



Tuolumne County Fire Department

In Cooperation with **CAL FIRE**

Proudly serving the County of Tuolumne, Groveland, Jamestown, Columbia, and Columbia College

Nick Casci, County Fire Chief
Andrew Murphy, Assistant County Fire Chief

18440 Striker Ct. • Sonora, CA 95370
Tel: (209) 533-5100 • Fax: (209) 533-5103

TCFD Awards Policy (rev. 3/24)

I. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define commendations and awards issued by the Tuolumne County Fire Department (TCFD) and the procedures for reporting, collecting, and evaluating the nominations for selected commendations and awards.

II. Policy

This policy allows for the recognition of volunteer and career CAL FIRE or TCFD personnel who have performed acts of bravery, courage, or exceptional service toward the betterment and/or safety of the department or the community. Personnel will also be recognized for promotions, special achievements, retirement, and years of service within the Fire Department.

Not all commendations and awards may be awarded annually if requirements for said commendations and awards are not met.

III. Procedure

TCFD members and community members may report acts of exceptional public service through any department supervisor.

A. Submitting Nominations

1. Any member may report, in writing, to the TCFD Assistant County Fire Chief (AC) or their designee, the exemplary performance of another member.
2. Any member of the public may submit a written nomination by submitting it to Fire Administration in person or at fire@co.tuolumne.ca.us.
3. An Awards Committee shall convene no less than once a year (typically November), or as directed by the AC, to review recommendations, nominations, and confer awards. The AC, or designee, shall appoint (4) members to the committee for a two-year term. New members will be appointed on an alternating basis to ensure continuity of the review process.



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4. The committee shall be responsible for reviewing all recommendations and nominations and making a final determination on the merit of said recommendations and nominations. This process should be as thorough as possible to include a review of pertinent reports, an interview of witnesses, and/or any other action necessary to determine if an award is warranted.

III. Types of Commendations and Awards

A. Class I Commendations and Awards

Medal of Honor

This is the highest award presented by the TCFD. Awarding of this medal will occur only under two circumstances. The first circumstance is posthumous to any member killed in the line of duty. The second circumstance is to any member for a conspicuous act of heroism performed at the extreme risk of his or her own life. The deed performed must have been an act of personal bravery so conspicuous as to clearly distinguish the individual for gallantry above his or her comrades and must have been under extremely hazardous conditions. The act must have involved an extreme risk to life known to the member before performing the act. The act need not have been performed during a tour of duty. This award shall consist of a medal (neck) and a certificate of recognition. The Chief of the Department presents the commendation.

Medal of Valor Award

The Medal of Valor is the second-highest award presented to Volunteer members by the TCFD. This medal may be awarded to a member who has performed a courageous act under conditions of extreme danger and at the risk of personal injury. This act exceeds what is required and was performed during the protection or attempted protection of life in a manner that is considered to be exceptionally valiant. The Medal of Valor nominations for CAL FIRE employees will be routed through the CAL FIRE process for possible awards by the CAL FIRE Director. This award shall consist of a medal (neck) and a certificate of recognition. The Chief of the Department presents the commendation.



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Life-Saving Award

The Life-Saving Award is equal to the Medal of Valor and is awarded to any career or Volunteer member who provides the ultimate service of saving a human life. The following criteria should apply: The patient recovers and is discharged from the hospital after care is provided for an injury or illness that usually results in death. (E.g. massive trauma, cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, severe respiratory compromise, etc.). It should be noted that the TCFD personnel may render these services regularly, and firefighters and officers should nominate others for this award if the incident was particularly exceptional or ominous. This award shall consist of a medal (neck) and a certificate of recognition. The Chief of the Department presents the commendation.

Medal of Distinguished Service

This exceptional service award is the third-highest award given by the Tuolumne County Fire Department. This medal may be awarded to a member who has gone above and beyond their assigned duties and through unwavering dedication and commitment to the fire service and through their actions and accomplishments, have fostered and inspired enthusiasm, devotion, and a strong regard for the honor, integrity, reputation, and advancement of the fire service and the TCFD towards excellence. This award shall consist of a medal (neck) and a certificate of recognition. The Chief of the Department presents the commendation.

