**Purpose:** *To recognize members who distinguish themselves in the performance of their duties and contribute significantly to the achievement of the goals of the department and service to the community.*

**Procedure:**

1. This procedure applies to all Okolona Fire Department personnel who are volunteer members, full time employees or part time employees who work at least 800 hours per year.

2. The awards ceremony will be held during the month of December.

3. The attendance year for the purposes of this procedure shall begin December 1 and end November 30.

**LENGTH OF SERVICE AWARDS:**

1. Length of Service Awards shall be awarded as follows:

A. Five (5) Years: Pen and Pencil set

B. Ten (10) Years: Engraved wristwatch

C. Fifteen (15) Years: Fire department ring with three (3) diamond chips

D. Twenty+ (20) Years: One diamond centered in stone

E. Twenty-five (25) Years: Firefighter bugle on base

F. Thirty (30) Years: Pike on base

G. Thirty-five (35) Years: Bronze helmet on base.

2. Previous service may be combined with current service for those persons have a break in service with the fire department.

**VOLUNTEER RETENTION AWARDS:**

1. Volunteer members of the fire department shall receive a cash retention award according to the following schedule:

A. One (1) to Four (4) years: $400

B. Five (5) Years: $650

C Six (6) and more: $675 plus an additional $25 for each year more than six (6) years.

**SERVICE RECOGNITION PLAQUES:**

1. Members of the fire department shall receive Service Recognition plaques with engraved plates for the plaque for certain events occurring during their fire department service:

A. For each 1,000 call for service to which the member responded.

B. 110% annual Fire Run attendance (volunteer members only).

C. Perfect Attendance (no sick or emergency days, full time career employees only).

D. 250 hours of training attendance during attendance year.

E. 400 hours of training attendance during attendance year.

F. Other notable events as approved by fire chief or awards committee.

G. Attendance Improvement: Awarded to those members who have increased their fire run attendance by 10% or more during the attendance period.

**TROPHIES:**

1. Trophies shall be awarded to members according to the following:

*A. Volunteer fire run attendance*: Awarded to the top three (3) volunteer members responding to fire runs on a station basis

B. *Best Attendance Improvement:* Awarded to the top three (3) volunteer members who have improved their fire run attendance from the previous attendance year.

C. *Perfect Attendance:* Awarded to volunteer members who have attended at least one regularly scheduled week training session during the attendance year.

D. *Most Off Duty Fire Runs:* Awarded to the top three (3) career firefighters (full and part time) who responded to fire runs occurring outside their scheduled duty hours.

E. A member whose fire run attendance is less than fifty percent (50%) is NOT eligible to receive an attendance trophy.

Plaques:

**Career members shall be awarded trophies according to the following**:

a. Career Firefighter of the Year

Nominations for this award should be nominated by his/her fellow fire fighters, who is most deserving and these names shall be submitted to the Firefighter Award Committee by November 1st. From those names the award committee shall chose one member for this award. The firefighters name will be inscribed on the appropriate wall plaque in the firehouse.

Criteria: The Career Firefighter is an annual award given to chief officer, active, regular, career firefighter who has made the most significant contribution to the department during the course of that year Accomplishments in line with devotion to duty, service to the public and/or bringing positive acclaim to the fire department should be a guide for this award. Recipient will be issued a plaque along with the ribbon. Each career member is entitled to submit the name of any career member whom he feels is deserving of this award.

b. Platoon Firefighter of the Year

Awarded to one member from each platoon. Award nomination is sent to the shift chief of platoon who will send award to Awards Committee for verification. All members are entitled to nominate one member from his/her platoon. Shift Chiefs are not entitled for nomination. These names shall be submitted to the Firefighter Service Award Evaluation Board by November1st Criteria: This award is intended for the Department member who, over the course of the year, has continually put forth an effort of the highest degree. This may involve fire suppression, emergency medical service, fire prevention, training, or any combination of the above. Further, it may involve an individual event or a collection of exceptional performances. The firefighters name will be inscribed on the appropriate wall plaque in the firehouse. Recipient will be issued a plaque along with the ribbon.

