



# **GENERAL ORDER**

## **Employee Recognition Program**

### **Purpose and Scope**

To demonstrate appreciation when employees go above and beyond in completing their duties and responsibilities, to celebrate success, and retain a highly-skilled professional workforce.

This order establishes guidelines for the use of County funds to recognize employees, reward creativity, enhance productivity and encourage a commitment to support positive change.

### **Affected Personnel**

All employees

### **Authority**

Sacramento County Charter  
Sacramento County Employee Recognition Policy, Procedure and Guidelines  
Administrative Directive

### **Effective Date**

1/20/2023

### **I. Recognition Budget**

- A. The Probation Department allocates funding for employee recognition, food, refreshments and/or related expenses as part of the annual budget.
- B. All expenditures must be pre-approved by the Chief Probation Officer or designee.

### **II. Requests To Use Employee Recognition Funds**

Divisions may request employee recognition funds in accordance with the approved expenditures specified in this order and the Petty Cash Advance/Reimbursement General Order.

- A. Requests must be in writing via the Petty Cash Request Form and approved and signed by the Chief Probation Officer or designee;
- B. The request must include the nature of the recognition, involved employee(s), and a detailed estimate of funds requested;
- C. If the recognition includes the purchase of food and drink items, the purchase must be pre-approved by the Chief Probation Officer or designee, in writing (emails are acceptable) prior to the purchase;

- D. Items embossed with the County and/or department's seal/logo must be available to all department employees and may only be purchased by the Chief Deputy of the Professional Standards Division, or his/her designee.

### **III. Approved Expenditures**

- A. Plaques, tokens of appreciation, certificates, etc., as acknowledgement or recognition for exemplary work/success, not to exceed \$100, before tax, shipping/delivery costs are applied;
- B. Recognition events, including the cost for food<sup>1</sup>, facilities and supplies<sup>2</sup>;
- C. Flowers may be purchased when an employee is hospitalized due to serious illness or injury, when an employee retires, and when an employee or a member of the employee's immediate family dies, not to exceed \$100, before tax and shipping/delivery costs are applied;
- D. Workplace amenities such as coffee, water, tea, and related supplies<sup>3</sup>;
- E. Food and/or refreshments at early morning meetings;
- F. Food and/or refreshments at meetings that extend through normal meal times;
- G. Meals included in the cost of attending business events/functions involving organizations the County has existing ties to, contractually or otherwise; and
- H. Community-based and/or business lunches or dinners and related expenses.

### **IV. Prohibited Expenditures**

- A. Costs associated with training or travel;
- B. Gifts to County officials or organizations;
- C. Gift cards<sup>4</sup>;
- D. Retirement functions<sup>5</sup>;
- E. Recognition of/decorations for birthdays, childbirth or adoptions, weddings, anniversaries, or Administrative Professional Day<sup>6</sup>;
- F. Costs associated with seasonal or holiday celebrations;
- G. Gifts of public money to any individual, municipal, or corporation;
- H. Contributions or donations, in any form, including rounding up to the nearest dollar/change, to organizations (profit or non-profit), charities, alumni associations, schools or universities, including scholarships or other purely fundraising activities, and religious organizations; and
- I. Alcoholic beverages, firearms, and tobacco products.

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<sup>1</sup> Decorations for events may not exceed \$50 per event; gratuity for services rendered not to exceed 18 percent unless the vendor's policy imposes a higher amount, capped at 25 percent.

<sup>2</sup> The department must demonstrate the event is primarily used to recognize employee achievement. When recognizing employee(s) for significant work-related achievements, the cost of meals or food is allowable for reimbursement limited to the actual costs for the employee(s).

<sup>3</sup> Workplace amenities must be purchased using existing County purchasing agreements when available

<sup>4</sup> The Internal Revenue Service considers "gift cards" of any value to be taxable wages.

<sup>5</sup> Exceptions: Plaques, flowers, cake and/or a meal for retirees, not to exceed \$100 before tip, tax and/or shipping; see footnote 1 for policy regarding tips.

<sup>6</sup> Gifts to individual staff for Administrative Professionals Day are prohibited; however, recognition and appreciation events for Administrative Professional staff may be funded, and the purchase of Fiscal management-approved items for such events is allowed.

**Amends/Replaces**

Administrative Policy and Procedure, Employee Recognition Program General Order – September 6, 2019

**Authorized By**  **Date** 1/5/2023  
*Marlon Yarber, Chief Probation Officer*