



United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Washington, D.C. 20240

DIRECTOR'S ORDER NO. 145

SUBJECT: Customer Service Excellence Awards

Sec. 1 What is the purpose of this Order? This Order establishes Fish and Wildlife Service policy and procedures for implementing the Customer Service Excellence Award Program.

Sec. 2 What is the authority for this action?

a. 5 U.S.C. 4501-07, Government Employees Incentives Awards Act, authorizes Federal agencies to award employees who contribute to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations or who perform a special act or service in the public interest, related to official employment. The Act authorizes agencies to recognize employees with cash or honorary awards and to incur necessary expenses incident to the award program.

b. Public Law 102-54, Sections 115-16, Department of the Interior Appropriations, authorizes the Service to provide nonmonetary awards of nominal value to private individuals and organizations that make contributions to our programs and to incur expenses incidental to our use of volunteers.

Sec. 3 To whom does this Order apply? This Order applies to all Service employees, volunteers, and teams and to partner organizations (e.g., Friends groups) and members of the public working to serve our customers and carry out the Service mission.

Sec. 4 Who is a customer? Internal customers are offices and individuals within the Service and the Department; external customers are stakeholders, partners, members of the public, or anyone who uses our products and services.

Sec. 5 Who is responsible for administering and implementing the Customer Service Award Program?

a. Regional and Assistant Directors will:

(1) Conduct the Customer Service Award Program within their area of responsibility in accordance with the procedures in this Order and 224 FW 3 through 6.

(2) Maintain a Customer Service Contact for their area of responsibility and notify the Customer Service Coordinator promptly of any changes.

(3) Nominate individuals/organizations, teams, and partners from within their area of responsibility for the Director's Award. Teams may consist of employees, volunteers,

private individuals, or representatives of nongovernmental or industry (partner) organizations.

b. The Customer Service Coordinator, Planning and Evaluation Staff, will:

- (1) Maintain liaison with and provide guidance to the Customer Service Contacts.
- (2) Review all nominations and prepare awards for recipients of the Director's Award.
- (3) Coordinate the review of nominations for the Secretary's Award.
- (4) Forward to the Office of Planning and Performance Management (PPP), the Director's nomination for the Secretary's Award.
- (5) Coordinate arrangements for presentation of the Director's Awards, and work with PPP to arrange for presentation of the Secretary's Award to the selected Service recipient.
- (6) Maintain copies of award documentation and ensure that an individual, team, organizational unit, or partner receives no more than one Director's Award per year.
- (7) For Director's and Secretary's Awards, forward copies of certificates to the appropriate Customer Service Contacts.

c. Customer Service Contacts will:

- (1) Administer the Customer Service Award Program within his/her jurisdiction (e.g., award certificates and mementos).
- (2) Forward endorsed nominations for the Director's Award to the Customer Service Coordinator.
- (3) Maintain copies of Region/Washington Office, Director's, and Secretary's Award nominations, certificates, and related documentation (award documentation).
- (4) For awards going to Service employees, forward copies of award documentation to the servicing personnel office for inclusion in the employee's performance file.

Sec. 6 What is the Customer Service Excellence Award? A nonmonetary award to recognize those who provide outstanding service to our customers by asking for feedback, identifying opportunities for improvement, and implementing actions that improve the way we do business. If you want to recognize customer service excellence with a cash award, you must use the STAR Award nomination process. See 224 FW 4 for eligibility restrictions and guidance on preparing and submitting nominations for monetary awards.

Sec. 7 Are there different levels of the award?

a. Region/Washington Office Award. Awards granted by each Regional and Assistant Director to recognize examples of excellent customer service with their areas of responsibility. Working within established guidelines, Regional and Assistant Directors should use the criteria in Section 8 as a base and expand on them as needed.

b. Director's Award. The highest level award granted within the Service for excellence in customer service.

c. Secretary's Award. The Secretary's Customer Service Excellence Award is the highest level Department award for customer service.

Sec. 8 What are the nomination criteria? The initiative or innovation being recognized should have occurred within the past 3 months or no later than the start of the fiscal year. The award is not intended to recognize plans that have not been implemented, unless these plans are the result of customer surveys or other demonstrations of customer feedback. The Customer Service Excellence Award recognizes special initiative or innovation in one or more of the following areas:

a. Improving the quality or delivery of a Service product or service.

b. Responding to customer requirements in an exemplary, timely, and courteous manner.

c. Solving customer problems/concerns quickly and innovatively.

d. Developing new ways of doing business that benefit customers (e.g., through electronic government or partnership initiatives).

e. Providing outstanding service to customers (e.g., technical assistance, conflict resolution).

Sec. 9 Who can nominate individuals/organizations for the award?

a. We encourage nominations from all sources (both internal and external to the Service). To help promote a culture of customer service, we particularly encourage peers to recognize fellow peers for excellent service.

b. Either the nominee or the nominator must have a direct tie to the Service (employee or volunteer) and carrying out our mission. A private individual or external organization cannot nominate another private individual or external organization for this award. For team awards, at least one member of the team must be a Service employee.

