goals and objectives, and exceeding the standards on all the elements in the individual's performance appraisal plan.

c. QSI's are appropriate when an employee's sustained high level of achievement merits faster than normal advancement of basic pay and that employee is not in step 10 of the grade. A SI not only increases an employee's base pay, but also increases the amount in retirement benefits, the amount of Government life insurance for covered employees, and often results in a higher basic pay adjustment upon promotion of the employee.

NOTE: *Because a QSI represents an increase in base pay, this type of recognition may, increase an organization's budget well into the future. Therefore, Local Care/Service Line Managers must carefully consider such recommendations before approval.*

d. Recommendations for quality step increases will be submitted as soon as possible after the end of the appraisal cycle, on VA Form 4659, and will be accompanied by a copy of the employee's most recent performance appraisal and a narrative statement describing the overall exceptional performance meriting this recognition. VA Form 4652, Request for Personnel Action, should also be provided with the justification to ensure timely processing.

e. Restrictions. A quality step increase may not be granted to an eligible employee who received a quality step increase within the preceding 52 consecutive calendar weeks or who is in step 10 of the pay grade.

f. Effect on Regular Within-Grade Increases. An employee who receives a quality step increase does not start a new waiting period to meet the time requirements for a regular within-grade increase. If the increase places the employee in the fourth or seventh step of his/her pay grade, however, the waiting period for the within-grade increase is extended by 52 weeks. Because a QSI is intended to recognize and motivate an employee, the avenue most advantageous to the employee should be taken. Also, if the employee is about to be promoted, the QSI may or may not benefit the employee once promoted.

NOTE: *The following chart compares the impact of the effective date of a QSI on an employee's progression from step 3 through step 5 of the grade. In the illustration, a decision was made to award a QSI to an employee who is due for a within-grade increase to step 4 in January 2003. The last two columns illustrate how making the QSI effective before or after the due date of the step 4 within-grade increase affects the due date for the within-grade increase to step 5.*

IMPACT OF QSI ON REGULAR WITHIN-GRADE INCREASE

Regular Within-Grade (WGI) Progression	Impact When QSI Places Employee in Step 4 of Grade	Impact When WGI Places Employee in Step 4 of Grade because QSI is delayed
WGI to step 3 – effective 1/03	WGI to Step 3 – effective 1/03	WGI to Step 3 – effective 1/03
WGI to Step 4 – effective 1/04	QSI to Step 4 – effective 1/03	WGI to Step 4 – effective 1/04
WGI to Step 5 – effective 1/06	WGI to Step 5 – effective 1/05	QSI to Step 5 – effective 1/04*

*WGI and QSI may be processed on the same date as the WGI will always be affected first.

g. Effective Date. Quality step increases should be made effective as soon as possible after they are approved unless a short delay would benefit the employee. Because the approval of the increase is a discretionary action, it may not be approved retroactively. However, if an administrative error occurred after the increase was approved that caused a delay in the increase being processed, it may be made effective retroactive to the first day of the first pay period following the date of approval.

4. TITLE 38 Certification Awards: A cash award will be granted to covered employees who receive a national certification by examination provided the requirements below are met:

a. The specialty certification must be in the employee's field of practice.

b. A current, fully satisfactory proficiency addressing the qualification standards of the employee's grade must be on file in the local Employee file.

c. Awards will be given as follows:

1. First specialty certification –
   a. Full-time Employees - $1,000
   b. Part-time Employees – Prorated by number of hours worked
   c. Intermittent Employees - $100

2. Second specialty certification –
   a. Full-time Employees - $500
   b. Part-time Employees – Prorated by number of hours worked
   c. Intermittent Employees - $50

3. Additional Certifications – All Employees - $25.00

4. No award for recertification.

5. Productivity Sharing or Gain Sharing: These are awards that are paid out on a regular, recurring basis in recognition of exceeding predetermined levels of productivity during the pay out period. Productivity sharing or Gain Sharing programs are subject to the same award criteria that apply to other awards.

In accordance with established criteria, Network 2 has adopted Goal Sharing as its major strategic recognition methodology for rewarding productivity. This program engages all employees within each designated work unit to achieve gains in productivity, quality, cost savings, etc. in conjunction with the strategic goals. The employees whose work unit has achieved their goal, through teamwork and common commitment, produce results and are rewarded. Although such programs generally offer monetary incentives, they may also be combined with time off or other forms of recognition.

