



## TOWN OF NEEDHAM

### MERIT PROGRAM POLICY AND PROCEDURES Policy#503

#### I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

The purpose of this document is to outline the Town's policy and procedures used for nominating employees for Merit Steps and Merit Bonuses.

#### II. APPLICABILITY

This Policy applies to all regular non-represented employees of the TOWN OF NEEDHAM (the "Town"), whose employment is full-time or permanent benefit-eligible part-time, excluding those employees under the supervision and control of the School Committee.

Represented employees whose Collective Bargaining Agreements contain Merit Programs, may follow the applicable sections of this policy related to procedures for submitting nominations. Collective Bargaining Agreements will take precedence over this policy where necessary. If a Collective Bargaining Agreement does not contain a Merit Program, this policy does not apply to that employee group.

#### III. DEFINITIONS

Refer to Policy # 100 Definitions for commonly used words and phrases.

#### IV. POLICY

**A. Merit Step Increase** At the written request of the department manager, the Town Manager may grant an additional step or steps at the conclusion of the probationary period or at the time of the annual performance review if the employee has demonstrated exceptional performance. The date of the additional step or steps shall become the employee's anniversary date for the purposes of future satisfactory performance step increases.

**B. Merit Bonus** At the written request of the department manager, the Town Manager may grant a one-time Merit Bonus in an amount not to exceed \$3,600 per fiscal year if the employee has demonstrated exceptional performance.

The provisions listed above shall be subject to sufficient appropriation.

## **PROCEDURES**

### **C. Merit Step Program**

1. Department managers may recommend employees for a merit step at the conclusion of the applicable probationary period or at the employee's annual review date for demonstrated exceptional performance. Exceptional Performance includes, but is not limited to how the employee met stated objectives during the preceding year; how the employee assisted other departments or employees in meeting their objectives; how the employee improved customer service to the Town of Needham; and how the employee's service to the Town over the past year was extraordinary in nature.

2. The Merit Step Award Form must be completed in its entirety, signed by the department manager, and be submitted to the Director of Human Resources, along with the Nomination Narrative, the most recent performance evaluation and a Personnel/Payroll Action Form (PPAF).

3. The Director of Human Resources reserves the right to request additional information after the nomination is reviewed.

### **D. Merit Bonus Program**

1. Department Managers may nominate an employee or group of employees for Merit Bonuses up to \$3,600 for truly exceptional performance such as, but not limited to, successful completion of a major, multi-year project with Town-wide implications; completion of a complicated assignment; backfilling a significant vacancy; outstanding customer service; or devotion of a significant amount of work beyond what is reasonably expected; assisting other departments or employees in meeting their objectives; improving customer service to the Town; successfully achieved a one-time goal or completed a major project or task which greatly enhanced the Town's operational ability or enhanced services to its customers.

2. The Merit Bonus Award Form must be completed in its entirety, signed by the department manager and be submitted to the Director of Human Resources, along with the Nomination Narrative, the most recent performance evaluation and a Personnel/Payroll Action Form (PPAF).

3. The Merit Bonus Award Form must include the dollar amount of the bonus requested. If the award form is submitted for a group of employees, the form may include the specific dollar amount of the bonus to be granted to each member of the group (not to exceed \$3,600 in total).

4. The Director of Human Resources reserves the right to request additional information after the nomination is reviewed.

## **V. EXCEPTIONS**

The Town Manager has the discretion to make exceptions to this Policy in the best interest of the Town.

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**MERIT NOMINATION FORM**

Employee Name:			
Department:			
Position Title:			
Date of Hire:		Annual Review:	
Current Grade/Step:		Current Rate:	\$ _____
<b><u>Merit Step</u></b>		<b><u>Merit Bonus</u></b>	
Proposed Grade/Step:		Amount of Merit Bonus Requested:	\$ _____
Proposed Rate/Salary:	\$ _____		
Does the Employee receive additional compensation above the step rate?		Yes _____	No _____
Do funds exist in the Department Budget to cover this request?		Yes _____	No _____

**NOMINATED BY**

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Department Manager Signature

Date

**APPROVAL**

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Director of Human Resources Signature

Date



## ATTACHMENT C

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR NARRATIVE

Each Merit form should include a narrative description of how the employee(s) being nominated fulfills the three areas required for a Merit award.

1. **Basic Job Requirements.** *Explain how the employee performed the basic requirements of the position and how he/she met specific objectives.*

The performance evaluation that attached to the Merit Request form may substitute completion of this section if the evaluation is both recent (within two months) and written in narrative form.

If a recent performance review is not available, please use this space to state the most important aspects of the employee's position and how this employee was successful in performing the basic requirements of the position. Included in this discussion should be examples of: the employee's job knowledge; the quality and quantity of the work produced by this individual; the employee's over dependability and judgment; the individual's interpersonal and communication skills; and the employee's supervisory skills, if applicable.

This section should also include a description of specific objectives that were discussed and agreed upon with the employee at the beginning of the review period. Please discuss how the employee met these objectives and provide examples of specific assignments completed, programs implemented or systems that were instituted by the employee. Please also describe how deadlines were met by the employee and, most importantly, what efficiencies were achieved, what benefits were derived, and what revenue or budget impacts resulted from the employee's actions or efforts.

2. **Extraordinary Service.** *Describe the nature of the employee's extraordinary service over the past year or the importance of the successful completion of the project.*

Describe the characteristics that differentiate this employee from his or her peers and that specifically made this employee's performance exceptional. Provide examples of objectives this employee attained this year and why these were especially difficult or challenging. Describe successful and important projects that were undertaken and completed by the individual that were above and beyond the usual role and scope of the employee's position. This section might include a description of the attitude of the employee, the hours contributed, and the sacrifices made by the individual to complete the project. Please also describe the ways in which this employee sought out new challenges, took on new responsibilities, or made time for continuing education efforts.