



UAF Policy 04.05.001

Original Adoption: January 17, 2006

Revised: July 17, 2009

Responsible Chancellor's Cabinet Member: VC for Admin Services

Responsible Department/Office: Human Resources

Employee Recognition Policy

POLICY STATEMENT

Putting people first is a UAF core value. Recognition shows employees they are valuable contributors to accomplishing the UAF mission. This policy establishes standards, considerations, and approval processes for employee recognition. Under this policy, the Chancellor delegates decision authority to approve informal and formal recognition awards at the Dean/Director level or the Provost/Vice Chancellor level (see Procedures below).

BACKGROUND & JUSTIFICATION

Recognition is an important element of “putting people first” and serves to motivate and reward employees for exemplary work above and beyond that which is required by a position description.

DEFINITIONS

Eligible Employees: All non-represented exempt and non-exempt regular or term employees are eligible to participate in this employee recognition program. Student employees are eligible for cash bonuses but are not eligible for paid time off.

Ineligible Employees: Employees in a bargaining unit are not eligible for recognition under this policy, but may be eligible for recognition as allowed under a governing collective bargaining agreement. Temporary employees, faculty, and executives are not eligible to participate in this program.

Informal Recognition: An informal recognition award may take the form of a cash bonus of up to \$500 and/or non-cash awards such as up to 3 days of leave with pay; gift certificates; meals; plaques; certificates of appreciation; and items such as university sweatshirts, caps, or shirts; tickets to sporting or theater events; etc. The purchase of non-cash items with department funds is subject to applicable University representational allowance regulation [R05.02.07(F)].

Events or employee behaviors leading to informal recognition may include exemplary teamwork, completion of a special project, employee generated new or improved work procedures, special effort under unique or difficult circumstances, and employee appreciation. This list provides common examples and is not exhaustive.

Formal Recognition: A formal recognition award may take the form of cash bonuses of up to \$2,500, up to 5 days of leave with pay, or may take the form of a higher profile institutional, organizational, or department-wide program that occurs on a regularly scheduled basis, characterized by an event to acknowledge significant contributions of an individual employee or

team. Formal recognition events might include employee of the month, employee of the year, or other similar formal programs.

Events leading to formal recognition may be the same as for informal recognition, but at a sustained level of performance or at a higher level of performance.

REFERENCES RELIED UPON

Recognition awards are subject to federal income tax withholdings and other withholdings as required by law. Recipients need to be aware of their tax obligations and University Regulation 05.02.07 regarding gifts and awards.

RESPONSIBILITIES

Awards of recognition are discretionary to the University.

If a supervisor desires to give an eligible employee a recognition award, the supervisor must complete and sign an award form (Informal Recognition Award and Formal Recognition Award forms are attached to this policy), indentifying the justification for the award. Supervisors are responsible for ensuring that the level of recognition requested and awarded corresponds to the level of accomplishment and to administer recognition in a consistent manner. An Informal Recognition Award form must be approved by the appropriate Dean/Director; a Formal Recognition Award form must be approved by both the appropriate Dean/Director and the appropriate Provost/Vice Chancellor. It is the responsibility of the Dean/Director or Provost/Vice Chancellor to approve recognition that is warranted and funded. Approved awards are funded by the awarding unit's budget.

Supervisors should identify and convey to employees the behaviors and accomplishments that will be rewarded, recognizing that incentives are a powerful motivator if expectations are clearly set out, but are a powerful de-motivator if expectations are not transparent or not achievable. Human Resource consultants can assist supervisors in formulating recognition standards for their departments. Department Payroll and Personnel Assistants (PPAs) will be knowledgeable about this policy and the required forms and can assist employees with proper timesheet coding and/or job form completion where required.

Supervisors are responsible for tracking the days of recognition leave awarded to an employee, which is best handled by written memo to the employee or copy of the approved award form to the employee.

Human Resources will process payment of recognition awards and withholdings consistent with state and federal laws. Human Resources will enter data and track or audit recognition awards to provide reports on utilization of this Employee Recognition Policy.

NON-COMPLIANCE

Administrators must be cognizant of budgetary constraints; awards may not negatively impact department budgets and may not be given from restricted funds. Administrators are responsible for identifying funding source. Inconsistent application of this policy could bring claims of favoritism and/or discrimination toward the supervisor which will be investigated by Human Resources.

EXCEPTIONS

See Definitions above for eligible and ineligible employees.