1. Coverage. Goal sharing programs may cover the entire Network, Care/Service Lines, work units, teams or individual employees in specific occupations where output can be measured against pre-established goals.

2. Defining Performance Measures. Productivity, quality and/or effectiveness, whichever is being measured, should be defined in terms of resources used to produce measurable results. Compared with baseline data, these programs should include a predetermined method for measuring gains as well as for calculating the amount of any award based on the gain. Work Units may establish their optional goals in conjunction with VHA's strategic goals.

3. Defining Measurement and Award Formulas. Each work unit will be asked to set the Bronze, Silver, and Gold levels for their goals. Levels must be defined and have measurable criteria. The point system below will assist in determining the final goal attainment for the individual work unit.

GOAL	BRONZE $Value	SILVER $Value	GOLD $Value	SELECTION
Enhance Employee Development	1 Point	2 Points	3 Points	REQUIRED
GOAL				
GOAL				
GOAL				
Points required for Award	2 – 4 points	5 – 7 Points	8 – 9 Points	

6. Special Award Programs: The following awards are designed to recognize individuals and/or groups of employees of Network 2 who exceed expectations on Network initiatives including improved customer service, innovative practices, and quality initiatives and are utilized at one or more facilities throughout VISN 2. Contact your local Human Resources to see which award programs have been implemented at your facility and to obtain nomination criteria.

a. Employee of the Month: Employee of the Month Award recognizes outstanding employee efforts during the month as evidenced by peers, customers, management, etc.

b. Employee of the Year: In January, the recipients of Employee of the Month at each of the five facilities will be evaluated and an Employee of the Year will be selected at each facility.

c. Spotlight Award: Spotlight Award shines the spotlight on non-supervisory employees who consistently go above and beyond in servicing customers, who have a positive and friendly attitude, and who are willing to pitch in to help others. Nominations MUST be in writing on the form (Att. B). Completed forms will be forwarded to the Care/Service Line Incentive Awards Liaison. A congratulatory letter as well as a $75.00 cash award is presented to the employee.

d. "Head Light" Award: Head Light Award recognizes supervisory employees or groups of employees who consistently go above and beyond in serving customers who have a positive and friendly attitude and who are willing to pitch in to help others providing direct and/or indirect patient care within the facility. Nominations MUST be in writing on the appropriate form (Attachment C). Completed forms will be forwarded to

the Care/Service Line Incentive Awards Liaison. A congratulatory letter as well as a $75.00 cash award is presented to the employee.

7. Network 2 "Vera Buster": Network individuals or groups who made major contributions to significant cost avoidance, cost reduction, and/or revenue generation will be recognized with the Network 2 "Vera Buster" Award.

8. Network High Achiever Award: This award recognizes a Network employee for personal drive and determination to improve him or herself while at the same time benefiting the VA. Obtaining specialty certification, ACHE, would be indicative of this.

9. Encouraging Suggestion Program – "ESP": This award is designed to recognize those supervisors, team leaders, and managers who encourage unit employees to use the suggestion program to improve VA operations, help employees in developing their ideas and/or provide prompt and responsive evaluations of employee suggestions.

10. Time Off Awards:

a. General Provisions –

1. Time off awards will be granted in increments of 1 hour.

2. The minimum time award is 4 hours, except full-time physicians, dentists, optometrists, and podiatrists may only be granted time off in increments of 8 hours.

3. Not more than 40 hours may be granted to an employee for a specific contribution.

4. The maximum amount of time off that may be granted to any employee during a 12-month period is 80 hours.

5. Time off must be used by the employee in increments of 1 hour, except for full-time physicians, dentists, optometrists, and podiatrists MUST use time off in 8-hour increments.

6. Normally, each time off award must be used within 180 days after the date on which it was approved. At the request of the employee, a supervisor may extend the period of time to use the time off award for an additional 180 days. In no case may the total period for use of the award exceed 1 year from the date the time off award was granted. Failure to use an award within the prescribed period will result in the employee's forfeiture of any unused portion of the award.

b. Determining Time Off Awards:

1. Time off awards may be used in conjunction with other awards. The time off award may be granted in addition to any monetary or honorary award already provided for. No more than 1 workday of time off may be granted when used to supplement special award programs that already offer another form of recognition.

