



## Botetourt County Department of Fire & EMS Guideline

**Subject:** Awards Program  
**Number:** G- 122.01  
**Effective Date:**  
**Last Revision Date:** July 17, 2017  
**Signatures of Approval:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Scope:** This guideline is designed to be utilized by all department personnel, both volunteer and career.

**Purpose:** The purpose of the Awards Program is to publicly and officially recognize all members of the Botetourt Department of Fire & EMS and other qualified persons who distinguish themselves by performing exceptional or conspicuously outstanding acts of heroism. It also provides a means for the recognition of any department members who performs commendable acts which are deemed to be above and beyond those normally expected or required of personnel discharging their assigned duties.

### Definitions:

**Award-** An all-inclusive term covering any decoration, medal, badge, ribbon, certificate, designation, or attachment bestowed on an individual or group of individuals.

**Civilian-** A member of the community.

**Medal-** An award presented to an individual for performing certain duties, acts, or services consisting of a medallion hanging from a distinctly colored suspension ribbon.

**Member-** A uniformed member of coordinated combination career and volunteer system known as the Botetourt Department of Fire & EMS.

**Ribbon-** An award bestowed upon an individual for performing certain duties, acts or services consisting of a distinctly colored ribbon.

**Unit Citation-** An award presented to an operating unit worn by members of that unit who participated in the cited action.

## **1.0 Awards Committee**

The Awards Committee is a standing committee. The committee shall consist of a cross-section of personnel from the department, to include but not limited to: career, volunteer, fire, EMS, entry-level, company and chief officer levels. Additionally, a member from the Board of Supervisors assigned to the Fire & EMS Commission should serve as a community interest representative to the committee. The awards committee will not have a standing meeting, but will schedule meetings based upon awards nominations or as needed to maintain the awards program. Members of the committee will serve two year terms.

The committee will be made up of the following members:

- Chairman: Chosen by the Chief of Fire and EMS.
- (2) Officers: Two department officers of any rank, one being a volunteer and one being a career member.
- (2) Firefighters: Two department firefighters and/or EMT's, one being a volunteer and one being a career member.

## **1.1 Nominations**

Nominations may be submitted at any time and by any individual within the organization. In addition, citizens of Botetourt County may also submit a nomination for an award to the awards committee. Nominations should be submitted in writing, utilizing the awards nomination form found in the forms appendix of this manual. Any required supporting documentation should be included during the submission process. Nominations may be submitted to any member of the awards committee, at any time. Those making nominations will be subject to justification in front of the awards committee if deemed necessary as part of the decision making process.

## **1.2 Awards**

The intent of the Awards Committee is to honor those involved in a significant event that contributes to a safe community in Botetourt County or provides assistance to another community. Awards (ribbons and medals) presented by another organization to our members may be displayed on the uniform assuming said award is in keeping with the uniform policy of Botetourt County Fire and EMS. The Chief of Department is responsible for the authorization of awards issued from another organization.

*The intent is to have our members proudly display their accomplishments on their uniforms.*

## **1.2 Precedence of Awards**

### **A. General**

Awards issued to Botetourt Fire & EMS Department personnel are listed in this section in order of precedence and **will be worn on the Class A coat and/or Class B shirt, depending on the award.** The following awards will be issued by the Botetourt Department of Fire & EMS along with the appropriate uniform insignia.

### **B. Order of Decoration**

The Botetourt Fire & EMS Department personal decorations, unit awards, non-Botetourt Fire & EMS decorations and Botetourt Fire & EMS campaign and service awards will be given precedence in the order listed.

All ribbons and medals must be mounted and worn according to the precedence listed herein.

Awards shall be worn in the order of precedence from top down and from the wearer's center of chest towards the arm, and horizontal with the floor unless otherwise specified herein. Multiple medals and ribbons shall be mounted on the appropriate ribbon bar and not individually mounted. If an award is given to an individual on more than one occasion, the recognition will be given in the form of a star attached to the original ribbon for each additional occurrence.

### **C. Awards Description and Criteria**

The following describe the awards and the criteria for each award sponsored by the Botetourt Department of Fire & EMS:

- Shall have no disciplinary action during the calendar year
- Actions should be beneficial to the department or community
- Shall be a member in good standing
- The nominee shall demonstrate teamwork, initiative, and motivation that have a positive impact on others.

