



Awards Program Description and Guidelines

Innovation and Service Excellence

Purpose

1. To recognize employees for exceptional contributions, ideas, and efforts that have resulted in superior service being provided within the organization and to the Hillsborough community.
2. To cite noteworthy examples of innovation and service excellence as a way to share success stories throughout the organization and community and make it easier for others to build upon these achievements.
3. To reward employees for outstanding contributions and to make ongoing improvement a part of the organization's culture.

Nominations

Nominations are made for exemplary efforts in the areas of innovation and service excellence. Nominations can be made by anyone, such as a coworker, supervisor, department head, employee in another department, community member, or appointed or elected officials. Employees also can nominate themselves. A nomination can be for individual or multiple employees.

Nominations may be made throughout the calendar year by completing this [Microsoft Form](#) online. The deadline for accepting nominations for this year is Jan. 31, 2025 (for July 1, 2023, through Dec. 31, 2024).

Award categories

Innovation — Innovation is any idea, program, or effort where the implementation results in improving the efficiency, effectiveness, or responsiveness of a town service or operation. An innovation can also be an idea that addresses a major community need or strategic priority. An innovation is generally described as an improvement that changes the way something has been done in the past.

Service Excellence — Service Excellence is considered an action or change that impacts the quality of service a customer receives. A customer can be widely defined, such as a community member, business operator, tourist, coworker, appointed board, department, vendor, or other government or nonprofit agency. Examples of exemplary service include assisting a community member in need; implementing an idea that improves communications and the provision of critical information to the public; and assisting coworkers or other departments beyond the normal call of duty. This category also rewards employees who have endured sustained periods of a day to a year or more of extraordinary workloads or stressful circumstances that may impact their personal and family wellbeing.

The Service Excellence Award recognizes employees who have exhibited calm in the face of a storm, showing resilience and endurance to provide exceptional service despite challenges, obstacles and adversity.

Innovator of Distinction — recognizes exceptionally creative ideas and/or actions that encourage similarly bold thinking to become part of the Town of Hillsborough's organizational culture. Because the award recognizes especially unique ideas, it is awarded on a limited basis and may not be awarded annually.

Eligibility

Employees are eligible for multiple nominations and can be nominated for efforts in both categories. All part-time and full-time employees are eligible for the awards program, with the exception of the town manager.

Review committee and awards

The town manager will appoint a committee to review the nominations and recommend awards based on the merits of each award submission. The committee will consist of a combination of elected officials, community member(s), operations team member(s), employee representative, and town manager.

Awards are made based on their overall impact, such as cost savings, efficiency and effectiveness gains, improving current practices or serving as an example that encourages future innovations from town employees. An award can be given for exceptional benefits in just one area, such as cost savings. Or a nominee could qualify by making significant contributions across both areas listed above.

The review committee will make decisions on the following awards for each award category:

- *Gold Award* — \$550, award and one day of vacation leave
The recipient made the **highest level of impact** to the community and/or organization via the contribution made by implementation of the nominee's idea; through service excellence actions that serve as an example for fellow town employees to follow; or through actions during extraordinary circumstances.
- *Silver Award* — \$300 and award
The recipient made a **substantial impact** to the community and/or organization via the contribution made by implementation of the nominee's idea; through service excellence actions that as an example for fellow town employees to follow; or through actions during extraordinary circumstances.
- *Bronze Award* — \$150 and award
The recipient made a **creative and/or noteworthy improvement** to the community and/or organization via the contribution made by implementation of the nominee's idea; through service excellence actions that as an example for fellow town employees to follow; or through actions during extraordinary circumstances.
- *Innovator of Distinction* — \$300 award and one day of vacation leave

Awards can be given to individuals or to a team or group. Each member of a recipient team or group will receive the award as if receiving an individual award. For instance, if a team of three employees wins the Gold Innovation Award, they each will receive \$550, the award, and a day of vacation leave.