2. When using time off to supplement a cash award, care should be taken to ensure that total recognition is commensurate with the contribution.

3. In determining the amount of time off to grant in recognition of a single contribution or sustained high level achievement, use the scale at the end of this section.

c. Additional Responsibilities:

1. To the extent possible, management should ensure that time off granted as an incentive is used promptly both to reinforce the motivational value of this form of recognition and to ensure that the employee does not have to forfeit his or her time off award.

2. In granting this form of recognition, management should weigh organizational priorities that the employee will have an opportunity to use the number of hours of time off being awarded within the period available for its' value.

d. Scheduling, Recording, and Accounting for Time Off:

1. Although time off is not a category of leave, current procedures for requesting and scheduling use of discretionary leave (i.e., annual leave, leave without pay) will apply to time off awards. At a minimum, employees must request time off and obtain supervisory approval for absence in advance of its use. Action on each request will be made in consideration of factors which are normally considered in granting discretionary leave.

2. Each time off award granted must be recorded and tracked separately to ensure use by its expiration date. Under the direction of supervisors, timekeepers will be responsible for tracking time off accumulated and used as a subsidiary record to the electronic timecard for employees in their organization in accordance with instructions in MP-6, part V, supplement 2.2.

3. Upon transfer of a VA employee to another VA facility, supervisors will be responsible for ensuring that information on any unused time off balance is provided to the servicing human resources management office for recording on VA Form 3918, Intra-agency Transfer Request, in the "Remarks" section. The amounts of unused time off and respective expiration date(s) must be annotated.

4. Nominations should be submitted on VA Form 4659 and 4659a to Care/Service Line Managers through facility Directors for approval. Approved forms should be forwarded to local Human Resources offices for processing.

VALUE TO ORGANIZATION	NUMBER OF HOURS
MODERATE Change or contribution to an operating principle, practice, procedure, or program of limited impact or use.	4 to 12
SUBSTANTIAL Significant or important change, contribution to or modification of an operating principle, practice, procedure, or program or service to the public.	Up to 24
EXCEPTIONAL Complete revision or initiation of a major policy, practice or procedure that has significant impact on VA's mission. Major improvement in the quality of a critical product, activity, program or service to the public.	Up to 40

11. VA Honor Award: These awards include a suitably inscribed certificate, plaque, desk or office item or other similar item that has an honor connotation. Honorary awards are an integral part of the VA's recognition and awards program and are available in a variety of forms to recognize a wide range of one-time or career achievements. The costs associated with granting these awards can be minimal and depending on the level of approval and presentation as well as method of presentation, their value as a motivator can be significant. Honor awards are distinguished from non-monetary awards by the criteria, level of official approving and presenting the award and the few numbers of these awards granted. Generally, the cost of such awards is less than $50.

a. Secretary's Honor Awards Program. The Secretary approves and personally presents a number of awards to employee or groups of employees in recognition of their outstanding community service and for acts of heroism. A listing of these awards, along with criteria and nominating procedures, appears in Appendix A, Part IV to VA Handbook 5017. In addition to awards that recognize VA employees, the Secretary also recognizes contributions by private citizens or private organizations who make contributions in support of VA's mission.

b. There are numerous other honor awards sponsored by VA, VHA, and outside organizations to recognize VA employees for contributions to public service. These are listed on the Annual Awards Calendar distributed to each Network and Local Care/Service Line Managers and all designated Incentive Awards Liaisons.

c. Service Recognition:

a. Length of Service. While not technically an award because an employee need not perform above requirements to be recognized, service recognition is an accepted part of VA's employee recognition and awards program. Service pins and certificates will be issued starting with 10 years of service through 50 years at 5 year intervals at an appropriate ceremony such as a Care/Service Line meeting as close as possible to the employee's anniversary date.

b. Local Human Resources Office will forward pins and certificates to Care Line incentive awards liaisons.

