

**The American Legion, Department of Oregon
Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award
Guidelines
20__ - 20__**

To: All Department of Oregon, American Legion Post Commanders, and Post Law and Order Committee Chairs

1. This memorandum supersedes all previous editions. This memorandum and the policies continued herein are effective after the selection of the Department Law Enforcement Officer of the Year winner.

2. **Scope:** Americans in recent years have been experiencing an unprecedented crime wave that has permeated all States and neighborhoods in our country, and crime is rapidly becoming America's foremost domestic problem. The Preamble of the Constitution of The American Legion includes as one of its objectives... "to maintain Law and Order". As concerned citizens and veterans, Legionnaires have always fostered a strong sense of law and order and have upheld the protection of American citizens and the American way of life. They have always held law enforcement agencies in the highest regard, and many Posts already recognize outstanding law enforcement officers of various jurisdictions who daily serve our communities and frequently lay their lives on the line.

3. **Purpose:** The purpose of this letter of instruction is to specify the guidelines, eligibility criteria, and application requirements for selection and presentation of the "Department Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award." Our goal is to select a well-rounded Law Enforcement Officer who has exceeded, above and beyond, the duty requirements expected of their position and has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service coupled with professional achievement, episodes of heroism will, of course, also be included where noted. A major secondary purpose of this award is to encourage the further development of Post Law and Order Committees in the department in recognition of law enforcement officers by Posts, Departments, and the National Headquarters of The American Legion. It is firmly believed that the establishment of this award will further serve to promote the public trust and support of our law enforcement agencies.

4. **Award Designation:** This award shall be known as "The American Legion Department Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award" and it will be presented annually at the Department Convention or other suitable American Legion settings, as appropriate. All Posts are encouraged to participate in this worthwhile and prestigious award program. "The American Legion Department Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award" will include paid travel and hotel expenses and reasonable expenses for round trip travel for the winner and spouse to the Department Convention City; presentation of "The American Legion Department Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award" and a letter of commendation signed by the Department Commander.

5. Guidelines for Posts:

- a. All Posts are urged to select a Post Law Enforcement Officer of the Year before the convention and submit their Post winner as its nominee for this award. Posts should submit their nominee's application to The American Legion, Attn: National Security Commission Chair, PO Box 1730, Wilsonville, OR 97070. It is desired that Post select and submit their nominee so that postmarked applications are received not later than December 31, 2024, in order to allow adequate judging and notification time prior to the Department's January D.E.C Meeting.
- b. The inclusive dates for this award cover the calendar year January 1 through December 31, 2024, and until the following January 1 deadline for submission to the Department of National Security Commission. For example, the National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year winner selected for their service for the calendar year of 2024 will be recognized at the 2025 Department Convention.
- c. Posts may submit only one nominee per year and their nominee must have been the previous year's Post-award winner. Once a nominee has been entered in "The American Legion National Law Enforcement of the Year Award" for the National competition he or she will not be allowed to be submitted for another year.
- d. The resume and application for the nominee from each Post must conform to the National criteria for judging as contained herein. The eligibility and criteria stated in this letter will be used to select the Department of Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.

6. Eligibility Criteria: To be eligible for consideration, Department nominees must meet the following criteria:

- a. Be a citizen of the United States.
- b. Be a living, active, full-time, and paid, sworn law enforcement officer entrusted with full authority and the powers of arrest.
- c. Consideration for a posthumous award will be acceptable only if the nominee's death has occurred after the department's selection and within the dates for which the award is being presented.
- d. Be assigned to, or fully recognized by, Municipal (City), County, District, or State Police (e.g., University Police, etc.) or Highway Patrol, Sheriff's office, or as a sworn federal law enforcement officer (e.g., FBI or Secret Service Agent, United States Federal Marshal, National Park Police, Capitol Police, etc.)
- e. Be selected as the Post Law Enforcement Officer of the Year.
- f. Post nominees are not required to be veterans or members of The American Legion.
- g. Reside and be assigned or attached for duty in the department from which they are selected.

- h. Federal agents serving in overseas departments may be nominated by the overseas department.
- 1. Nominees selected for this award should be available to receive this award at The American Legion Department Convention.
- J. Military police officers or investigators are eligible for participation in this award provided they are state law enforcement certified.

7. Department Application Packets: Only one copy of the Department application packet needs to be submitted to the Post Security- Foreign Relations Commission. Department application packets for their nominee should include:

- (1) A completed application form,
- (2) A 5" x 7" photograph of the nominee, and
- (3) A maximum of 18 one-sided pages 8 1/2" x 11" bond paper of service documentation.

The first six or seven pages should contain the individual's service narrative. The additional pages may include supporting citations and other documentation including press articles. Only one (1) copy of the application package needs to be submitted. The following documentation should be included:

- a. Application form - Complete the attached application form and use it as the cover page of the application. This cover page shall not count as part of the maximum 18 pages of service documentation.
- b. 5" x 7" official photograph of the nominee.
- c. Service narrative and supporting documentation. The goal of the Department Law and Order Committee is to select a well-rounded law enforcement officer who has exceeded, above and beyond, the duty requirements of their position exemplify the virtues of professionalism and dedication and has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service to their community, State or Nation; and also, have proven their personal dedication to societal security and protection. The law enforcement officer must be recommended by their Commanding Officer or Supervisor for this award. The Commanding Officer or Supervisor should also state that the Law Enforcement Officer, if selected for this award, will be available for its presentation at the State/National Convention. Specific acts of community service, heroism, and meritorious performance recognized by their law enforcement agency should be included and documented. To assist Departments in their selections, judging guidelines at the state level will be based on the following criteria, and maximum percentage points will be allocated as follows:

I	Community Service	35 points
II	Professional Career	40 points
III	Heroism	20 points
IV	Letters of Recognition, news clippings, and other substantiating documentation.....	5 points

d. **Community Service:** Outstanding service to the community, state or nation by the officer, in both on-duty and off-duty activities, should be explained for the past year and may include previous years. Cite, for example, awards and/or supporting letters from city or county commissioners, letters from state officials, and letters from The American Legion Posts, or from citizens attesting to and commending the officer for their community service contributions.

