

Emergency Medical Services Exemplary Service Medal

Alberta Awards Guidelines

The EMS Exemplary Service Medal is the newest member of the Exemplary Service Medals family. It was created on July 7, 1994 to recognize professionals in the provision of prehospital emergency medical services who have performed their duties in an exemplary manner, characterized by good conduct, industry and efficiency. They must have been employed with EMS on or after October 31, 1991 and have completed twenty years of exemplary service, including at least ten years in the performance of duties involving potential risk.

How Does It Work

Each province and territory has an Awards Committee whose members are appointed by the National Advisory Committee whose membership consists of the Executive Director and two directors of the Canadian Confederation of Ambulance Service Associations.

Nominations for the Medal are submitted by the Awards Committee to the Advisory Committee which reviews the eligibility of the nominees and, if acceptable, submits the nominations to the Chancellery, the branch of the Office of the Governor General responsible for the administration of honours. The Chancellery then submits the nominations to the Governor General for his approval.

Who Qualifies to be Nominated for the Award

First of all, do they meet the requirement of the Regulation? The Regulation states that “the Medal may be awarded to any person who:

- (a) is an emergency medical services employee on or after October 31, 1991;
- (b) has completed at least twenty years of service with EMS, at least ten years of which have been served in the performance of duties involving potential risk, as determined by the Advisory Committee; and
- (c) has a record of exemplary service of such a high standard as to merit award of the Medal.”

What Does “potential risk” Mean

This has been defined by the Advisory Committee as time spent in duties in which the individual is personally required to provide emergency medical treatment to patients and is, therefore, personally subject to the potential dangers at the scene and resulting from direct contact with the patient.

This means that the individual must have spent time “on the cars”, or at least in a mobile supervisory position, the job description of which requires him/her to regularly attend the scene and personally provide back-up and assistance to the crews on duty. Time spent in positions where the job descriptions do not require the incumbent to come into regular, direct contact with the emergency scene and patients will not be counted towards the ten years of “potential risk.”

What Does “exemplary service” Mean

Section 2 of the Regulations governing the award states “*exemplary service means service, characterized by good conduct, industry, efficiency that serves as a model for others.*”

The Alberta Awards Committee, in reviewing this section of the Regulation, extracted the following definitions from www.dictionary.com to further explain exemplary service.

Exemplary – Worthy of imitation; serving as a model; serving as an illustration.

Synonyms: *admirable, virtuous, representative, sterling, praiseworthy, commendable, meritable, honourable and worthy.*

Industry – Energetic devotion to a task or an endeavor, diligent activity directed to some purpose; ongoing work or study associated with a specified subject or figure.

Synonyms: *diligence, skill, ability.*

Efficiency – the production of the desired effects or results with a minimum waste of time, effort or skill.

Synonyms: *ability, adaptability; adeptness, capability, competency, efficacy, expertise, performance, proficiency, readiness, resourcefulness, response, skill, talent and thoroughness.*

Conduct – The way a person acts, especially from the standpoint of morality and ethics. To lead.

Synonyms: *behaviour, doings, behavioral attributes, demeanour, deportment, carry on, deal, behave and comport.*

Exemplary service is that standard of individual EMS service, performance and dedication that we would wish to see imitated. It is the model of what we would wish all EMS personnel to be, rather than merely the standard of performance we require them to meet.

The Medal is a recognition of the individual’s role and exemplary performance within EMS or as a recognized representative of EMS in associated activities.

It is also important that we not give undue credit to activities that are more properly judged a part of the individual’s employment. While some things are not specifically spelled out in one’s job description they may have become, by precedent or tradition, “expected” of the individual. To take on such extra jobs without complaint may be admirable, but it is not exemplary.

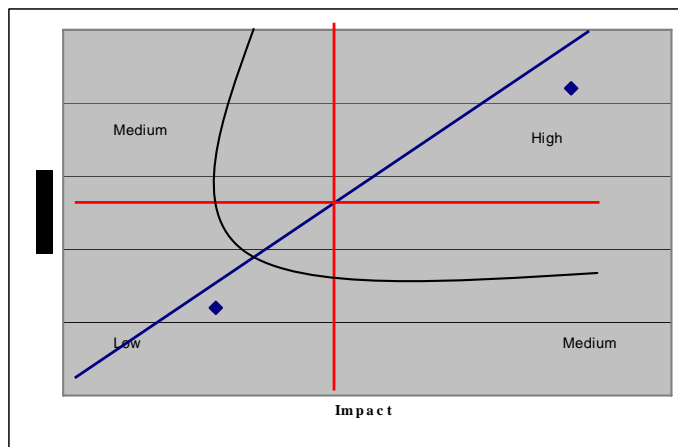
An individual may “shine” merely because those about him/her are mediocre and their performances mundane. The judgement of one’s exemplary performance must be made against the “ideal” and not contemporaries...although occasionally that is appropriate.