## **D. Botetourt Fire & EMS Personnel Decorations**

### **1) Medal of Honor (Member)**

The Medal of Honor is the highest award presented by Botetourt Department of Fire & EMS. This award is for those uniformed personnel who display distinguished and uncommon personal bravery in the act of protecting life/lives in circumstances far beyond the normal limits of the profession.

Criteria:

- The candidate, in the act of saving other life/lives, exposed his/her life to significant risk.
- The act was far above and beyond actions expected of personnel
- There must be proof of performance in the form of witness statements or witnesses or other acceptable means
- The act may have been performed on or off-duty

### **2) Medal of Valor (Member)**

This award is for those uniformed personnel who perform a personal act in a courageous manner in the protection of life/lives. Acting in the face of grave danger or imminent hazard to life or limb, with knowledge of the risks involved. Acting beyond the call of duty.

Criteria:

- There must have been the presence of a possible and probable personal risk to the award nominee.
- The act may have been performed on- or off-duty.
- The act must be something extraordinary such as, but not limited to, the following examples:
  - A “save” at a fire, rescue scene (such as a building collapse), a hazardous materials incident, or a swift water rescue
  - An act that prevents injury related to the incident
  - May be an act performed during “normal” incident activity, or an anytime voluntary activity.

### 3) Medal of Merit (Member)

This award is for those departmental personnel who exemplify the fire and EMS service profession's highest ideals. Nominees gave much of themselves, either through special projects or long-term outstanding service. Their work has had a positive impact on the department/community/fire service and is demonstrated to be above and beyond the scope of normal job functions.

Criteria:

- For special service and/or long-term outstanding service in the Department
- May be awarded for special service and/or long-term outstanding Department related service to the community (i.e., education, prevention, public relations, etc.)
- May be a single act or an accumulation of acts
- The activities must be above and beyond normal duties. They must infer personal initiative and innovation.
- The activities must have some sort of impact and/or successful connotations.
- The award may be for a significant contribution to departmental/community/ or fire/EMS service
- The actions must have brought a recognizable positive distinction to the department

### 4) Jeffrey W. Beckner Leadership Award (Member)

This award is presented in honor of Chief Jeffrey W. Beckner who served Botetourt County from 2014 until 2016 and the fire service as a whole for over 30 years. This award is presented to the active emergency services member who demonstrates strong leadership skills, is focused on the mission of the organization, and is a well-rounded member of the Botetourt community. Selection for this award is conducted by an independent committee chaired by Chief Beckners wife Julie or her designee. If so designated by the chairmen, the awards committee may participate in the selection process. This honor is awarded annually.

### 5) Firefighter of the Year (Member) A10850



This award is presented to the firefighter or officer who, in the eyes of their peers, has demonstrated outstanding service to the community through the execution of their duties as a firefighter in a manner which reflects credit upon all department personnel and for dedication above and beyond the call of duty. The firefighter of the year award can be presented to both 1 career and 1 volunteer member in the same year if deemed appropriate by the committee.

The award is a statue of a style to be determined by the Awards Committee.

**6) EMS Provider of the Year (Member) A7142-AE**



This award is presented to the EMS provider or officer who, in the eyes of their peers, has demonstrated outstanding service to the community through the execution of their duties as a patient advocate in a manner which reflects credit upon all department personnel and for dedication above and beyond the call of duty. The firefighter of the year award can be presented to both 1 career and 1 volunteer member in the same year if deemed appropriate by the committee.

The award is a statue of a style to be determined by the Awards Committee.

**7) Meritorious Conduct Ribbon (Member- Individual Award) A1475**



This award is presented to any member of the department who distinguishes themselves for outstanding actions that are performed in an emergency operation or in the support of other emergency operations where the member performed in an exemplary manner. It is not intended for staff functions or routine work done on an incident, but for those activities that directly influenced the task being performed.

Examples:

- Providing necessary operational support that assisted others to save another life/lives (coordinating special rescues)
- Providing necessary specialized support to special rescue activity workers
- Performing specialized response work on a hazardous incident
- Any other action that is beyond the normal scope of emergency response activity performed in an exemplary manner
- Personnel may be on or off duty.