12. Non-monetary Awards:

a. Non-monetary Awards are awards of nominal cost (generally up to $50). These items can be purchased and kept on hand to be used to immediately recognize an employee or team efforts. There are a limitless number of items that can be used that provide a unique and different incentive for employees. Such incentives, when used to immediately reinforce an employee contribution of limited impact and value, can be as, it not more, effective than cash in motivating an employee or group of employees.

b. Non-monetary Versus Honor Award. Although these forms of recognition may overlap (a certificate can be both and honor award and a non-monetary award), these forms of recognition are distinguished generally by the level of contribution required and level at which they are approved and presented. Typically honor awards recognize exceptional contributions of great importance to the Department. As with any form of recognition used, the recommending official should try to ensure that the recognition being suggested both fits the contribution and the employee(s) being recognized. For example, a non-monetary award item would be inappropriate to recognize a significant contribution such as a medical breakthrough but might be appropriate to give someone to thank them for completing a rush assignment.

c. Types of Non-monetary Awards. A full range of items from a certificate of appreciation to a gift certificate to a favorite restaurant, to an item the employee can wear such as a tee shirt, jacket, or scarf to an appropriate desk item such as calculator, pen, clock, radio, etc. are available using appropriate funds. These items can only be procured for use in connection with these awards program and for use in connection with employee recognition. Such use must be documented in writing when ordering. If

authorizing a non-monetary award with a value in excess of $25, fiscal service should be contacted regarding tax liability.

d. Inappropriate Uses. Items purchased under the authority of VA's incentive awards may not be given away randomly, but must be used as recognition for an employee or group's efforts. For example, items with no intrinsic value such as buttons and magnets handed out in connection with public service recognition week, or nurses week, or for a historical event like the 50th anniversary of the signing of the GI Bill are not considered awards under VA's incentive awards programs but are considered mementos as there is no linkage between the item being handed out as special act, service or achievement by the employee. For further information on the appropriateness of mementos, consult guidance by the Office of Financial Policy.

5. REFERENCES: VA Handbook 5017 dated April 15, 2002

6. RECISSIONS: Network Memorandum 10N2-127-01 dated March 9, 2001.

7. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY: Network Two HR Council-Char Taft, 607-664-4726

8. AUTOMATIC RECISSION DATE: October 31, 2005.

LAWRENCE H. FLESH, MD
Interim Network Director

ATTACHMENTS: A,B,C,D,E,F,G

Distribution: All N2 Care Line Managers
All N2 Medical Center Directors
All Network 2 Employees
VISN 2 Website

	INCENTIVE AWARDS RECOMMENDATION AND APPROVAL	DATE RECEIVED	OLDE RELEASE DATE

TYPE OF AWARD(S) RECOMMENDED *(check as appropriate)*

NOTE: Shaded area (Case Number) for Human Resources Use Only.

CASE NUMBER	X	AWARDS			
		SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION	TANGIBLE SAVINGS $	INTANGIBLE VALUE *(If applicable)*	INTANGIBLE EXTENT *(If applicable)*
			AWARD VALUE $ +	GROSS-UP *(If applicable)* $ =	TOTAL AWARD AMOUNT *(Award Value + Gross-up)* $ 0.00
		HONOR	SPECIFY TYPE		
		TIME OFF	TOTAL HOURS	VALUE OF CONTRIBUTION	
		QUALITY STEP INCREASE	Attach written justification and performance appraisal.		

		SPECIAL USE		CASH AWARD	AWARD VALUE $ +	GROSS-UP *(If applicable)* $ =	TOTAL AWARD AMOUNT *(Award Value + Gross-up)*
				CASH EQUIVALENT			
				NON-CASH *(greater than $25)*			
				DE MINIMUS NON-CASH	**CERTIFICATION:** I certify that this item is not a cash equivalent and has a value of $25 or less.	SIGNATURE	

CURRENT STATUS *(Provide justification on reverse or attach separate sheet)*

FACILITY NO.	NAME OF EMPLOYEE(S)	SOCIAL SECURITY NO.	AWARD AMT/ HOURS OFF	POSITION TITLE	PAY PLAN/ GRADE
		000-00-0000 - - - - - - - -			

PERIOD COVERED BY RECOMMENDATION		PROMOTIONS, AWARDS, QUALITY INCREASES, OTHER HONORS RECEIVED DURING LAST 12 MONTHS
SIGNATURE, TITLE AND ORGANIZATION OF RECOMMENDING OFFICIAL	DATE	

