



## TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY™

### Operating Policy and Procedure

#### **OP 70.34: Service Excellence Leave Award**

**DATE:** December 19, 2016

**PURPOSE:** The purpose of this Operating Policy/Procedure (OP) is to establish a Service Excellence Award in accordance with Government Code § 661.911 to reward staff employees of Texas Tech University and the Texas Tech University System for exemplary service.

**REVIEW:** This OP will be reviewed in September of even-numbered years by the Assistance Vice President for Human Resources with substantive revisions forwarded to the chief of staff for the president.

#### **POLICY/PROCEDURE**

##### **1. General Guidelines**

- a. At the request of the department manager and upon the approval of the divisional senior vice chancellor, senior vice president/vice president, or the provost and senior vice president, the president, chancellor, or their designee will authorize the awarding of service excellence leave in accordance with Government Code § 661.911. Service excellence leave is paid time off without reduction of other leave balances such as vacation or compensatory time.
- b. Benefits eligible staff who have exhibited outstanding performance, as documented by a current performance appraisal, may be awarded service excellence leave.
- c. For the purposes of this policy, “outstanding performance, as documented by a current performance appraisal” is defined as an overall rating of at least 4.5 on a scale of 7 or higher (or equivalent language in modified performance evaluation forms approved by Human Resources) on the most recent performance appraisal that has been filed within the last 12 months.
- d. Service excellence leave is an award and should not be considered an employee entitlement. Receipt of an outstanding performance appraisal is an eligibility requirement but does not entitle the employee to a service excellence leave award.
- e. An employee may be awarded a minimum of four hours up to a maximum of 32 hours of service excellence leave within a fiscal year. This maximum is prorated based upon the employee’s percentage of employment. For example, a half-time person could be awarded a maximum of 16 hours within a fiscal year.
- f. The recipient must not currently be subject to formal disciplinary action.

- g. Service excellence leave must be used within the fiscal year (September 1 through August 31) in which it is awarded or it will be forfeited.
- h. Unused service excellence leave is not compensable at the time of termination.
- i. The awarding of service excellence leave will be without regard to race, color, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, national origin, age, disability, genetic information, status as a protected veteran, or any other legally protected category, class or characteristic..

## 2. **Procedures**

- a. Nominations may be made any time during the year.
- b. An employee may receive multiple awards within a fiscal year, provided the maximum hours awarded do not exceed those set forth in section 1.e above.
- c. The department manager is responsible for ensuring compliance with the general guidelines. Prior to forwarding for final approval, the department manager must attach a copy of the employee's latest performance appraisal to the nomination form.
- d. Supervisors or the campus community at large may nominate individuals for recognition by completing a nomination form. Nomination forms require approval of the employee's department manager and the divisional senior vice chancellor, senior vice president/vice president, or the provost and senior vice president. Upon final approval, the original form should be forwarded to Human Resources with a copy returned to the employee's department. Upon receipt of the approved nomination form, the department manager/supervisor will make the award to the employee.
- e. Award recipients and their supervisor will discuss the best time to schedule time off. Supervisors are encouraged to permit the time off as close to the approval of the award as practicable.
- f. Service excellence leave taken will be reported in a manner and form prescribed by the university.

## 3. **Authoritative References**

Texas Government Code, Section 661.911

## 4. **Right to Change Policy**

Texas Tech reserves the right to interpret, change, modify, amend, or rescind this policy, in whole or in part, at any time without the consent of employees.

The *Service Excellence Leave Award Nomination* is available on the Human Resources website at <http://www.depts.ttu.edu/hr/forms.asp>.