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PETER J. OSTROSKEY
STATE FIRE MARSHAL

34th Annual Firefighter of the Year Awards Nomination and Award Information

I. NOMINATIONS

All nominations for the annual Massachusetts Firefighter of the Year Awards must be submitted on the official form included with this package and must be from the head of the department. All paid, call, or volunteer firefighters are eligible to receive an award. Only those incidents that occurred between July 1, 2022, and June 30, 2023, are eligible.

Nominations must include the nomination form with a brief narrative of the incident signed by the head of the department and supporting documents such as reports, testimonials, photos, or affidavits.

The head of the department will be asked to attend the meeting of the Heroic Awards Selection Committee in the summer of 2023 to provide a brief overview of the incident and answer any questions the committee might have. The event coordinator will contact the chief with the date and a specific time.

Nominations are accepted on a rolling basis but must be emailed or postmarked by July 15, 2023. Emails should be sent to Kerry.Weihn@mass.gov and hard copies should be sent to Firefighter of the Year, c/o Kerry Weihl, Department of Fire Services, P.O. Box 1025, Stow, MA 01775.

II. AWARD CATEGORIES

Firefighters put their lives on the line every day to protect their communities. The Firefighter of the Year Awards recognize those firefighters whose actions truly go above and beyond the call of duty. The Heroic Awards Selection Committee also seeks to recognize those unsung heroes whose day-to-day work makes their communities safer. Please note that all nominees must be members of the fire service. Civilians who work with the department are not eligible for this award program.

Nominations may be made to recognize individuals and companies for performance in either emergency response or community service:

- **Emergency Response** nominations may include fire incidents with the rescue of victims, incidents involving hazardous materials, vehicle extrication and rescue, rescue from heights or depth, confined space rescue, water or ice rescue, etc. Keep in mind that firefighter safety should not have been unnecessarily compromised to effect a rescue unless the potential benefit exceeded the actual or perceived risk.
- **Community Service** nominations may include exemplary programs and/or actions including fire prevention, fire investigation, training, public fire education, or other innovative community service programs.

III. AWARDS

A. MEDAL OF HONOR

- a. Highest recognition.
- b. Recipients traditionally include those who made the ultimate sacrifice.
- c. Reserved for those incidents where a firefighter or company performed heroic actions at great personal risk and demonstrated uncommon bravery. An outstanding act in the line of duty with risk involved, and a highly unusual accomplishment under dangerous conditions.
- d. Examples: Line of Duty Death, hazardous materials incident that resulted in large numbers of civilians saved, multi-alarm fire with heroic saves, etc.

B. MEDAL OF VALOR

- a. Second highest recognition.
- b. Reserved for those incidents where a firefighter or company went above the call of duty while still performing the job according to protocol. Recipients performed under adverse conditions with some degree of hazard to life and limb or saving lives, or an individual whose efforts resulted in protecting their company or the public.
- c. Examples: multi-alarm fire with multiple civilian saves, technical rescue in extreme circumstances, victim known to the firefighter, child victim, multiple rescue attempts, etc.

C. GOVERNOR'S CITATION FOR MERITORIOUS CONDUCT

- a. Recipients can be individuals or groups.
- b. This category recognizes the individual or company that performed extraordinarily under difficult conditions and went above and beyond the call of duty.
- c. While every fire company and fire department works as a team, this category recognizes individuals and companies who performed extraordinarily under difficult conditions.

- d. Examples include: a difficult technical rescue, a rescue under heavy fire and smoke conditions, performing EMS under unusual circumstances (on a bridge, under fire), responding to a fire or emergency while off-duty, etc. Teamwork may have been key to the operational success of the incident (regardless of outcome).

D. NORMAN KNIGHT AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN COMMUNITY SERVICE

- a. This award is named after philanthropist Norman Knight, who founded The Hundred Club in 1959 and continues to be committed to the public safety community.
- b. Recipients can include those who are in a training or public outreach role within the department or who volunteer their time on a project that deserves recognition.
- c. Recipient's accomplishment is a result of the training and commitment to their service to the fire service.
- d. Examples: public fire education, public service campaign or project, volunteer for CISM peer support, etc.