

## 4.6 Employee Recognition Policy

### Policy Statement

The Province of Nova Scotia is committed to recognizing employees for their achievements made in support of business objectives, high-quality client service and dedication to public service. Recognizing the accomplishments of employees contributes to a supportive work environment and supports the attraction and retention of committed and engaged employees.

This policy provides the foundation for corporate and departmental recognition programs within the Province of Nova Scotia.

### Definitions

#### **CASH GIFT/AWARD**

Cash or near-cash items, such as gift cards or gift certificates, as defined by Canada Revenue Agency (CRA).

#### **DEPUTY HEAD**

The deputy of the member of the Executive Council presiding over a department and all others whom the Governor in Council from time to time designates as having the status of deputy head.

#### **DEPARTMENTS**

Any department, office or public service entity established by the Government of Nova Scotia, as identified under Category I in Appendix I-A of the Corporate Administrative Policy Manuals Policy.

#### **NON-CASH GIFT/AWARD**

Items, such as plaques/trophies, certificates, greeting cards, or merchandise, as defined by the Canada Revenue Agency.

#### **RECOGNITION**

Any word or deed making someone feel appreciated and recognized for what they do. Recognition covers a range of formal and informal practices in the workplace that support corporate and departmental values, goals, objectives and priorities.

#### **Formal Recognition**

Structured, scheduled activities, official communication, or events with specific criteria, which are used to recognize employee contributions, service, and achievements.

### **Informal Recognition**

Acknowledgment of day-to-day accomplishments in the workplace through gestures of appreciation, communication and/or feedback.

### **VALUES**

Respect, integrity, diversity, accountability, and the public good, as defined in the *Values, Ethics, and Conduct: A Code for Nova Scotia Public Servants* and/or values as defined in department business plans.

## **Policy Objectives**

The objectives of this policy are to:

- Promote formal and informal recognition of employees for their achievements such as service, and/or contributions to public service.
- Provide parameters for corporate and department-specific recognition programs and activities.
- Raise awareness of the value of recognizing employees and the positive effect it has on such things as employee engagement, client service, health and wellness, attraction and retention and overall organizational success.

## **Application**

This policy applies to all civil servants whose terms and conditions are set out in accordance with the *Civil Service Act* and regulations and other direct employees of the provincial government, including all bargaining unit employees.

## **Policy Directives**

- Formal and informal recognition activities must recognize, reinforce or promote positive employee behaviours and performance that support corporate and/or departmental values, goals and objectives.
- Events that are solely social in nature, such as office holiday socials, are not considered recognition activities under this policy.
- Public funds cannot be used to purchase alcoholic beverages for recognition gifts/awards or at recognition events.
- Cash gifts/awards shall not be granted to employees as part of any recognition program and/or activity.

- Award recipients will not be deducted for time taken to attend, or travel to, a recognition event held during their regularly scheduled hours of work. Time taken from regular work hours to attend, or travel to, a recognition event is treated as time worked in straight time hours. Award recipients who travel to attend a recognition event will be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with the corporate Travel policy.
- Recipients must be consulted before administering internal and external public forms of recognition, and consent must be obtained before publicizing names or photos of award recipients, either internally or externally.

#### **CORPORATE RECOGNITION**

- The Public Service Commission (PSC) will establish, coordinate, and maintain corporate employee recognition programs, including the Premier's Award of Excellence Program and Corporate Long Service Award. Specific program guidelines related to Corporate Long Service Award and Premier's Award of Excellence programs are available on MyHR.
- Employees reaching service milestones of 25 years or more (in increments of five-years thereafter), will be recognized at an annual Long Service Awards event, co-hosted by the PSC and respective departments.
- All costs related to the Long Service Awards event, including gifts, certificates and venue will be proportionally distributed to recipient departments. Departments will be invoiced by the PSC.
- Publicly-funded gifts for service milestones of 25 years or more will only be provided to recipients through the corporate recognition program.
- For corporate recognition events, where deemed appropriate by the Deputy Head, each department will be responsible for the cost of travel and accommodation for one night and meals, for the recipient and one guest, provided the guest resides in Nova Scotia, in accordance with the corporate Travel Policy. The cost of an additional night accommodation may be approved by the Deputy Head.

