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February 8, 2021

By: David and Bergstrom

An Act relating to public safety awards; amending Section 1, Chapter 17, O.S.L. 2017 (47 O.S. Supp. 2020, Section 2-108.5), which relates to the Oklahoma State Award Program Committee; modifying included awards; and providing an effective date.

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

SECTION 1. AMENDATORY Section 1, Chapter 17, O.S.L. 2017  
(47 O.S. Supp. 2020, 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 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.

1        2. There is hereby established the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the  
2 Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal and the Oklahoma  
3 Purple Heart, along with authorized appurtenances, for award by the  
4 Governor, in the name of the state, to any person who has  
5 demonstrated meritorious achievement, or a distinct act of courage,  
6 shown distinguished meritorious service to the state over an  
7 extended period of service or who has incurred injury or wounds,  
8 while performing or actively engaged in public service activities.  
9 The Oklahoma Purple Heart is limited to law enforcement and public  
10 safety members employed by municipal, county, state and employees of  
11 federal agencies working in Oklahoma.

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

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

- 22        1. The Lieutenant Governor, who shall serve as chair;
- 23        2. The Adjutant General of the Oklahoma National Guard;
- 24        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 ~~and~~, the Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal or the Oklahoma Purple 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.

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

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

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

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

16 1. Design of the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma  
17 Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal and the Oklahoma Purple  
18 Heart and any authorized appurtenances proposed by the Adjutant  
19 General;

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

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

4        4. Method of purchasing the Oklahoma Medal of Valor ~~and, the~~  
5 Oklahoma Distinguished Meritorious Service Medal or the Oklahoma  
6 Purple Heart;

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

8        6. Other rules deemed necessary to carry out the provisions of  
9 this ~~act~~ section.

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

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

1 K. The Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma Distinguished  
2 Service Medal and the Oklahoma Purple Heart may not be awarded to  
3 any person who was not selected by the Committee.

4 L. The award of the Oklahoma Medal of Valor, the Oklahoma  
5 Distinguished Service Medal and the Oklahoma Purple Heart may be  
6 rescinded for suitable cause. The Chair, with the consent of the  
7 Committee, shall forward the recommendation for rescission to the  
8 Governor. The final decision to rescind must be approved by the  
9 Governor.

10 M. The Oklahoma Medal of Valor ~~and~~, the Oklahoma Distinguished  
11 Service Medal or the Oklahoma Purple Heart may be awarded  
12 posthumously and may be presented to such representative of the  
13 deceased's family as may be deemed appropriate by the Governor.

14 SECTION 2. This act shall become effective November 1, 2021.

15 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC SAFETY  
16 February 8, 2021 - DO PASS  
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