



# Cochise County Board of Supervisors

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**Policy Title: Employee Recognition and Awards**

**Policy Number: 2237**

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**Effective: January 7, 2025**

**Scope/Coverage: All Cochise County Employees**

**Policy Contact: Finance Director, County Administrator**

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**Purpose:** The Cochise County Board of Supervisors acknowledges that delivering county services to county residents and visitors is accomplished through core non-negotiable values:

1. Ethical Leadership – Acting with integrity and influencing other to do the right thing, ensuring mutual accountability at all levels;
2. Excellence – Striving to exceed performance standards and expectations in stewardship, service and both individual and organizational development; and
3. Grit – Inspirational perseverance in the face of adversity, creating opportunity out of challenge.

In recognition of these values, and in addition to standard compensation and benefits, the County has established an employee recognition plan to honor those who exemplify these principles through exceptional service, commitment to organizational goals, community engagement, or upon retirement.

## **I. General Employee Recognition Guidelines**

### **A. Funding Sources**

1. The Cochise County Board of Supervisors may designate an amount in the county budget to be used for employee recognition events and awards consistent with this plan.
2. County Administrator, or designee is responsible for organizing county-wide employee recognition events.
3. County Elected Officials may transfer funds within their office budgets for employee recognition events specific to their office that are consistent with this plan.
4. Recognition that does not comply with this plan, or with the Food and Beverage Purchases Procedure, shall be purchased as an out-of-pocket expense.



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## B. Award Types, Eligibility and Limitations

1. Recognition may be given through periodic award of non-cash items having a *de minimus* value of fifty dollars (\$50.00) or less. Items may include clothing, mugs, desk items, plaques, watches, coins, or other items for business use with the Cochise County seal, or other approved branding for Cochise County Elected Offices or the Superior Court.
2. Length-of-Service plaques or other recognition award should not exceed a cost of \$400 per award, per employee. If a length-of-service item costs more than \$400, then employee can be taxed on the excess amount.
3. Purchase of award items shall be done in compliance with County Procurement Policy.
4. For purposes of this policy, all employees are considered uniformed employees when purchasing clothing items.
5. Any county employee can recommend a colleague for an award in recognition of excellence, regardless of salary or classification.
6. Cochise County will endeavor to structure employee awards to comply with federal Internal Revenue Service laws, regulations and guidelines and to minimize tax implications to employees. However, any employee recognition awards may be taxable to the employee under the then current federal and state tax laws and taxes on such awards are the employee's responsibility.

## II. County Wide Employee Recognition Programs

### A. "Applause!" Recognition

1. Employees are encouraged to recognize the outstanding service they see co-workers providing to other employees, clients, and the public.
2. All County employees are eligible for recognition.
3. All County employees and clients can submit Applause! Nomination forms or send an email to: [board@cochise.az.gov](mailto:board@cochise.az.gov).
4. Applause nominations are shared through a monthly email to all County employees. Each month, the Clerk of the Board will randomly draw a winner to receive Cochise County branded merchandise.



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## B. Cyber Security Awareness

1. Cochise County, through its Information Technology (IT) Department, recognizes the important role all county employees perform to maintain the security of County IT systems from malicious cyber-attacks. If a cyber-attack were to occur, the public could be greatly harmed by corruption of County IT systems.
2. The Cyber Security Awareness recognition program highlights the importance of cyber security by rewarding employees who report suspicious email activity.
3. Winners are shared through a monthly email to all County employees. Each month, the IT Department will randomly draw a winner to receive branded Cochise County merchandise.

## C. Volunteer Cochise

1. Volunteer Cochise recognition has two goals in mind - to encourage County employees to volunteer within communities, and for employees to recognize the impact of that volunteerism.
2. The County values having active communities and encourages employees to develop a sense of purpose outside of work which can lead to healthier lifestyles.
3. Cochise County employees are recognized for the ways they can give back to the communities they serve throughout the region.
4. Employees voluntarily report hours of service through an online form. Submissions are shared through a monthly email to all County employees. Each month, the Clerk of the Board will randomly draw a winner to receive Cochise County branded merchandise.
5. There are many ways employees can volunteer time and energy to help enhance the health of Cochise County. Volunteer categories include:
  - Youth Sports & Environmental Initiatives
  - Animal Care & Scouting/Summer Camps
  - Good Neighbor & Community Development
  - Healthcare & Disability Support
  - Schools & Horticulture/Agriculture
  - Fraternal/Sororal Organizations & Food Banks
  - Veterans & Democracy Building
  - Holiday Events & Faith-based Initiatives
  - Senior Care & Letter Writing Campaigns
  - Literacy & Advocacy



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- Fitness/Mental Health & Hobbies
- Other

## D. Approval for Future Programs

Any County Office or Department may request a county-wide employee recognition program like the above by submitting a proposal to the County Administrator. Proposals will be reviewed and, if acceptable, presented to the Board of Supervisors for final approval. Future programs shall be added to this policy accordingly.