

## EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION AND AWARDS

- 1. REASON FOR ISSUE:** To issue Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) policy regarding employee recognition and awards.
- 2. SUMMARY OF CONTENTS/MAJOR CHANGES:** This handbook contains mandatory procedures on VA's employee recognition and awards program and special advancements and cash awards for title 38 employees. The page in this issuance replaces the corresponding page number in VA Handbook 5017. Revised text is contained in [brackets]. These changes will be incorporated into the electronic version of VA Handbook 5017 that is maintained on the [Office of Human Resources Management Web site](#). This revision changes the expiration period of the time off award from 180 to 365 days from the time the award was approved.
- 3. RESPONSIBLE OFFICE:** The Employee Relations and Performance Management Service (051), Office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Human Resources Management.
- 4. RELATED DIRECTIVE:** VA Directive 5017, Employee Recognition and Awards.
- 5. RESCISSIONS:** None.

**CERTIFIED BY:**

/s/  
LaVerne H. Council  
Assistant Secretary for  
Information and Technology

**BY DIRECTION OF THE SECRETARY  
OF VETERANS AFFAIRS:**

/s/  
Meghan Flanz  
Acting Assistant Secretary for Human  
Resources and Administration

## APPENDIX F. TIME OFF AWARDS

### 1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

a. Time off awards may be granted to an individual or group of employees for contributions that benefit the Department.

b. The amount of a time off award is subject to the following:

(1) The minimum time off award is 4 hours, except for VHA full-time title 38 employees paid on a daily basis, who may only be granted time off in increments of 1 day (8 hours equivalent).

(2) Time off awards will be granted in increments of 1 hour.

(3) Not more than 40 hours may be granted to an employee for a specific contribution.

(4) The maximum amount of time off that may be granted to any employee during a 12 month period is 80 hours.

(5) Time off must be used by the employee in increments of 1 hour, except that VHA full-time title 38 employees paid on a daily basis must use in 1-day increments.

c. [ ] [E]ach time off award must be used within [365] days after the date on which it was approved. [ ]. Failure to use an award within [365 days after the date of approval] will result in the employee[ 's] forfeiture of any unused portion of the award. [To avoid possible forfeiture, management should allow the employee time to utilize the award within the prescribed timeframe.]

d. Time off awards may be transferred when an employee changes jobs or organizations within VA. Time off awards may not be transferred to another Federal agency if an employee leaves VA and, likewise, time off will be forfeited upon an employee's separation from VA and may not be treated as annual leave for lump sum payment purposes. Time off may not be recredited to a former employee if reemployed by VA.

e. Time off awards may not, under any circumstances, be converted to a cash payment, to an employee or group of employees.

**2. COVERAGE.** Except as provided in VA Handbook 5017, Part III, paragraph 3, employees who earn leave under the provisions of 5 U.S.C., chapter 63 or 38 U.S.C., chapter 74 and VA Handbook 5011, Hours of Duty and Leave.