#### **DEPARTMENT RECOGNITION**

- Deputy Heads are encouraged to establish, coordinate, and maintain formal employee recognition programs specific to their department. Each department should consider which types of recognition are most valuable to its employees and fit best with the department's values and mandate. The establishment of a formal recognition program must be authorized by the Deputy Head.

- Departments should also consider how to support a culture of appreciation where timely and valuable informal recognition is given on a regular basis.
- Deputy Heads are responsible for the costs associated with department recognition programs and activities. Costs related to department-specific recognition will be managed from within departmental budgets and must be compliant with CRA rules.

#### **RETIREMENT CELEBRATIONS**

- Retirement gifts and celebrations shall be financed by voluntary contributions from fellow employees. The Deputy Head, however, may deem it appropriate to fund a gift from a department budget if they wish to give special recognition to an individual for an extraordinary contribution or exceptionally long service. If public funds are used, the Deputy Head of the authorizing department is responsible for providing justification.

### **Policy Guidelines**

Employee recognition is most effective when recognition activities are genuine and meaningful. To assist departments in making recognition meaningful and inclusive, the PSC has developed Department Recognition Guidelines that are available on MyHR.

This policy is also supported by Premier's Award of Excellence and Corporate Long Service Award Guidelines that provide program details for the corporate recognition programs, which are available on MyHR.

The guidelines will be reviewed and updated by the PSC as needed.

### **Accountability**

#### **PUBLIC SERVICE COMMISSION**

PSC is responsible for:

- Coordinating and maintaining corporate recognition programs such as the Premier's Award of Excellence and Corporate Long Service Award.
- Providing advice and assistance to departments on employee recognition and the application of this policy.
- Providing data to departments to support their recognition activities.
- Ensuring the recognition guidelines are reviewed regularly to reflect current employee recognition practices.

### **DEPUTY HEADS**

Deputy Heads are responsible for:

- Authorizing, monitoring and recording expenditures related to recognition activities relating to their department, in accordance with CRA rules.
- Supporting and approving formal employee recognition programs suitable to their department consistent with the parameters outlined in this policy.
- Communicating corporate and/or department values, goals and objectives when engaging in recognition activities.
- Providing a supportive work environment for employee recognition by modeling informal, day-to-day recognition.
- Ensuring employee recognition activities comply with this policy.

### **MANAGERS/SUPERVISORS**

Managers and supervisors are responsible for:

- Modeling and providing informal, day-to-day recognition for staff and other colleagues and contributing to a culture of appreciation and engagement.
- Nominating employees for awards, where appropriate.
- Encouraging and supporting employees to participate in recognition committees, programs, awards activities whenever operationally possible.

### **EMPLOYEES**

Employees are responsible for:

- Informally and respectfully recognizing peers at all levels of the organization.
- Nominating employees for awards, where appropriate.
- Making an effort to participate in employee recognition programs, committees, and events.

## **Monitoring**

The Public Service Commission is responsible for policy implementation and ensuring the policy is up to date with respect to employee recognition practices.

Departments will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of their own employee recognition programs.

## References

Canada Revenue Agency – Gifts and Awards

*Civil Service Act*

Corporate Administrative Policy Manuals Policy

Travel Policy

Values, Ethics, and Conduct: *A Code for Nova Scotia's Public Servants*

## Enquiries

For further information or questions about this policy, please contact:

Policy and Planning

Public Service Commission

Email: [PSC-Policy-Inquiries@novascotia.ca](mailto:PSC-Policy-Inquiries@novascotia.ca)

---

Approval date: ***April 3, 2007***

Effective date: ***April 3, 2007***

Approved by: ***Executive Council***

Administrative update: ***August 16, 2017***

---