B. Class II Commendations and Awards

Mo Frank Award

Recognizes a member of the TCFD, County of Tuolumne, or the Community for a minimum of 20 years of unwavering and long-standing service and dedication to the betterment of the TCFD. The award shall consist of a sculpted bronze leather fire helmet and is awarded by the Chief of the Department or designee.

Mike Spear Award

This commendation of overall excellence may be given to any member based on the execution of assigned duties where said duties have been carried out in an outstanding and superior manner. This award denotes completion of duties above and beyond what is considered routine. This



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award shall consist of an acrylic or plaque award. The Chief of the Department or designee presents the commendation.

K.T. Farmer Award

This commendation of excellence in training may be given to any member based on the execution of assigned duties where said duties have been carried out in an outstanding and superior manner through training of other individuals. This award denotes completion of duties above and beyond what is considered routine. This award shall consist of an acrylic or plaque award. The Chief of the Department or designee presents the commendation.

Purple Cross

Recognizes a member who has been injured in the line of duty while either responding to or during operations at an emergency scene. The member must have observed all reasonable safety procedures and required transportation to a medical facility. This award shall consist of an acrylic or plaque award. The Chief of the Department or designee presents the commendation.

Stork Award (Individual or Unit)

Awarded to any member or members that have participated in the delivery of a baby in the pre-hospital environment. This award shall consist of an acrylic or plaque award. The Chief of the Department or designee presents the commendation. The commendation should be either blue or pink (depending on the gender of the newborn) with storks.

C. Class III Commendations and Awards

Chief's Commendation/Chief's Award

Awarded to any individual recognizing the accomplishment of a special assignment, project, or mission for the Department in a meritorious manner. This award shall consist of an acrylic or plaque award. The Chief of the Department or designee presents the commendation.

Emergency Medical Services Commendation

Awarded to any individual recognizing the accomplishment of a special assignment, project, or mission for the Department in the field of EMS in a



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meritorious manner. This award shall consist of an acrylic or plaque award. The Chief of the Department or designee presents the commendation.

Firefighter of the Year – Volunteer or Career

This commendation may be awarded to any firefighter or engineer who performs their fire service duties in an exemplary manner that far exceeds the expectations of their community and peers. This service may manifest in the delivery of traditional fire service duties, community, or peer education, etc. This member is not only singled out for a job well done, but one who takes part in their community and who is the personification of a good citizen, neighbor, and friend. The Firefighter of the Year is nominated by their peers. This award shall consist of an acrylic or plaque award. The Chief of the Department or designee presents the commendation.

Company Officer of the Year

The Company Officer includes Engineers/Operators, Lieutenants, and Fire Captains, whether paid or volunteer. This commendation may be awarded to a member who performs their officer duties in an exemplary manner that far exceeds the expectations of their community and peers. This service may manifest in the delivery of traditional fire service duties, community, or peer education, etc. This member is not only singled out for exemplary leadership of subordinates, but one who takes part in their community and who is the personification of a good citizen, neighbor, and friend. The Company Officer of the Year is nominated by their peers. The commendation will be awarded based on merit. This award shall consist of an acrylic or plaque award. The Chief of the Department or designee presents the commendation.

Partnership Award

Awarded to recognize extraordinary collaboration and dedication between another cooperator, that demonstrates collaboration, innovation, or excellence that enables the agencies to achieve goals to improve service to the public.



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D. Class IV Commendations and Awards

Service Award (Years of Service-5, 10, 15....)

Awarded to reflect the member's year of continuous service to the department. This award is given in five-year increments beginning with the completion of the member's 5th year of service. This award shall consist of a pin signifying the years of service. The Chief of the Department or designee presents the commendation.

Letter of Commendation (Individual, Unit, or Civilian)

The letter of commendation shall be awarded to those who go above and beyond their normal duties while performing a public service on behalf of the Fire Service. This commendation can be awarded to any citizen, public servant, or department member for recognition of outstanding achievement. This award shall include a letter of recognition in the member's personnel file. The Chief of the Department or designee presents the commendation.

IV. Placement and Wearing of Commendations

CAL FIRE employees will follow the CAL FIRE Uniform policy at all times.

TCCFD Volunteers may wear their pins on their uniform shirt, in the following manner:

1. ¼-inch above the member's nametag and centered.
2. Only the newest year of service award pin will be worn.
3. If wearing a U.S. Flag and/or EMS pin, the years of service pin will be spaced evenly with the other pin.
4. Medals will not be worn on duty.