

An Act

ENROLLED HOUSE
BILL NO. 3970

By: Burns and Luttrell of the
House

and

Simpson of the Senate

An Act relating to awards for meritorious service; amending 47 O.S. 2021, Section 2-108.5, which relates to the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal and related awards; modifying terminology; providing for creation of Oklahoma Red Heart and Oklahoma Blue Heart Awards; specifying persons eligible for Oklahoma Red Heart or Oklahoma Blue Heart; and providing an effective date.

SUBJECT: Awards for meritorious service

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 47 O.S. 2021, Section 2-108.5, is amended to read as follows:

Section 2-108.5 A. 1. There is hereby created the Oklahoma State Award Program Committee. The purpose of the Committee is to create, establish eligibility requirements and make recommendation for awarding the Oklahoma Medal of Valor for meritorious service, the Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal for extended exemplary service to the state and the Oklahoma ~~Purple Red Heart~~ Oklahoma Blue Heart for serious line of duty injuries for law enforcement and public safety members employed by municipal, county, state and employees of federal agencies working in Oklahoma.

2. There is hereby established the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal and the Oklahoma ~~Purple Red Heart~~ Oklahoma Blue Heart, along with authorized

appurtenances, for award by the Governor, in the name of the state, to any person who has demonstrated meritorious achievement, or a distinct act of courage, shown distinguished meritorious service to the state over an extended period of service or who has incurred injury or wounds, while performing or actively engaged in public service activities. The Oklahoma ~~Purple Red~~ Heart is limited to ~~law enforcement and public safety members~~ municipal firefighters employed by cities and towns. The Oklahoma Blue Heart is limited to law enforcement and public safety members employed by municipal, county, state and employees of federal agencies working in Oklahoma.

3. The purpose of each award is to formally recognize extraordinary acts of valor by public safety members and citizens of Oklahoma who engage in extraordinary acts of bravery and valor and to formally recognize public safety members in Oklahoma who have been seriously injured in the line of duty and to acknowledge the distinguished meritorious service of citizens to the state.

B. The members of the Oklahoma State Award Program (OSAP) Committee shall have experience in the field of public safety and public service. The OSAP Committee shall be composed of nine (9) members as follows:

1. The Lieutenant Governor, who shall serve as chair;
2. The Adjutant General of the Oklahoma National Guard;
3. The Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety;
4. The Director of the Department of Corrections;
5. The Director of the Department of Transportation;
6. The President of the Oklahoma Sheriffs' Association;
7. The President of the Oklahoma Association of Chiefs of Police;
8. The President of the Oklahoma State Firefighters Association; and
9. The President of the Oklahoma Sheriffs and Peace Officers Association.

C. Except at any meeting to select recipients of the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal, the Oklahoma Red Heart or the Oklahoma ~~Purple~~ Blue Heart, each member, other than the chair, may be represented by a designee; provided, the designee must be an active member in good standing with the agency or association to which the appointed member belongs. The Chairman reserves the right to appoint an advisory board to collect, review and make initial award recommendations to the OSAP Committee. The advisory board will be comprised of designees from the nine-member OSAP Committee.

D. The Committee shall conduct its first meeting no later than ninety (90) calendar days after the appointment of the last member. The Committee shall meet at the direction of the chair, and shall normally meet not less than once each year and not more than three times each year.

E. A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum to conduct business.

F. The members of the Committee shall serve without compensation, except that the members may be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses arising from Committee activities or business. Such expenses shall be paid by the respective agencies at which the member is employed at the time the expense is incurred.

G. No member of the OSAP Committee shall solicit, seek or request individuals to submit individuals for awards. OSAP Committee members may explain the program to interested individuals. The Committee may secure directly from any department or agency such information as the Committee deems necessary to carry out its duties.

H. The Commissioner of the Department of Public Safety shall promulgate rules to establish the following:

1. Design of the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal and the Oklahoma ~~Purple~~ Red Heart or the Oklahoma Blue Heart and any authorized appurtenances proposed by the Adjutant General;

2. Criteria for eligibility for award of the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal or the Oklahoma ~~Purple~~ Red Heart or Oklahoma Blue Heart proposed by the Adjutant General;

3. Criteria for the proper wear of the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal or the Oklahoma ~~Purple~~ Red Heart or the Oklahoma Blue Heart proposed by the Adjutant General;

4. Method of purchasing the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal or the Oklahoma ~~Purple~~ Red Heart or Oklahoma Blue Heart;

5. Order of precedence relating to other state awards; and

6. Other rules deemed necessary to carry out the provisions of this section.

I. The Committee shall consider candidates for award for the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal or the Oklahoma ~~Purple~~ Red Heart or Oklahoma Blue Heart only from the applications received. The OSAP Committee may go into executive session to deliberate and select recommended recipients. The Chair shall present to the Governor the names of recommendations as Medal recipients.

J. The Committee shall not disclose any information which may compromise an ongoing law enforcement investigation or information that is otherwise required by law to be kept confidential. Only the final recommendation for receipt of the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Service Medal and the Oklahoma ~~Purple~~ Red Heart or Oklahoma Blue Heart shall be subject to the Oklahoma Open Records Act.

K. The Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Service Medal and the Oklahoma ~~Purple~~ Red Heart or Oklahoma Blue Heart may not be awarded to any person who was not selected by the Committee.

L. The award of the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Service Medal and the Oklahoma ~~Purple~~ Red Heart or Oklahoma Blue Heart may be rescinded for suitable cause. The Chair, with the consent of the Committee, shall forward the recommendation for rescission to the Governor. The final decision to rescind must be approved by the Governor.

M. The Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished Service Medal or the Oklahoma ~~Purple~~ Red Heart or Oklahoma Blue

Heart may be awarded posthumously and may be presented to such representative of the deceased's family as may be deemed appropriate by the Governor.

SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2022.

Passed the House of Representatives the 15th day of March, 2022.

Presiding Officer of the House
of Representatives

Passed the Senate the 20th day of April, 2022.

Presiding Officer of the Senate

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Received by the Office of the Governor this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____

Approved by the Governor of the State of Oklahoma this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

Governor of the State of Oklahoma

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY OF STATE

Received by the Office of the Secretary of State this _____

day of _____, 20_____, at _____ o'clock _____ M.

By: _____