**Volunteer members shall be awarded trophies according to the following:**

a. Volunteer Firefighter of the Year

Nominations for this award should be nominated by his/her fellow fire fighters, who is most deserving and these names shall be submitted to the Firefighter Award Committee by November 1st. From those names the award committee shall chose one member for this award. The firefighters name will be inscribed on the appropriate wall plaque in the firehouse.

Criteria: The Volunteer Firefighter is an annual award given to chief officer, active, regular, volunteer firefighter who has made the most significant contribution to the department during the course of that year. This may involve fire suppression, emergency medical service, fire prevention, training, or any combination of the above. Further, it may involve an individual event or a collection of exceptional performances. Accomplishments in line with devotion to duty, service to the public and/or bringing positive acclaim to the fire department should be a guide for this award. Recipient will be issued a plaque along with the ribbon. Each career member is entitled to submit the name of any career member whom he feels is deserving of this award

b. Recruit of the Year

This award shall be given to the recruit fire fighter who best exemplifies the conduct required of a Okolona fire fighter and continually demonstrates readiness, performance, and excellence in completing the recruit training program. The recruit shall display maturity and leadership potential before fellow recruits and, through dedication and commitment to duty, has made a significant contribution to advancing the goals of the Department. To be eligible the nominee shall be a graduate from the Jefferson County Recruit Program and is a member of the department. The firefighters name will be inscribed on the appropriate wall plaque in the firehouse. Recipient will be issued a plaque along with the ribbon.

**MEDALS AND RIBBONS:**

1. The following Medals and Ribbons shall be awarded to members of the fire department as shown below. The ribbon associated with the medal may be worn on the member’s Class A or Dress Uniform.

A. *Life Saving – EMS:* Awarded to those persons participating in an EMS situation where a person has been rescued or treated with life threatening injuries, or CPR save. Subsequent awards shall be noted with a leaf for the ribbon.

B. *Life Saving – Fire:* Awarded to persons directly involved with the rescue of a person during a structure fire, subsequent awards shall be noted with a leaf for the ribbon.

C. *Fire Prevention Award:* Awarded to those persons whose fire prevention efforts have been deemed significant by the fire marshal, fire chief or awards committee.

D. *Twenty (20) Year Service:* Awarded to those persons who have completed twenty (20) years of service with the fire department, and have satisfied all attendance requirements for each of the twenty (20) years.

E. *Chief’s Award:* Awarded to two (2) members each year by the fire chief for demonstrating fire department dedication and possession of an attitude exemplifying the fire service.

F. *Medal of Honor:* Awarded to a firefighter who in the performance of duty under extremely hazardous conditions in which the member is confronted with imminent personal risk and has full knowledge of that risk, performs an act of conspicuous heroism which furthers the highest traditions of the fire service as determined by the awards committee. The Medal of Honor is the highest award bestowed upon a member.

G. *Medal of Valor:* Awarded to a firefighter who in the performance of duty under hazardous conditions in which the member is confronted with imminent personal risk and performs an act of heroism which furthers the high traditions of the fire service, as determined by the awards committee. The Medal of Honor is the second highest award bestowed upon a member.

H. *Firefighter Cross:* Awarded to a firefighter who performs an act of distinguished bravery and stamina in the face of extreme fire conditions, as determined by the awards committee. The Firefighter Cross is the third highest award bestowed upon a member.

I. *Purple Heart:* Awarded to a firefighter for a injuries received in the line of duty while observing all reasonable safety procedures that required transportation to a medical facility and has received medical care for a severe injury. Examples of severe injuries are puncture wounds, lacerations, fractures, concussions and burns. The awards committee shall determine and distinguish between severe and minor injuries during consideration.

