

United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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In Reply To:

1400-451 (933.PH) P

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Instruction Memorandum No. MT-2004-004

Expires: 09/30/05

To: State Management Team

From: Deputy State Director, Division of Support Services

Subject: Time Off Recognition Award

The following guidance is provided for your use and information regarding the Time Off Recognition Award within the Montana/Dakotas organization. This directive supersedes Instruction Memorandum Number MT-2002-018. Form DI-451, Award Certification, which is automated in the forms directory, is to be utilized for most awards, including Time Off Awards.

A Time Off Recognition Award is an excused absence granted to an employee without charge to leave or loss of pay as a means of recognition of a personal effort that contributes to the quality, efficiency, or economy of Government operations. Time Off Awards are one method to encourage and recognize exceptional employees for contributions that benefit the Government. These awards are for specific accomplishments that are generally of a one-time, nonrecurring nature. Time Off Awards may be used alone or in conjunction with a monetary, non-monetary, or honor award.

All permanent and temporary employees who are working full-time or part-time work schedules are eligible for Time Off Recognition Awards. Employees on intermittent work schedules are not eligible. The award is based on the employee's work schedule at the time the award is approved.

CRITERIA:

Nominees must demonstrate high quality accomplishment(s) which contribute to the quality, efficiency, or economy of Government operations. The following are some examples of high quality accomplishments; these examples are not all inclusive:

- Making a high quality contribution involving a difficult or important project or assignment;
- Displaying special initiative and skill in completing an assignment or project before the deadline;

- Using initiative and creativity in making improvements in a product, activity, program, or service; and
- Ensuring the mission of the organization is accomplished during a difficult period by successfully completing additional work or a project assignment while maintaining the employee's own work load.

The minimum Time Off Recognition Award is 1 work day. An employee may be granted a maximum of 40 hours of time off on a single award nomination. No more than 80 hours may be granted to an employee within a leave year.

Part-time Employees. No more than one-half of the average number of hours of work in the employee's biweekly scheduled tour of duty may be granted for a single award nomination. No more than the average number of hours of work in the employee's biweekly scheduled tour of duty may be granted in any leave year.

(Example: A part-time employee has a 40-hour biweekly tour of duty. The single award nomination can be no more than 20 hours, and the total maximum for the leave year can be no more than 40 hours.)

NOMINATION PROCEDURES FOR GRANTING TIME OFF AWARDS:

The immediate supervisor is authorized to grant Time Off Recognition Awards not to exceed 1 workday without further approval. The State Director, Deputy State Directors, and Field Managers are authorized to grant, up to and including, 40 hours for a single Time Off Award. The immediate supervisor should determine the number of hours to be granted for the award by utilizing the attached benefits guide.

- In preparing the DI-451, the immediate supervisor should document the contribution or accomplishment made by the employee and its value to the organization in the justification block. The appropriate official must also approve Time Off Awards over 1 work day as noted above.

- The original form is forwarded to the Branch of Human Resources Management, MT-933, for preparation of the SF-50, Notification of Personnel Action, and filing in the Employee Performance File. After approval, copies of the Forms DI-451 and SF-50 are returned to the supervisor for presentation to the employee in an appropriate ceremony. The SF-50 initiated by Human Resources enters the Time Off Award-Earned into the payroll system. Human Resources provides a copy to the timekeeper for their information.

- **When the Time Off Award is used by the employee,** the timekeeper is to record the Time Off Award hours taken on the T&A using hours code 30C and by inserting the number of hours used in the daily column and the weekly hours total column to complete the employee's regular schedule. **The appropriate cost structure must be entered on the T&A and also in RETARS when using hours code 30C.**

The immediate supervisor and the employee must schedule the use of the Time Off Awards so that organizational work loads can be considered and productivity sustained. These awards must be scheduled and used within 1 year after the effective date of the award. Employees should be informed of the 1-year limitation at the time the award is presented. Time Off Awards should be scheduled effectively so that employees in a "use or lose" annual leave situation are not adversely affected. If the employee becomes ill during the use of the Time Off Award, the immediate supervisor may grant sick leave for the period of incapacitation and reschedule the use of the award.

Time Off Recognition Awards are an employee incentive rather than a category of leave. Unlike accrued annual leave, Time Off Awards cannot be converted to a cash payment upon separation from federal service nor transferred when the employee transfers to another federal agency. However, the Time Off Award may be transferred to another DOI Bureau if, under unusual circumstances, the employee was unable to use the award and the new supervisor agrees to allow the employee to use the award in his/her new position.

If you have questions on the Time Off Recognition Award, please contact Patty Hougham, Awards Coordinator, at 406-896-5225.

Signed by: Deborah M. DeBock
for Diane M. Friez, Acting

Authenticated by: Donna K. Zentz, MT-933

1 Attachment

1-Time Off Recognition Award Benefits Guide (1 p)

Distribution w/attm.

Assistant Field Manager, Glasgow Field Station
Assistant Field Manager, Havre Field Station

TIME OFF RECOGNITION AWARD BENEFITS GUIDE:

<u>Value to Organization</u>	<u>Number of Hours Awarded</u>	<u>Approval</u>
MODERATE: -A contribution to a product, activity, program, or service to the public which is of sufficient value to merit formal recognition. -Beneficial change or modification of operating principles or procedures.	1 to 10 hours (1 work day)	Immediate Supervisor
SUBSTANTIAL: -An important contribution to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public. -Significant change or modification of operating principles or procedures.	up to 20 hours	SD DSD 920 DSD 930 FMs
HIGH: -A highly significant contribution to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public. -Complete revision of operating principles or procedures, with considerable impact.	21 to 30 hours	SD DSD 920 DSD 930 FMs
EXCEPTIONAL: -A superior contribution to the quality of a critical product, activity, program, or service to the public. -Initiation of a new principle or major procedure, with significant impact.	31 to 40 hours	SD DSD 920 DSD 930 FMs