CONCURRENCES *(if required)*

SIGNATURE, AND TITLE	DATE	SIGNATURE, AND TITLE	DATE

APPROVAL

SIGNATURE OF TECHNICAL REVIEWER *(if required locally)*	DATE	SIGNATURE OF OFFICIAL AUTHORIZED TO MAKE INCENTIVE AWARDS DECISION	DATE

Department Of Veterans Affairs

AWARD JUSTIFICATION

INSTRUCTIONS: Use this form to provide justification for awards as an attachment to VA Form 4569, Recognition of High Level Performance. Check the applicable type(s) of contribution in the first column and briefly describe the accomplishment in the corresponding box in the second column. The narrative statement should clearly describe the specific accomplishment and not merely paraphrase the type of contribution listed in the first column. Include information regarding the benefit of the contribution of the organization. See example below:

TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION	CITE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF EMPLOYEE'S (GROUP'S) EFFORTS
Automation, modification or reengineering of work process, practices or procedures.	The A team developed an automated system for submission and tracking of xyz work orders. This decreased the average time to deliver the service to our customers from 5 to 3 days.

CHECKLIST FOR SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION AWARD RECOMMENDATIONS

TYPE OF CONTRIBUTION	CITE SPECIFIC EXAMPLE OF EMPLOYEE'S (GROUP'S) EFFORTS
☐ Unusual Initiative	
☐ Creativity and/or innovation in solving a problem or establishing	
☐ Unusual effort in completion of assignment, task or project	
☐ Unexpected benefits *(either tangible or intangible) to the organization or beyond from*	
☐ Demonstration of a high level of skill and ability in completion of assignment or task	
☐ Demonstration of exceptional teamwork or team building	
☐ Exceptional courtesy or responsiveness to a customer	
☐ Preparation of exceptional written materials	
☐ Automation, modification or reengineering of work processes, practices or	
☐ Other *(describe)*	
☐ Other *(describe)*	

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS

Department of Veterans Affairs **Form Revised 11/2/01**

SPOTLIGHT RECOGNITION AWARD

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION (**$75 CASH**) AWARD (check one) _____GROUP _____INDIVIDUAL

DO NOT COMPLETE THIS FORM if this Contribution Saves More than $500.00 in Tangible and/or Intangible Benefits. Contact Human Resources Management for Instructions.

Name of Employee	**Care/Service Line Represented**	**Soc. Sec. Number** (for official use only)	**Position/ Title**	**Grade**

Customer Service Standard Exceeded (check all that apply)

_____Timeliness of Service _____Health Education Provided

_____Courtesy _____Cleanliness of Area

_____Quality of Health Care _____Other

Justification: Please provide a brief description of how employee(s) exceeded the customer service requirements beyond their position. Please check with the supervisor of the employee if you have questions regarding if the act is beyond the requirements of the employee(s) position.

(If additional space is required, attach a separate blank sheet)

Name of Employee Making Nomination	Phone Num	Date
Approved: (Care/Service Line Manager)		Date
Spotlight Coordinator Action:		Date Award Presented
Human Resources Action:		Fund Control Point

Department of Veterans Affairs Form established 11/01
"HEAD"LIGHT RECOGNITION AWARD

SPECIAL CONTRIBUTION **($75 CASH)** AWARD (CHECK ONE) ____GROUP___INDIVIDUAL
DO NOT COMPLETE THIS FORM if this Contribution Saves More than $500.00 in Tangible and/or Intangible Benefits. Contact Human Resources Management for Instructions. This form is to be utilized to recognize supervisors/managers.

