



State of Nevada MERIT AWARD BOARD



“Good Government, Great Employees”

Brian Sandoval
Governor

FREQUENTLY- ASKED QUESTIONS

Q: What is the “Good Government Great Employee Award?”

A: The Good Government Great Employee Award is merit award program created in 1967 to recognize state employees’ efforts and contributions to increase the efficiency and productivity of Nevada. Program suggestions must be submitted by state employees to state agencies.

Q: What body has authority over the program?

A: The controlling authority of the merit program is the Merit Award Board. The board is comprised of five members from varying state agencies and other organizations.

Q: What is the definition of a state employee?

A: Per NRS 285.018: state employee is defined as any person employed by a state agency who is not the head of the state agency or a designee of the head of a state agency for the purposes of this chapter.

Q: What is the definition of a state agency?

A: Per NRS 285.016: a state agency is defined as ascribed in NRS 281.195, except that the term does not include a board which is exempt from the provisions of chapter 353 of NRS pursuant to NRS 353.005.

Q: Where can I find information on the Merit Award Program?

A: Information regarding the program, its requirements, forms and board can be found at www.hr.nv.gov/Boards/MeritAward/Merit_Award_Board

Q: How can I find out if my suggestion has been previously-submitted?

**A: You can search the online suggestion matrix to see if your idea has already been submitted to the state for review and approval.
(Click to see matrix)**

Q: What are the suggestion requirements for an eligible award?

A: An eligible suggestion: (See NRS 285.050 for a details)

- *is not currently under active consideration by the state agency affected;*
- *is not a normal part of the job duties of the state employee(s);*
- *is not within the employee’s authority or responsibility to carry out or implement, whether acting individually or as a member of a group of state employees;*
- *proposes to do more than merely suggest that an existing policy or procedure be followed correctly;*
- *does not concern an individual grievance or complaint;*
- *would not reduce the quality or quantity of services provided by the relevant state agency; and;*
- *would not transfer costs from one state agency to another state agency.*

Q: What constitutes a valid and official suggestion?

A: A suggestion is considered valid and official when it is submitted to the Board in writing utilizing the nomination form found online at www.hr.nv.gov/Boards/MeritAward/Merit_Award_Board. Suggestions that are written down but not submitted to the Board on the required form will not be deemed valid or official.

Q: What happens after the Board receives a suggestion?

A: Upon receiving an employee suggestion (pursuant to [NRS 285.050](#)), the Board records and acknowledges receipt of the employee suggestion; notifies the state employee(s) of said receipt; and refers the employee suggestion to the head of the state agency or agencies affected, or his or her designee, for consideration.

The head of the state agency, or his or her designee, shall report findings and recommendations to the Board regarding said suggestion. Typically, the agency report indicates whether the employee suggestion has been adopted and if adopted; the day on which the employee suggestion was placed in effect; and the actual or estimated reduction, elimination or avoidance of expenditures or any improvement in operations made possible by the employee suggestion. If the suggestion is rejected by the agency, the reasons for rejection, and if applicable, whether legislation will be required before the employee suggestion may be adopted.

Once the Board receives the agency's report, it shall review the findings and recommendations of the state agency. The Board may obtain additional information or take other action as is necessary for thorough and impartial consideration and evaluation of each employee suggestion, while also taking into consideration any action by the state agency, staff recommendations and the objectives of the Merit Award Program. The Board then makes a formal recommendation for approval of the suggestion for award.

An award may not be made for an employee suggestion until the State has realized a reduction, elimination or avoidance of expenditures or any improvement in operations as a result of the employee suggestion.

Q: What happens if duplicate suggestions are submitted?

A: If duplicate employee suggestions are submitted, only the state employee or group of state employees who makes the first employee suggestion received is eligible for an award pursuant to NRS 285.070.

Q: How many times can one submit a suggestion for review?

A: Per NRS285.050 (4): "... a state employee either individually or as a member of a group of state employees, may not make more than two employee suggestions in any calendar year. If one suggestion has been approved in a calendar year that individual or group may only submit ONE additional suggestion in that calendar year..". (Refer to NRS285.050 (4) for more information)

NOTE: Suggestions may only be submitted once to the Board. Once a suggestion is rejected or approved it will not be reconsidered.

Q: Is there maximum an employee can receive as their award?

A: An award made under the merit program may not exceed ten percent of the amount of any actual savings to the State, or a total of \$25,000, whichever is less. If the amount of a proposed award will exceed \$5,000, the award must be approved by the Interim Finance Committee.

Q: Are awards subject to IRS reporting?

A: Awards may be subject to tax reporting. For more information, please contact your Agency Payroll/HR representative.

For additional information regarding the Merit Award Board, please visit www.hr.nv.gov/Boards/MeritAward/Merit_Award_Board.