PROCEDURES

- A. The supervisor completes an Informal Recognition Award or Formal Recognition Award form (forms are attached to this policy) for an eligible employee. The completed form must contain the supervisor's justification for the award request. The supervisor is prohibited from discussing the recognition request with the employee until final approval of the award is secured. The supervisor sends the completed and signed award form via confidential means (examples: inner-campus mail in an envelope marked confidential; as a PDF attachment to an email) to the appropriate Dean/Director for review and approval.
- B. If the Dean/Director denies the award, he/she indicates his/her denial on the award form and returns the original form to the supervisor in a confidential envelope.
- C. When a Dean/Director approves an informal award, the Dean/Director sends the original, approved informal award form to Human Resources in a confidential envelope and sends a copy to the supervisor via confidential means (see A above). The supervisor provides the employee and the department PPA with a copy of the approved award form. If the award is paid leave, the supervisor makes the employee aware that paid recognition leave needs to be recorded on the employee's time sheet under earnings code 460, that the leave must be used within the fiscal year it is awarded, and that unused leave will be lost upon the employee's termination or separation from UAF. Leave may not be awarded from restricted funds.
- D. When a Dean/Director approves a formal award, the Dean/Director sends the original, approved formal award form via confidential means to the appropriate Provost/Vice Chancellor for review and approval.
- E. If the Provost/Vice Chancellor denies a formal award, he/she indicates his/her denial on the award form and returns the original form to the supervisor in a confidential envelope.
- F. When a Provost/Vice Chancellor approves a formal award, the Provost/Vice Chancellor sends the original, approved formal award form to Human Resources in a confidential envelope and sends a copy to the supervisor via confidential means (see A above). The supervisor provides the employee and the department PPA with a copy of the approved award form. If the award is paid leave, the supervisor makes the employee aware that paid recognition leave needs to be recorded on the employee's time sheet under earnings code 460, that the leave must be used within the fiscal year it is awarded, and that unused leave will be lost upon the employee's termination or separation from UAF. Leave may not be awarded from restricted funds.
- G. Human Resources Payroll will update Banner as necessary and file approved award forms in the appropriate employee's personnel file.

POLICY APPROVED BY:



Brian D. Rogers, Chancellor
University of Alaska Fairbanks

Signed: July 17, 2009

INFORMAL RECOGNITION AWARD
(Up to \$500 and/or 3 days paid leave)



Please print or write legibly

Employee Name: _____ ID No: _____

Regular Term Student Employee

Department Org/Fund/Account: _____ - _____ - _____
Awards, whether leave or monetary, may only be charged to unrestricted funds.

Type of Award: Monetary (EC 710) \$ _____ Leave (EC 460) _____ hours
Leave awards must be used in the fiscal year awarded; unused leave will be lost upon the employee's termination or separation from UAF.

Justification for Award:

Requesting Supervisor's Name: _____

Supervisor's Institute/School/Unit & Department: _____

Requesting Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Dean/Director - circle one: Approved Denied

Dean/Director's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Instructions, after final **APPROVAL**

Dean/Director: Send original to UAF HR and a copy to supervisor via confidential means.

Supervisor: Present a copy to the employee and department PPA.

Employee: Write EC code 460 on time sheet when using leave award.

PPA: Ensure EC is properly coded on timesheet; submit time sheet to HR.

Instructions, if Award is **DENIED**

Dean/Director: Return original form to supervisor in a confidential envelope.

FORMAL RECOGNITION AWARD
(Up to \$2,500 and/or 5 days paid leave)



Please print or write legibly

Employee Name: _____ ID No: _____

Regular Term Student Employee

Department Org/Fund/Account: _____ - _____ - _____
Awards, whether leave or monetary, may only be charged to unrestricted funds.

Type of Award: Monetary (EC 710) \$_____ Leave (EC 460) _____ hours
Leave awards must be used in the fiscal year awarded; unused leave will be lost upon the employee's termination or separation from UAF.

Justification for Award:

Requesting Supervisor's Name: _____

Supervisor's Institute/School/Unit & Department: _____

Requesting Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Dean/Director - circle one: Approved Denied

Dean/Director's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Provost/VC - circle one: Approved Denied

Provost/Vice Chancellor Signature: _____ Date: _____

Instructions, after final **APPROVAL**

Provost/VC: Send original to UAF HR and a copy to supervisor via confidential means. **Supervisor:** Present a copy to the employee and department PPA. **Employee:** Write EC code 460 on time sheet when using leave award. **PPA:** Ensure EC is properly coded on timesheet; submit time sheet to HR.

Instructions, if Award is **DENIED**

Provost/VC: Return original form to supervisor in a confidential envelope.