Name of Supervisory Employees	**Care/Service Line Represented**	**Soc. Sec. Number** (for official use only)	**Position/ Title**	**Grade**

Customer Service Standard Exceeded (check all that apply)

_____Timeliness of Service
_____Courtesy
_____Quality of Health Care
_____Health Education Provided
_____Cleanliness of Area
_____Other

Justification. Please provide a brief description of how the supervisor(s) <u>exceeded</u> the customer service requirements beyond their position. (If additional space is required, attach blank sheet)

Name of Employee Making Nomination	Phone Number	Date
Approved: (Care/Service Line Manager)		Date
Spotlight Coordinator Action:		Date Award Presented
Human Resources Action		Fund Control Point

AMOUNTS OF CASH AWARDS

1. The extent to which an employee or group of employees makes a contribution in support of VA's mission and the value of that contribution are the basis for granting a monetary award. Such awards are calculated using the appropriate table(s) in Attachments B & C.

a. Tangible benefits are specific monetary savings that can be calculated. When used as the basis for determining a cash award, tangible benefits are calculated based on an estimate of savings the first full year. When there are significant nonrecurring costs involved in implementation, the amount of the award may be based on an average of the estimated net benefits over a period of up to 5 years.

b. Intangible benefits measure the value of a suggestion or contribution when its worth cannot be calculated in dollars, and considers such factors as value or significance of the contribution, and extent of application and impact.

2. The minimum cash award that may be granted under this program is $50.00

3. A cash award granted under this program is a lump-sum award which is in addition to the regular pay of the recipient and is subject to the withholding of income and medicare taxes.

4. When a cash award is authorized for a group of employees based on a contribution or suggestion, each contributing employee may share in the award equally or in shares proportionate to each employee's participation in the contribution.

5. Exceptions to application of the scales may be made when: (1) a properly calculated cash award for a group of employees may be increased by a reasonable amount if it would not provide a meaningful award (at least $50 per employee) when divided among the recipients; or (2) a properly calculated cash award for an employee whose contribution falls directly within job requirements, but that is so outstanding that it warrants a cash award, may be reduced.

SCALE OF AWARDS BASED ON TANGIBLE BENEFITS

BENEFITS	AWARD	BENEFITS	AWARD	BENEFITS	AWARD	BENEFITS	AWARD	BENEFITS	AWARD
Up to $10,000	10%*	50,000	2,200	90,000	3,400	170,000	4,050	1,800,000	12,200
11,000	1,030	51,000	2,230	91,000	3,430	175,000	4,075	1,900,000	12,700
12,000	1,060	52,000	2,260	92,000	3,460	180,000	4,100	2,000,000	13,200
13,000	1,090	53,000	2,290	93,000	3,490	185,000	4,125	2,100,000	13,700
14,000	1,120	54,000	2,320	94,000	3,520	190,000	4,150	2,200,000	14,200
15,000	1,150	55,000	2,350	95,000	3,550	195,000	4,175	2,300,000	14,700
16,000	1,180	56,000	2,380	96,000	3,580	200,000	4,200	2,400,000	15,200
17,000	1,210	57,000	2,410	97,000	3,610	225,000	4.325	2,500,000	15,700
18,000	1,240	58,000	2,440	98,000	3,640	250,000	4,450	2,600,000	16,200
19,000	1,270	59,000	2,470	99,000	3,670	275,000	4,575	2,700,000	16,700
20,000	1,300	60,000	2,500	100,000	3,700	300,000	4,700	2,800,000	17,200
21,000	1,330	61,000	2,530	101,000	3,705	325,000	4,825	2,900,000	17,700
22,000	1,360	62,000	2,560	102,000	3,710	350,000	4,950	3,000,000	18,200
23,000	1,390	63,000	2,590	103,000	3,715	375,000	5,075	3,100,000	18,700
24,000	1,420	64,000	2,620	104,000	3,720	400,000	5,200	3,200,000	19,200
25,000	1,450	65,000	2,650	105,000	2.725	425,000	5,325	3,300,000	19,700
26,000	1,480	66,000	2,680	106,000	3,730	450,000	5,450	3,400,000	20,200
27,000	1,510	67,000	2,710	107,000	3,735	475,000	5,575	3,500,000	20,700
28,000	1,540	68,000	2,740	108,000	3,740	500,000	5,700	3,600,000	21,200
29,000	1,570	69,000	2,770	109,000	3,745	550,000	5,950	3,700,000	21,700
30,000	1,600	70,000	2,800	110,000	3,750	600,000	6,200	3,800,000	22,200
31,000	1,630	71,000	2,830	111,000	3,755	650,000	6,450	3,900,000	22,700
32,000	1,660	72,000	2,860	112,000	3,760	700,000	6,700	4,000,000	23,200
33,000	1,690	73,000	2,890	113,000	3,765	750,000	6.950	4,100,000	23,700
34,000	1,720	74,000	2,920	114,000	3,770	800,000	7,200	4,200,000	24,200
35,000	1,750	75,000	2,950	115,000	3,775	850,000	7,450	4,300,000	24,700
36,000	1,780	76,000	2,980	116,000	3,780	900,000	7,700	4,360,000	25,000***
37,000	1,810	77,000	3,010	117,000	3,785	950,000	7,950		
38,000	1,840	78,000	3,040	118,000	3,790	1,000,000	8,200		
39,000	1,870	79,000	3,070	119.000	3,795	1,050,000	8,450		
40,000	1,900	80,000	3,100	120,000	3,800	1,100,000	8,700		
41,000	1,930	81,000	3,130	125,000	3.825	1,150,000	8,950		
42,000	1,960	82,000	3,160	130,000	3.850	1,200,000	9,200		
43,000	1,990	83,000	3,190	135,000	3,875	1,250,000	9,450		
44,000	2,020	84,000	3,220	140,000	3,900	1,300,000	9,700		
45,000	2,050	85,000	3,250	145,000	3,925	1,350,000	9,950		
46,000	2,080	86,000	3,280	150,000	3,950	1,400,000	10,200**		
47,000	2,110	87,000	3,310	155,000	3,975	1,500,000	10,700		
48.000	2,140	88,000	3,340	160,00	4,000	1,600,000	11,200		
49,000	2,170	89,000	3,370	165,000	4,025	1,700,000	11,700		