Remember, one of the major aims of the award program is to select a well-rounded law enforcement officer who has demonstrated a distinct pattern of community service, above and beyond assigned duty requirements.

e. Citations for community service, heroism, and meritorious performance of duty should be explained for the past year and may include previous years. Include citations and any supporting letters from the officer's chain of command as well as other documentation from city, county, state authorities, and American Legion officials, citizens, or civic groups as further evidence of community service, and heroic and meritorious performance of duty by the officer.

f. Include a copy of your nominee's State or Federal certification as a law enforcement officer as well as copies of pertinent training and education certificates as appropriate.

g. The Department which submits the winning nominee will be notified by the Department National Security Commission as expeditiously as possible.

h. Remember to let your nominee know what "The American Legion National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award" is and receive assurance from the officer's chain of command that if your nominee is selected as the winner, they will be available for the award presentation at the Department Convention and possibly the National Convention. If the winning officer is a uniformed officer, then they will be requested to appear in their full uniform at the National Convention at the time of presentation. Non-uniformed winners would be expected to appear in appropriate business attire.

8. Department Judging: Judges will be selected by the Chairman of the Law-and-Order Commission from members of the Law and Order and the National Security Commission. Each judge shall represent their region (Departments assigned to each National Vice Commander) and will select a regional winner from regions other than their own. Regional winners will be

selected at the Washington conference, and the National Winner will be selected from region winners during the Spring meeting of the National Executive Committee. Alternates-at-large judges may also be selected by the Chairman of the Law-and-Order Committee in the event of absences of any judges.

In the event the National Winner is unable to be present to receive their award at the National Convention, The American Legion National Law Enforcement Officer of the Year Award will be accepted by the winner's American Legion Department Commander at the National Convention on behalf of the winner for presentation at an appropriate Department ceremony

National Regional awards: All Regional Winners/National runners-up of this award will be presented with plaques and letters of commendation. After the National Competition is held, these plaques will be sent to each Department for presentation to their Regional Winner/National Runner-up in an appropriate setting. A copy of the letters of commendation will be provided to each Department Adjutant.

9. Your comments on how the program can be improved, streamlined, or modified are solicited. Any questions on this award program should be sent to the undersigned in the care of:

**The American Legion
Department of Oregon
National Security Commission Chair
PO Box 1730
Wilsonville, Oregon 97070-1730**

All efforts will be expended to assure fairness and impartiality to all Posts and their Nominees. The hope of this Commission is that all Posts will participate in this program and that in those cases where law enforcement agencies that cover the area which includes two (2) or more American Legion Posts the Post's Law Enforcement Officer of the Year committees will join together for one joint nomination.

Jim Jerome, Chair
Law and Order, Homeland Security
408 SE Hillcrest
John Day, OR 97845
jjerome@centurytel.net
Phone: 541-620-4486
(Under National Security Commission)

Enclosure: Application Forms

Your due date is December 31

LAW OFFICER OF YEAR

Point Sheet

NAME _____ POST _____ DATE _____

POINTS AVAILABLE	SUBJECT	POINTS AWARDED
35	Community Service	_____
40	Professional Career	_____
20	Heroism	_____
5	Letters of Recognition, News Clippings, and Other Substantiating Documentation	_____
		TOTAL _____

Other Criteria:

_____ Be a citizen of the United States.

_____ Be a living, active, full-time, and paid, sworn law enforcement officer entrusted with full authority and the powers of arrest.

_____ Consideration for a posthumous award will be accepted only if the
The nominee's death occurred after the department's selection and within the dates for which the award is being presented.

_____ Be assigned to, or fully recognized by, Municipal (City), County, District or State Police (e.g., University Police, etc.) or Highway Patrol, Sheriff's office, or as a sworn federal law enforcement officer (e.g., FBA or Secret Service Agent, United States Federal Marshal, National Park Police, etc.)

_____ Reside and be assigned or attached for duty in the Department from which

they are selected.

_____ 5" x 7" official photograph of the nominee

_____ The law enforcement officer must be recommended by his / her Commanding
Officer or Supervisor

Note: This should not exceed 18 pages, and the individual should be available to attend National Convention if selected.

Your due date is December 31

The American Legion
Law Enforcement Officer of the Year
Application Form

Date _____

Name _____ Gender _____

Home Address _____

City and State _____ Zip _____ Phone (____)____ - _____

Age _____ Marital Status _____ Spouse's Name _____

Length of Service as Law Officer _____

Agency Name _____

Agency Director _____ Title _____

Nominee's Supervisor _____ Title _____

Agency Address _____

City and State _____ Zip _____ Phone (____)____ - _____

Post/District Submitting Nomination _____

National Security Commission Chair Address _____

City and State _____ Zip _____ Phone (____)____ - _____

Post/District Commander Signature

Post/District Adjutant Signature

Submit one copy of your application packet and it should conform to the instructions contained in the Security-Foreign Relations Memorandum. Failure to use this form may result in the DISQUALIFICATION of your nominee. It should be placed as the COVER SHEET for your packet of materials supporting your candidate. Remember to include an official photograph of the nominee. Mail completed application to The American Legion, Department of Oregon P.O. Box 1730 Wilsonville, Oregon 97070. ATTN: National Security Commission Chair.