J. *Exceptional Duty:* Awarded to a member for highly credible accomplishments bringing acclaim to the fire department or fire service because of devotion to duty or service to the public as determined by the awards committee.

Ribbons Only:

A. *Unit Citation Ribbon:* A ribbon awarded to companies, units or specialty teams who perform in a superior manner on the scene of an incident or during the course of the year. The companies, units or teams receiving the award must demonstrate outstanding teamwork and ingenuity that have a direct impact on the smooth operations at the scene of the incident or has had a positive impact on the department and or service to the community, as determined by the awards committee. The company names and year of award will be added to a fire station plaque.

B. *Campaign Ribbon:* A ribbon awarded for each unique campaign as determined by the awards committee or fire chief. The Campaign Ribbon will be awarded to personnel who participate in operations at the scene of a large-scale disaster, either man-made or natural.

C. *Commendation Award*: The Commendation Award will be given to individuals whose participation and commitment to special projects, programs or committees has benefited the department or the citizens of Okolona. (Recipients shall be chosen by the Chief Officers Board.)

D. *Exceptional Service Award*: The Exceptional Service Award will be awarded to individuals who distinguish themselves from others by their dedication to the goals of the Okolona Fire Department. (Recipients shall be chosen by the Chief Officers Board.)

**The following awards: Medal of Honor, Medal of Valor, Firefighter Cross, Purple Heart, Exceptional Duty Award, Unit Citation Award, Platoon Firefighter of the Year, Career Firefighter of the Year, Recruit of the Year, and Volunteer Firefighter of the Year will be reviewed by an Awards Committee**.

**AWARDS COMMITTEE**

1. An Awards Committee shall be created for the purposes of reviewing and approving recommendations for those certain awards noted above requiring Awards Committee determination.

2. The Awards Committee shall be composed of seven (7) members. The committee shall consist of one (1) representative from each of the three career platoons and chosen by the members assigned to the given platoon. An alternate member shall also be chosen by each platoon in case the principal member has been nominated for an award within the Awards Committee scope or is otherwise unable to participate in awards review.

3. There shall be two (2) volunteer members, chosen by the volunteer members. Two (2) alternate members shall also be chosen by each platoon in case the principal member has been nominated

for an award within the Awards Committee scope or is otherwise unable to participate in awards review.

4. The fire chief shall also be a member of the Awards Committee. In the event that the fire chief or deputy fire chief have been nominated for an award, the fire chief shall appoint alternate chief officers to participate in the review.

5. The fire chief shall also have the authority to appoint additional officers if necessary to ensure at least seven (7) persons are present to review award nominations. (For example, platoon X’s representatives are assigned to company Y and that company has been nominated for a Unit Award. Neither the principal or alternate member could review the nomination.

6. The Awards Committee meeting shall be called by the fire chief. The meeting shall be held during the month of November preferably the second Saturday of the month. Any nominations for awards are due November 1st of each year, for the preceding one year period.

7. Nomination for awards shall be submitted in written form, giving the suggested award, and a sufficient description of the act(s) performed justifying the award.

8. No member of the Awards Committee shall be present during any discussion on any award for which he or she has been nominated. This also includes Awards Committee members who have a close family relationship as defined in the fire department’s Nepotism Policy. No member of the Awards Committee shall be present during any discussion on any award which he or she has submitted a nomination form.

9. The Awards Committee shall review each nomination form and conduct a deliberation on the merits of the nomination. The Awards Committee shall have the discretion to amend a nomination to a different award other than that initially proposed.

10. Each nomination for each act shall be considered separately. For example, Firefighter A is nominated for a medal of valor for an action on January 1, and another medal of valor for action on June 1, shall be two separate considerations.

11. Upon conclusion of the deliberation, each member of the Awards Committee shall submit a secret ballot on whether the recommendation should be approved. If there are three (3) “No” votes, the recommendation shall be deemed as disapproved.