*Award is 10% of actual dollar value of benefit.

****Certain awards over $10,000 require approval by the Office of Personnel Management (OPM)**

*****Maximum award authorized by OPM. The President may authorize up to an additional $10,000**

Table 1

Extent of Application			
VALUE OF BENEFIT	LOCAL	REGIONAL	GENERAL
	Affects: • One or more field facilities or Central Office organizational elements or staff office, or • A minor change or correction of a VA form, policy, or procedure, or • Optional use of an idea or procedure, or • Minor change in the area of technology or automation	Affects: • An entire network, region, or • All Central Office organizations, or • Ideas approved for optional use in the Department or an administration, or • Important area of technology, or • Automation	Affects: • More than one network, or region • Has impact VA-wide or beyond
MODERATE. Change or contribution to an operating principle, practice, procedure, or program of limited impact or use.	Up to $500	Up to $1,500	Up to $3,000
SUBSTANTIAL. Significant or important change, contribution to, or modification of operating principle, practice, procedure, or program or service to the public.	Up to $1,500	Up to $3,000	Up to $5,000
EXCEPTIONAL. Complete revision or initiation of a major police, practice, or procedure that has significant impact on VA's mission. Major improvement in the quality of a critical product, activity, program or service to the public.	Up to $3,000	Up to $5,000	Up to $10,000

SCALE OF AWARDS BASED ON INTANGIBLE BENEFITS
NOTE: $50 is the minimum award that may be granted.

Table 2

Use of Cash Awards Is:

APPROPRIATE	INAPPROPRIATE
To recognize: • A significant contribution involving completion of a difficult project or assignment of importance to the mission of VA • Completion of a specific assignment or project in advance of an established deadline and/or with favorable results. • Unusual initiative, innovation or creativity in completion of work assignments resulting in improved operations or services. • Unusual courtesy or responsiveness to customers which clearly demonstrates performance beyond the call of duty and reflects favorably on the organization and VA. • Performance (without compensation of any nature) of additional duties over an extended period of time during the absence of another staff member • An employee suggestion beyond the normal scope of the job which results in benefits to VA or the Government.	• To rectify perceived discrepancies in VA's pay system. • As a farewell gift. • To recognize judicious use of sick leave. • To recognize performance of additional duties where a temporary promotion was given. • To recognize additional hours of work when overtime pay or compensatory time was provided for those additional hours. • As an "incentive" to encourage employees to work in a particular area or on a particular shift. • As an "incentive" to retire. • To recognize efforts in connection with voluntary participation as a canvasser for the Combined Federal Campaign, Savings Bonds, Blood Drives, etc.