There is also a strong possibility of a nominator being swayed by a single act of heroism and concluding that this justifies a career-long evaluation of “exemplary”. An act of heroism is cause for nominating the individual for a Bravery Award within the Canadian Honours System. It is not appropriate that the act itself be the basis for recommending an EMS Exemplary Service Medal. It may, of course, be used as merely one of many examples to illustrate an individual’s extraordinary contribution to EMS.

Defining characteristics of an Exemplary Service Medal nominee may include:

- Unreproachable
- Admirable
- Leader/Definer
- Devoted
- Visionary
- Committed
- Change the way we practice
- Influential
- Gives unselfishly
- Public image of the practice
- Altruistic
- Humble

The Committee created the following graph depicting how to evaluate a nomination. It was agreed that there is no requirement to identify the values for Diversity and Impact but rely on the nomination package to identify those values. This allows each nomination to be evaluated individually based on its own merit.



Impact – The effect or impression of one thing on another.

Synonyms: consequences, impression, imprint, influence, meaning, power, significance and weight.

Diverse – Made up of distinct characteristics, qualities, or elements. Distinctly dissimilar or unlike.

Synonyms: variety, multiformity.

Nominations

All nominations for the Medal must be submitted using the official Alberta Awards Committee Nomination Form. Forms may be obtained from the Alberta College of Paramedics by contacting the office at (780) 466-2772, toll free 1(877)351-2267, fax (780) 466-2869, email at acp@collegeofparamedics.org or at www.collegeofparamedics.org/links.php.

1. The Certification Form must be signed by the nominee's employer or senior supervisor. Self-nominations will not be accepted.
2. "Years of Service", entries must reflect the specific years of service "on the car". This time must be the time spent in duties in which the individual is personally required to provide emergency medical treatment to patients and is, therefore personally subject to the potential dangers at the scene and resulting from direct contact with the patient. This time could include a mobile supervisory position, the job description of which requires him/her to regularly attend the scene and personally provide back-up and assistance to the crews on duty. **Letter confirming employment history is required.**

Time spent in positions where the job descriptions do not require the individual to come into regular, direct contact with emergency scenes and patients will **not** be counted towards the ten years of "potential risk".

3. The Alberta Nomination Form must be accompanied by documentation which provides evidence of the **exemplary** nature of the nominee's EMS history. Documentation need not be lengthy or expansive, but must adequately illustrate where the performance of the nominee exceeds that expected of an EMS practitioner with a similar employment history.
4. Nominations to the Advisory Committee are sent no later than mid-January. Nominations for EMS Exemplary Service Medals must be received by the Alberta Awards Committee no later than November 30th each year. Nominations received after the deadline will be kept on file and reviewed the following year. Incomplete nominations will be returned to the nominator. The Awards Committee will accept re-submissions as long as the re-submission is received by November 30th.

Committee Decision

If the nomination form and supporting documentation does not clearly identify the deeds or efforts of the nominee, the Awards Committee will re-evaluate any new material that was omitted in the original submission and can, based on new data, review the decision providing the subsequent material supports such a decision.

The nominator will be advised in writing whether or not the nomination has been forwarded to the Advisory Committee for recommendation to the Chancellery.

The decision of the Alberta Awards Committee is final and binding.

Presentations

The prestige and merit of the medal will be greatly enhanced through presentation at prestigious events and with maximum media coverage. The onus rests on the Awards Committee to ensure that both the recipient and EMS as a whole gain the maximum prestige possible through effective presentations.

Although the Governor General made the Inaugural presentations, it is not to be expected that they will make any subsequent ones. Whenever possible, the Lieutenant Governor will be asked to make the presentations. The Awards Committee may choose to arrange for other presenters should they feel the circumstances dictate. The EMS Exemplary Medal is typically presented in conjunction with the Alberta College of Paramedics' AGM.

Alberta Awards Committee

Members of the Alberta Awards Committee are Dave MacLean, Chair (Alberta College of Paramedics), and Len Stelmaschuk (AB Health & Wellness). Ex-officio members include Kevin O'Keefe (Edmonton ERD), Bill Bubis (Calgary EMS) and Dave Treppel (Inter-Hospital).

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