Sec. 10 What are the nomination procedures?

a. Complete and sign FWS Form 3-2201 (Customer Service Excellence Award Nomination). Include a thorough description of the initiative or innovation and the impact of the improvements and results achieved (e.g., cost/time savings, reducing paperwork, eliminating layers or steps, preserving habitat). Include specific examples demonstrating customer satisfaction with the initiative or innovation as evidenced by customer satisfaction surveys (i.e., mail or telephone surveys, focus groups), formal reviews and assessments of the program, and notable anecdotal information. Attach or incorporate by reference materials relevant to demonstrating customer satisfaction, such as letters of appreciation.

b. Prior to any award, the nominee's first-line supervisor must review and concur in writing. This supervisory review must occur promptly so that we can recognize exemplary service in a timely manner. Forward FWS Form 3-2201:

(1) For teams, to the team leader's supervisor.

(2) For organizational units, to the supervisor who oversees the chief of the organizational unit being nominated.

(3) For partners, to the Service employee charged with administering the partnership arrangement (e.g., the Service official who signed the Memorandum of Understanding establishing the partnership).

(4) For volunteers, to the Service employee charged with managing the volunteer.

c. If you are unable to locate the nominee's supervisor or manager, forward FWS Form 3-2201 to the appropriate Customer Service Contact or the Customer Service Coordinator for further processing.

d. If the supervisor concurs with the nomination, he or she will sign Form 3-2201 and forward it to his or her Customer Service Contact. If the supervisor does not concur with the nomination, the process ends and no award is made.

e. The Customer Service Contact will review the nomination for completeness (e.g., signatures, contact information) and ensure that it meets the minimum criteria (see Section 8). If the nomination is complete and meets the criteria, the Customer Service Contact will prepare the award in the manner that the Regional or Assistant Director has chosen. For example, this may take the form of a letter of recognition signed by the Regional or Assistant Director, certificate, plaque, or memento. Every nomination that satisfies the minimum completeness, criteria, and concurrence requirements will receive recognition.

f. No individual or team should receive the award more than once per year.

Sec. 11 How are recipients selected for the Director's and Secretary's awards?

a. Director's Award. Each Customer Service Contact should work with his/her respective Regional or Assistant Director to nominate up to three of their top award recipients. The Regional or Assistant Director must endorse the nominations and submit them to the Customer Service Coordinator by June 1 of each year. If the nomination is complete and meets the criteria, the Customer Service Coordinator will prepare the Director's Customer Service Excellence Award for each nominee.

b. Secretary's Award.

(1) Each annual Service recipient (employee, team, or organizational unit) of the Director's Award is a nominee for the Secretary's Award. No later than August 15 of each year, the Director will convene a committee to review and rate the nominations for recipients of the Director's Customer Service Excellence Award.

(2) To help avoid any appearance of bias, the names and other identifiers of the nominees will not appear on the nomination forms presented to the committee. Committee representatives with a vested interest in a nomination under consideration should recuse themselves (e.g., the representative cannot review a nomination that he or she authored or for which he or she is the intended award recipient). Each representative may score a nomination for a maximum of 35 points; i.e., up to 5 points for each criterion and 10 points for demonstration of customer satisfaction.

(3) The Customer Service Coordinator will facilitate the process and ensure consistency with this Order. The nomination receiving the highest score from the committee will become the Director's choice for the Secretary's Award. In the event of a tie, the Director will select the nominee for the Secretary's Customer Service Excellence Award.

Sec. 12 What do recipients of the award receive?

a. For Region/Washington Office awards, Regional and Assistant Directors may award nominees from their jurisdiction in the manner they choose, following the authorities cited in Section 2 and 224 FW 5. Assuming that nomination requirements are met, all nominees will receive, at a minimum, a letter of recognition from the appropriate Regional Director or Assistant Director.

b. Recipients of the Director's Award will receive a signed, personalized certificate of recognition and a memento.

c. Employees may also receive parallel, monetary recognition through the Awards and Recognition Program (224 FW 3 and 4).

Sec. 13 How and when is the award presented? Regional and Assistant Directors should present awards to their recipients at least annually in an appropriate ceremony. The Director will honor the recipients of the Director's Awards each fall in an appropriate manner. The Secretary will honor the Director's choice for the Secretary's Award at the Department's Honor Awards Convocation or at a private ceremony.

Sec. 14 Who pays for the award and related expenses? See 224 FW 6 for guidance relating to the payment of travel expenses to attend award ceremonies.

a. Region/Washington Office Awards. Each Regional and Assistant Director will determine how to handle award certificates and related expenses.

b. Director's Award. The recommending organization or the recipient's Region/program (for awards recommended by external sources), as appropriate, will pay for awards and most related expenses associated with the Director's Customer Service Excellence Award (e.g., administrative costs, cost of certificate, framing, and memento).

c. Secretary's Award. The Office of Planning and Performance Management will pay for awards and most related expenses, except travel expenses, associated with the Secretary's Award.

Sec. 15 Do you publicize award winners? We will spotlight award winners on our intra- and internet web sites and in our news publications. We will describe the accomplishments awarded in our GPRA and accountability reports, as appropriate.

Sec. 16 When is this Order effective? This Order is effective immediately. It will expire September 30, 2003, unless amended, superseded, or revoked. We will incorporate its contents into Part 050 of the Fish and Wildlife Service Manual.

Deputy  **DIRECTOR**

Date: August 1, 2002