

**U.S. Department of Energy
Washington, D.C.**

NOTICE

DOE N 3450.31

7-6-93
EXPIRES: 7-6-94

SUBJECT: TIME OFF AWARDS

The Office of Personnel has implemented a change to the incentive awards program that allows employees to be granted time off as an award. The attachments to this Notice provide instructions on granting these awards.

Results of this change will be evaluated and final procedures will be incorporated into a revision of DOE 3450.1B, INCENTIVE AWARDS.

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BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF ENERGY:



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INITIATED BY:
Office of Personnel

INSTRUCTIONS FOR TIME OFF AWARDS

1. **BASIS.** This award may be granted, without loss of pay or charge to leave, in recognition of superior accomplishment or other personal effort (individual or group) that contributes to the quality, efficiency, or economy of Government operations. This includes both individual and group efforts. The following are examples of achievements for which this award is appropriate:
 - a. High quality contributions involving a difficult or important project or assignment.
 - b. Special initiative and skill in completing an assignment or project before the deadline.
 - c. Initiative and creativity in suggesting or making improvement to a product, activity, program, or service.
 - d. Contributions to the mission of the organization during a difficult period by successfully completing additional work or a project assignment while maintaining the workload.
 - e. Sustained, high level performance for an extended period as reflected, for example, in a rating of record.
2. **ELIGIBILITY.** All Departmental employees, including Senior Executive Service employees.
3. **AWARD AMOUNT.**
 - a. Full-time employees may be granted a maximum of 40 hours of time off from duty as an incentive award for any single contribution.
 - b. The maximum amount of time off for a part-time employee or an employee with an uncommon tour should be based on a computation of the average number of hours of work in the employee's biweekly scheduled tour of duty over a period of 1 year (if available). A single contribution involving a part-time employee or an employee with an uncommon tour may be one-half of the maximum number of hours that would be granted during the leave year.
 - c. The amount of time off should be determined based on a consideration of the cash award that otherwise might be authorized for such employee contributions, e.g., award based on tangible or intangible benefits. If a time off and cash award will be used to recognize a contribution, the combined awards must be appropriate for the overall contribution or accomplishment.

- d. There is no maximum value of combined time off and monetary awards; however, organizations should remain sensitive to the perceptions that could arise from combining large time off awards with substantial cash awards, particularly in the case of statutory limits, such as the \$10,000 limitation on individual awards.

4. GRANTING AND USE OF TIME OFF AWARDS.

- a. Awards must be granted in whole hour increments, except in organizations serviced by a payroll office which allows leave to be used in smaller increments.
- b. The use of the time off award shall be subject to approval by the nominee's immediate supervisor. Supervisors are encouraged to allow employees to schedule the time off award in a single absence.
- c. Time off must be scheduled and used within 1 year after the award is granted. The total amount of the time off an employee may be granted during any one leave year is 80 hours. In the case of a part-time employee or an employee with an uncommon tour of duty, the yearly ceiling for time off should be the average number of nonovertime hours of work in the employee's biweekly tour of duty over a period of 1 year (if available). For example, an employee who works 32 hours a week should not be granted more than 64 hours of time off per leave year.
- d. Consideration may be given to an employee's preference for a time off award or a cash award; however, organizations should avoid establishing expectations or procedures that would result in employee preference exclusively in determining the appropriate award to recognize the contribution.
- e. When physical incapacitation for duty occurs during a period of time off, sick leave may be substituted for the period of incapacitation and the employee may be allowed to use the remaining time off later, as long as it is used within 1 year of the date of the award.

5. LIMITATIONS.

- a. A time off award shall not convert to a cash payment under any circumstances, nor will it be used as a basis for restoring annual leave. In recommending the award, supervisors should consider whether employees have use or lose leave and whether it will be possible to schedule all the time off within the required periods.
- b. Unused time off awarded under this program will be forfeited upon the employee's separation from the Department. Time off awards cannot be transferred from one Federal agency to another.

- c. A time off award cannot technically be a performance award since a performance award, by definition, is a monetary award granted to recognize sustained, high level performance, e.g., as reflected in a rating of record.
6. NATURE AND RELATIONSHIP TO OTHER AWARDS. Time off awards represent another option available to managers and supervisors for recognizing excellence in employee performance and service. The receipt of a time off award is not disqualifying for the subsequent granting of any other cash or honorary incentive award. However, the same contribution should not be used as the basis for a time off award and another award, unless the time off award is clearly not adequate enough to recognize the value of the employee's contribution. In such cases, it may be appropriate to couple a time off award with a cash or honorary award.
7. RECOMMENDING AND APPROVING OFFICIALS. Activities may authorize supervisors to grant time off awards without further review or approval for periods not to exceed 1 workday. Time off awards for more than 1 workday must be approved by an official who is in the initiator's management chain at least one level of line management higher than the initiator, unless the latter is the Secretary of Energy. When the initiator is not in the nominee's immediate supervisor, the supervisor must concur in the nomination.
8. PROCEDURES AND DOCUMENTATION. DOE F 3450.3, "Nomination for Incentive Award," may be used for recommending an employee for a time off award or some other apparatus may be prescribed by local procedures. The nominating official completes DOE F 3450.3, or the prescribed document, supported by a written justification stating the basis for the award in relation to the criteria in paragraph 1, i.e., what was accomplished and the circumstances or contribution(s) which warrant recognition. The employee's supervisor of record, if not the nominator, and other appropriate officials (e.g., reviewing officials) are to indicate their concurrence by signing the DOE F 3450.3 (or locally prescribed document), which is transmitted to the servicing personnel office for regulatory review for compliance with this policy and generation of a SF-50, "Notification of Personnel Action".
 - a. Servicing personnel offices will document time off awards at the time the award is granted. An SF-50 documenting an individual time off award will be effective on the date the award is approved; the number of hours granted will be shown in block 20 (salary/award) of the SF-50.
 - b. FPM Supplement 296-33 provides additional information concerning the personnel processing of awards.
 - c. Form SF-71, "Application For Leave," will be used to schedule the leave.
9. AWARD. The award consists of time off from duty and a time off certificate, signed by the approving official.

TIME OFF AWARDS SCALE FOR A SINGLE CONTRIBUTION

<u>Value to Organization</u>	<u>Number of Hours</u>
1. MODERATE:	1 to 10
a. A contribution to a product, activity, program, or service to the public, which is of sufficient value to merit formal recognition.	
b. Beneficial change or modification of operating principles or procedures.	
2. <u>SUBSTANTIAL</u> :	11 to 20
a. An important contribution to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	
b. Significant change or modification of operating principles or procedures.	
3. <u>HIGH</u> :	21 to 30
a. A highly significant contribution to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	
b. Complete revision of operating principles or procedures, with considerable impact.	
4. <u>EXCEPTIONAL</u> :	31 to 40
a. A superior contribution to the quality of a critical product, activity, program, or service to the public.	
b. Initiation of a new principle or major procedure, with significant impact.	