

Title:	Employee Suggestion Program	
Purpose:	To recognize and reward officers and employees for their constructive and creative suggestions to improve City operations, thereby sustaining pride in work performance and fostering excellence in public service.	
Issued by:	Employment and Personnel Services	Date: February 15, 2005
References:	Hawaii Revised Statutes §78-29; Mayor's Directive 66 (05-25-72); CS Circulars 923 (09-27-73) and 23-86 (08-05-86)	

I. POLICY

Official recognition and tangible rewards shall be made for suggestions, which result in improvements in City functions and operations.

II. DEFINITIONS

"Suggestion" means a new or original idea or a new application of an old idea that proposes to effect improved efficiency, economy or safety in City operations.

"Tangible Benefits" means benefits where a direct dollar savings can be calculated (e.g., savings in expenditure, work or work hours).

"Intangible Benefits" means benefits where dollar savings are difficult to calculate, or dollar savings per se may be non-existent (e.g., improvements in safety or morale).

III. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

A. Suggester

1. All City employees, with the following exceptions, are eligible to submit suggestions and receive cash awards:
 - a) Department and agency heads and their first deputies or assistants.
 - b) Employees who are expected to make major changes or wide-ranging improvements within the scope of their normal work duties (as set forth in the employee's position description).
 - c) Employees concerned with the administration of the employee suggestion program (ESP).
2. An eligible employee who submits a suggestion remains eligible for an award despite any subsequent employment action (e.g., promotion, transfer, separation from service).
3. Joint efforts by two or more eligible employees are permitted. Equal credit and award amounts are given to each eligible employee who jointly submits the same suggestion unless the suggesters specify a different split of the award (e.g., 75%+, 25%, or 50%+ 30% +20%).

B. Suggestion

1. To be valid a suggestion must:
 - a) be submitted on an official suggestion form, which becomes a contract between the suggester and the City;
 - b) pertain to job-related and City-controlled work operations; and
 - c) pertain to improvements or changes, which would be beyond the normal expectancy of the duties and responsibilities assigned to the suggester's position.
2. No prior suggestion of a similar nature must be pending under this program. (If duplicate suggestions are received, only the first recorded is eligible for an award.)
3. Suggestions that are ineligible:
 - a) involve areas that are covered by law, personnel rules, or collective bargaining agreements or which require new or changes to existing statutes, rules, contracts, or agreements;
 - b) pertain to City policies on organization, staffing, and City-wide programs and their functions;
 - c) produce purely personal benefits;
 - d) point out the need for routine maintenance and repairs (unless a better and more economical method of doing the work is shown);
 - e) apply to clearly temporary arrangements for which further development or correction has been or is being planned by the City; or
 - f) direct attention to problems or conditions needing improvement but which offer no acceptable solution.
4. Ideas, which are adopted by the City or department but not through the ESP process, may be eligible for an award. The originator of the idea, however, must be able to document the suggestion's origin, and submit this documentation along with information about the idea on an official form within one year from the date of original City implementation. The suggestion must have been made within the one year period preceding the submission of the form and the documentation.

On an exception basis, the Suggestion Awards Committee (SAC) may consider a suggestion that was not submitted through this program but implemented over a year, provided full documentation is offered along with a valid reason for its late submittal.

IV. PATENTABLE SUGGESTIONS

Acceptance of a cash award constitutes an agreement that the use by the City of any idea, method or device shall not form the basis of a further claim upon the City by the employee, the employee's heirs or assigns (Hawaii Revised Statutes, §78-29).

V. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Employee

1. Complete the suggestion form and return or mail the correctly completed form to the ESP Administrator, Department of Human Resources (DHR).
2. Attach a detailed analysis of the situation, a summary of the cost and benefits of the idea, relevant diagrams, and alternative solutions considered (with reasons for their not being acceptable), whenever possible.

B. Departments and Agencies

1. Receive a referred suggestion for feasibility evaluation. Department personnel officer or administrative services officer should forward the suggestion to the appropriate level of management for investigation.
2. Complete an investigation and evaluation report as soon as practicable.
3. Return evaluation to the ESP Administrator through the department ESP coordinator.
4. Implement the suggestion upon the SAC's approval and the Mayor's approval of an award amount for the suggestion.
5. Notify the SAC when the implementation is completed or notify the SAC of the status of the suggestion if implementation is not completed within two months of approval.
6. Provide the award for the adopted suggestion in accordance with established procedure.