**8) Meritorious Unit Citation (Member – Unit Award) A8709**



This award is presented to any unit or group of members of the department that distinguishes themselves for outstanding actions performed in an emergency operation or in the support of other emergency operations where they performed in an exemplary manner. It is not intended for staff functions or routine work done on an incident, but for those activities that directly influenced the task being performed.

Examples:

- Providing necessary operational support that assisted others to save another life/lives (coordinating special rescues)
- Providing necessary specialized support to special rescue activity workers
- Performing specialized response work on a hazardous incident
- Any other action that is beyond the normal scope of emergency response activity, performed in an exemplary manner as decided by the awards committee.
- Personnel may be on or off duty

**9) Campaign Ribbon (Member) A11477**



This award designates a member's participation with a team deployed to a special event or campaign as designated by the Awards Committee.

Criteria:

- Operations in which members of our department deploy to an event outside our community
- The team must be deployed to assist another locality with the mitigation of an emergency event
- The crews may be rotated through the event

**10) Life Save Ribbon (Member) A9924**



Presented to any career or volunteer member who in the line of duty responds to an individual in cardiac arrest and through life saving measures returns said individual to a state of living. Said individual should remain in this living state for a minimum of 24 hours following the incident. Recommendation for this award should be accompanied with proper documentation (should not violate HIPPA).

OR

Presented to any career or volunteer member who in the line of duty, rescues an individual from a situation of certain death or severe injury.

**11) Natural Disaster Ribbon (Deployments) A6265**



Awarded for a members participation in a deployment response to a natural disaster.

**12) National Defense Ribbon A11850**

**(Acts of Terrorism/National Events) (Member)**



Awarded for a members response participation to an act of terrorism or other national event deemed appropriate by the awards committee.

**13) Emergency Management Assistance Compact Ribbon A10794**



(Fire and Mutual Aid Deployments not covered with the other two deployment ribbons) (Member)

**14) Honor Guard Service Recognition (Member) A10810**



After a member has served three accumulative years or as approved by the Awards Committee, they will receive an Honor Guard recognition ribbon.

**15) Special Operations Team Member (Member) A12571**



After a member has served three accumulative years or as approved by the Awards Committee, they will receive a SOTT recognition ribbon for uniform display.

**16) Search and Rescue Group Member (Member & Non-Member) A12350**



After a member has served three accumulative years or as approved by the Awards Committee, they will receive a S&R recognition ribbon for uniform display.

**17) Fire and EMS Chief's Award (Member & Non-Member) A10843**



This award may be presented to fire service individuals, groups, or companies, who, in the opinion of Fire & EMS Chief, have performed in a manner which he/she feels is beyond that which is normally expected of them.

All recommendations must also be qualified by the awards selection committee.



### **18) Letter of Commendation (Member and Non-Member)**

This award is presented when a member of the organization or community contributes or provides a service which results in the improved efficiency, morale, and/or effectiveness of the Botetourt Fire & EMS Department. The nominee has provided the department and/or the fire and EMS services the materials and/or services at no cost and in the interest of making their community a safer and better place to live. The award is a certificate and can be given to groups.

### **19) Citizen's Award for Bravery (Civilian)**

This award is presented to civilians outside of the Department who distinguish themselves by performing heroic acts involving great personal danger or risk, while saving or attempting to save a life.

### **20) Citizens Award for Distinguished Service (Civilian)**

This award can be given in recognition of significant accomplishments or actions as determined by the Service awards committee. These may include personal, educational or other as determined by the committee. This citation may also be given for superior performance in an emergency situation that results in the reduction of loss to citizens of our locality, contributing to the creation of a safer community. The award is in the form of a certificate and can be given to individuals or groups as necessary.

### **21) Length of Service Ribbon (Member and Non-Member)**

This recognition acknowledges length of service to the department in increments of 3 years. A citation and a three (3) year stripe (uniformed personnel only) will be presented. Distinguished service benchmarks such as retirements and lifetime achievement recognitions will be handled separately and will not require the review of committee, only proof of years of service.

### **22) Educational Attainment**

This recognition is to acknowledge the importance of formal education within the organization. 4 separate ribbons will be designated for a member obtaining an Associates, Bachelors, Masters, or Doctorate/PHD. Members will wear only one ribbon representing the highest level of formal education achieved.