

ADMINISTRATIVE BULLETIN NO. 33

*Issued May 16, 2008;
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SUBJECT: EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD PROGRAM

A. PURPOSE

The purpose of the Employee Recognition Award Program (ERAP) is to motivate, recognize, and reward exemplary performance that supports the overall organizational goals of the County of Kern. Recognition is an effective method for motivating employees by endorsing their high-quality performance in highly visible programs and ceremonies, and helps employees identify the skills and behaviors that are of priority value to the County.

Although the Employee Recognition Award Program outlines procedures for formal recognition, all managers and employees are encouraged to use verbal and written forms of recognition to demonstrate appreciation for a "job well done." In addition, department heads are encouraged to use innovative methods to recognize overall efforts by their department staff through employee appreciation programs apart from this process.

B. NOMINATION FORMS

Nomination forms for the Employee Recognition Award Program are available from the County Administrative Office or at www.co.kern.ca.us/cao/policy/ab-33.pdf.

C. EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARDS COMMITTEE

The Employee Recognition Awards Committee (ERAC) is a group tasked with developing criteria for awards, formulating the process, recruiting and screening members of the Recognition Review Committee, vetting nominees for Employee Recognition Awards, and organizing the event. ERAC will be comprised of staff from the Human Resources Division, a representative from County Counsel, and other volunteers from the Strategic Workforce Planning Taskforce.

D. RECOGNITION REVIEW COMMITTEE

Each year departments will be asked to nominate one non-management employee and one management employee as candidates to serve on the Recognition Review Committee (RRC). These nominees should be employees exemplifying integrity, sound ethics, collegiality, and dedication to serving the County. From these nominees the ERAC will select five management and five non-management personnel to serve as the Recognition Review Committee. The term of this service will be not more than one year at a time, though participation may be repeated in subsequent years. RRC members may not be considered for Employee Recognition Awards while serving, which is the reason for non-sequential terms.

E. NOMINATIONS FOR AWARDS

The awards ceremony will be held annually. The ERAC will normally solicit nominations for award winners from all County employees at least one month before nomination forms must be turned in (or, two months before the award ceremony).

Nominations will be accepted for permanent County employees who are performing satisfactorily. They may be submitted by any County employee, including managers or co-workers. Anonymous nominations will not be accepted. Members of the public may bring to the attention of a supervisor or manager a County employee of distinction, who may be nominated by the supervisor or manager if they concur.

Awards may be given to individual employees or workgroups/teams for outstanding performance during the prior calendar year. Where a long-term, multi-year effort is involved, awards may also be given for sustained contributions in any of the recognition categories.

When the top candidates or teams in each category have been selected by the RRC, the names of those selected will be forwarded to the ERAC to begin the award process. Members of the RRC will evaluate the nominations and select the top individual and team candidates, then nominees will be vetted by the ERAC to ensure they meet minimum standards. In the case when nominees are equally qualified for the award, more than one award per category may be presented. All nominees will receive recognition in some fashion.

F. EXEMPTIONS

Members of the Employee Award Recognition Committee, Recognition Review Committee, Board of Supervisors, and the public are not eligible for an award.

G. AWARD PRESENTATION

Employee Recognition Awards will be conferred each year, and presented at an awards event. Each individual winner and all winning team members will receive award recognition, to be selected each year by the RRC.

H. PROGRAM SUPPORT

The Employee Recognition Awards Program is funded annually by the Board of Supervisors with the goal of realizing improved customer service and increased efficiency through an investment in its human resources.

I. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

To obtain more information about the Employee Recognition Award Program, please call (661) 868-3163.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AWARD NOMINATION FORM

Directions: Select one nomination category per nomination form. Individuals may be nominated for more than one category, but nominations for more than one category require separate forms, addressing the criteria for each category. Nominations for multiple categories on the same form will not be accepted. Team nominations must list every team member. See attached instruction pages for further explanation of categories.

Individual Awards:

Outstanding Leadership
Customer Service Excellence
Workforce Excellence

Team Awards:

Exceptional Teamwork: A "team" may be employees from one department, or a project team from various departments, who work together on a project or assignment with a specific purpose for a limited time period. A unit or division working on on-going assignments that constitute their primary functions would not be considered a team for this purpose.

Sustained Effort Recognition:

To qualify for a "Sustained Effort Recognition" nomination, individuals or teams must have met the criteria for the chosen category for the past five consecutive years or longer, although there is no requirement that they must have won an ERAP award before. An explanation in support of this category must include examples of efforts over the full sustained time period.

Nomination Submitted By: _____

Nominator's Phone Number: _____

"I certify that the information submitted is accurate to the best of my knowledge."

Nominator's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Nominee Information: (Information required for each team member; attach additional sheets if necessary):

Name: _____

Nominee's Department: _____

Nominee's Phone Number: _____

INSTRUCTIONS

(1) Descriptions of the nomination categories and examples are provided below. (2) Fill out nomination form that precedes this page. (3) Mail or FAX the completed form to the County Administrative Office, to be received by the specified deadline (normally two months prior to award ceremony).

Outstanding Leadership: This award is presented to the employee who advances departmental or countywide initiatives through exemplary leadership.

- Demonstrates and models outstanding work ethics and attitude.
- Creates commitment to the pursuit of clear and compelling countywide or department vision, mission, and goals.
- Contributes understanding and knowledge of services on behalf of their department to the Board of Supervisors, County departments, other agencies, and the public.
- Shows fairness, equity, and professional demeanor in the performance of duties.
- Inspires employees to participate in workplace decision-making and reach their fullest potential, and routinely recognizes others for their achievements.

Customer Service Excellence: This award is presented to the employee who provides internal or external customers with access to quality information and services.

- Improves the quality or delivery of a service.
- Responds to customer requests in an exemplary, timely, and courteous manner.
- Develops innovative ways of doing business that benefit customers.
- Goes the extra mile to meet the customers' interests.
- Interacts professionally with customers to create a positive attitude about the County or their department.

Workforce Excellence: This award is for the employee who enhances quality and productivity of the workforce while demonstrating enthusiasm and dedication to his or her job.

- Exhibits enthusiasm and dedication to the job.
- Is committed to seeking positive outcomes with others in the workplace.
- Exemplifies unusual initiative or creative ability in the development and improvement of methods and procedures, resulting in substantially increased productivity and efficiency.
- Demonstrates dedication in performing their duties and exemplifies high standards.
- Implements ways to use time or resources more effectively and efficiently.

Exceptional Teamwork: This award is for a team that provides a distinguished level of service on a countywide or department assignment, goal, or event. Team members may be employees from one department work group or a project team from various departments, if they work together on a project or assignment with a specific purpose for a limited time period. A unit or division working on on-going assignments that constitute their primary functions is not considered a team for this program.

- Demonstrate willingness to help others without hesitation.
- Are dedicated to completing the overall goals of the team.
- Practice collaborative problem solving whereby members feel ownership in the decision-making process.
- Use initiative and creativity to solve priority assignments.
- Demonstrate trust and support of each other through candid and open communication.

Sustained Effort: To qualify for a "Sustained Effort Recognition" nomination, individuals or teams must have met the criteria for any one of the preceding categories for the past five consecutive years or longer, although there is no requirement that they must have won an ERAP award before. Explanation in support of this category must include examples of efforts over the full sustained time period.