

Employee Recognition Program

The City of Richland Center values the contributions of its employees and elected officials and is committed to recognizing outstanding performance, service, and dedication to the City's mission. The following program outlines the framework for honoring and recognizing employees and elected officials:

A. Purpose

The Employee Recognition Program aims to improve organization health by recognizing the achievements of the City's most valuable assets – employees and elected officials. This policy seeks to promote a positive work environment, encourage high performance, and acknowledge significant contributions to the City's goals and community well-being.

B. Eligibility

All full-time, part-time, and temporary employees, as well as elected officials, are eligible for recognition under this program, provided they are in good standing and have not received any formal discipline in the preceding 12 months.

C. Types of Recognition

The City may recognize employees and elected officials through the following methods, as determined by the City Administrator, department heads, or Common Council:

1. Service Milestones: Employees and elected officials reaching significant service milestones (e.g., 5, 10, 15, 20, or 25 years of service) may receive a certificate of appreciation and may be acknowledged at a Common Council meeting, City event, or through media communications.
 - a. A small token of recognition (e.g., plaque, gift card not exceeding \$50) may be provided, subject to budget approval.
2. Performance Excellence: Employees demonstrating exceptional performance, innovation, or leadership in their roles may be nominated for an annual "Employee of the Year" award or department-specific commendations. Nominations shall be submitted by supervisors or peers to the City Administrator by November 1 each year, with awards presented at a year-end.
3. Community Impact: Employees or elected officials who significantly contribute to community initiatives, volunteer efforts, or City projects benefiting the public may receive a "Community Service Award," presented at the discretion of the City Administrator or Common Council.
4. Safety and Teamwork: Employees who exemplify excellence in adherence to workplace safety standards or inspire exceptional team unity and collaboration may be recognized through department-level acknowledgments, such as a letter of commendation or public mention in City communications.

5. Retirement and Departure Recognition: Upon the retirement of a fully vested employee or conclusion of an elected official's term, the Common Council may issue a formal resolution or proclamation honoring their service. Such resolutions or proclamations shall highlight the individual's contributions and may be presented at a Common Council meeting or special event, with a copy provided to the honoree and maintained in the City's records or employee's personnel file.

D. Department-Level Recognition: Department heads are encouraged to engage in additional forms of recognition tailored to individual employees' preferences, work styles, or contributions to enhance personal impact and foster a culture of appreciation. Examples of such recognition include, but are not limited to:

1. Verbal or written praise.
2. Public recognition/praise via social media.
3. Providing lunch or treats.
4. Flexible scheduling.
5. Personalized thank-you notes or gift card.
6. Department or City branded items.
7. Professional development opportunities.

Department heads should consult with employees to understand their preferred forms of recognition and tailor their efforts accordingly, ensuring meaningful acknowledgment.

E. Nomination and Selection Process

1. Nominations for performance, community impact, teamwork, or other department-level recognition may be submitted by any employee, supervisor, or elected official to the City Administrator or delegated department head.
2. Nominations must include a written statement detailing the nominee's contributions and alignment with City values, submitted at least 30 days prior to the intended recognition date.
3. Department Heads will review nominations for department-level recognition and determine recipients. The City Administrator shall review all other nominations and determine recipients.
4. The Personnel Committee will review all requests for resolutions or proclamations.

F. Funding and Implementation

1. The City shall budget annually for recognition activities, including awards, certificates, and events, as approved by the Common Council.

- a. Per **Resolution 2022-6**, twenty-five percent (25%) of the proceeds from the sale of used equipment shall fund this program.
 2. Department heads shall promote the program, emphasizing tailored recognition, and ensure equitable access to recognition opportunities.
 3. Recognition events such as annual employee gatherings may be held to celebrate recipients, subject to budget and operational constraints.
- G.** Records of recognition awards, milestones, and resolutions or proclamations shall be maintained in the employee's personnel file or City records (for elected officials) and may be referenced in annual performance evaluations to highlight positive contributions.
- H.** This program does not create a contractual obligation or guarantee of recognition. The City reserves the right to modify or discontinue the program at its discretion, with or without notice.