C. Department of Human Resources (DHR)

1. Responsible for the ESP's overall operation.
2. Administer the day-to-day operation of the ESP. An ESP Administrator shall:
 - a) make a preliminary determination as to the eligibility of the suggestion and of the suggester;
 - b) process the eligible suggestion and coordinate the feasibility evaluation of the suggestion with the respective department(s);

- c) notify the suggester periodically as to the status of the proposal and coordinate the correspondence for the ESP Office; and
- d) arrange and coordinate the payment and presentation of awards with the respective departments.

D. SAC

There shall be a SAC consisting of the directors of the departments of Human Resources, Budget and Fiscal Services or their designees. The Committee shall:

- 1. review the ESP Administrator's recommendation on the eligibility of a suggestion and the suggester. The committee's decision on eligibility shall be final.
- 2. review the feasibility evaluation recommendation prior to the granting of an award; and
- 3. determine the value of the suggestion and determine the amount of the award.

VI. FEASIBILITY EVALUATIONS

When evaluating the feasibility of a suggestion, the evaluator(s) should consider the feasibility/practicability of the suggestion and extent of benefits or potential savings from the suggestion whether in the department, in other departments, or in the City.

VII. RECONSIDERATION AND SUGGESTION TIME LIMIT

- A. To receive an award, the employee's suggestion must be adopted and implemented by the City. If the suggestion is rejected, the employee may ask for reconsideration within 30 days of the notice of non-acceptance.
- B. When a suggestion, which was originally rejected, is subsequently adopted (wholly or in part) within one year of notification of non-acceptance, the suggester may request, in writing, a final reconsideration by the SAC.
- C. An employee who wishes to continue his claim after the one year period must resubmit the suggestion.

VIII. NATURE OF AWARDS

- A. Awards shall consist of one or a combination of the following:
 - 1. Tangible benefits
 - a) 10% of the first year's savings, but not less than a minimum of \$25 or more than a maximum of \$2,500.
 - b) Mayor's Certificate of Merit.

- c) Letter of commendation. A copy of the commendation shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- 2. Intangible benefits
 - a) \$5 to \$250 based on a standard rating scale.
 - b) Mayor's Certificate of Merit.
 - c) Letter of commendation. A copy of the commendation shall be placed in the employee's personnel file.
- B. Cash awards shall not exceed \$2,500 per suggestion.
- C. Expenditures for the awards are funded by the department(s) accruing the benefits of the suggestion.

IX. AWARDS PRESENTATION CEREMONY

An appropriate awards presentation ceremony shall be coordinated and arranged by the DHR. The presentation of monetary awards should be made as soon as practicable after the award has been determined. Other awards shall be presented at the appropriate award ceremony.

**A GUIDE FOR DETERMINING AWARDS FOR
 INTANGIBLE SUGGESTION BENEFITS**

Degree of Benefit*			Extent of Application of Suggestion**			Effectiveness of Suggestion ***		
Award	Minor	Moderate	Major	Minor	Moderate	Major	Moderate	Major
\$5	X			X			X	X
5 – 10	X				X		X	X
10 – 15	X					X	X	
15 – 25	X					X		X
\$10 – 15		X		X			X	X
15 – 20		X			X		X	
20 – 25		X			X			X
25 - 35		X				X	X	
35 - 50		X				X		X
\$25 - 35			X	X			X	
35 – 50			X	X				X
35 – 50			X		X		X	
50 – 75			X		X			X
50 – 75			X			X	X	
75 – 250			X			X		X

- * Minor – limited but measurable improvements
 Moderate – significant but less extensive improvements
 Major – extensive and wide-ranging improvements
- ** Minor – limited to specific applications
 Moderate – applicable to various situations
 Major – applicable to a wide-range and variety of situations
- *** Moderate – accomplishes the desired result
 Major – very effective in accomplishing the desired result