

Medal of Valor Frequently Asked Questions and Answers

The following is a list of frequently asked questions, and their answers, which were received by the National Medal of Valor Office about the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor (MOV) and its nominations. The National Medal of Valor Office advises recommending officials to review the information below before completing a nomination form.

1. **Question:** What is the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor?

Answer: The Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor is the highest national award for valor presented to a public safety officer. The Medal is awarded by the President or Vice President of the United States to public safety officers who are cited by the U.S. Attorney General following the recommendations by the Medal of Valor Review Board. In order to be nominated, public safety officers must have exhibited exceptional courage, extraordinary decisiveness and presence of mind, and unusual swiftness of action, regardless of their own personal safety, in an attempt to save or protect human life. Their actions must be considered to be above and beyond the call of duty.

2. **Question:** When is this year's nomination form due?

Answer: The online system will typically open each year on May 31 at 8:00 a.m. eastern time (ET) and closes each year on July 31 at 11:59 p.m. ET. The opening date may open one to two days early if May 31 falls on a weekend.

3. **Question:** Can I nominate more than one person or a team for the Medal of Valor?

Answer: Yes, recommending officials may nominate more than one public safety officer; however, a separate nomination form must be submitted for each individual nominee. If you intend to nominate a team that consists of public safety officers from different agencies (e.g., a multiagency task force) who were involved in a single event or incident, the nomination for each public safety officer must come from his or her agency head.

Please note that when considering the nomination of a team (defined as two or more public safety officers responding to a single incident), there is no guarantee that all members will receive recognition.

4. **Question:** For how many incidents can a public safety officer be nominated?

Answer: There is no limit to the number of incidents for which a public safety officer may be nominated. However, because the Medal of Valor is awarded for a single act that is above and

beyond the call of duty, the recommending official must submit a separate nomination for each meritorious act.

5. **Question:** Must every section of the nomination form be completed?

Answer: The National Medal of Valor Office recommends that you review the online Template for the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Nomination, to review those sections which are required and those that are optional. Nominations not containing required information may be withheld from consideration. Recommending officials should also keep the following points in mind when preparing nomination(s):

- The "Nomination Information" section requires the public safety officer's identifying information. The nominator/recommending official should include the nominee's home mailing address, email address, and telephone number.
- The "Nominator Information" section requires information about the appointing authority/chief executive and agency under which the nominee serves as a sworn public safety officer. Each nomination must be submitted at the direction of the public safety agency's head. The National Medal of Valor Office cannot accept nominations from individuals or other personnel who are not acting with the expressed authority of the chief executive/agency head of the nominating public safety agency.
- Examples of eligible public safety agencies include federal, state, local, and tribal law enforcement, fire, corrections, and emergency medical services.

6. **Question:** In the online nomination form, how detailed should the "Summary of Valorous Conduct" be?

Answer: Though supplemental information may be separately submitted for consideration by the MOV Review Board (see question 12), each nomination's "Summary of Valorous Conduct" is critical to the Board's decision when reviewing the act of valor. Each summary should provide a clear description of the act of valor performed. For summaries that detail an incident that involved multiple nominees, it is essential to describe the collective and individual actions of each nominee, and to explain why these actions are seen as representing acts that are above and beyond the call of duty.

7. **Question:** How are incidents involving individual versus group nominees considered?

Answer: The MOV Review Board will consider the individual actions of each nominee, regardless whether or not the nominee is part of a group. The Board is allowed to recommend a

limited number of recipients each year to receive the MOV, so it is within the Board's discretion when considering group nominations to recommend some, all, or none of the nominees to receive the MOV.

8. **Question:** Will the Board accept posthumous nominations?

Answer: Yes, the Board will accept posthumous nominations and may award a medal posthumously. Recommending officials should make it clear within the nomination form that it is for a posthumous award, and describe whether the public safety officer's death occurred in connection with his or her act of valor.

9. **Question:** How can interested parties keep informed about the nomination process and the award ceremony?

Answer: The National Medal of Valor Office will update its website as information becomes available, and interested parties may email questions to medalofvalor@usdoj.gov.

10. **Question:** Where are definitions for terms such as "public safety officer" and "act of valor" found?

Answer: Visit <https://www.bja.gov/programs/medalofvalor/index.html> in the Medal of Valor website.

11. **Question:** Where is information about past awardees found?

Answer: Check the recipient's page in the Medal of Valor website at: https://www.bja.gov/programs/medalofvalor/mov_awardees.html.

12. **Question:** How can additional information about the nominee and/or incident be provided?

Answer: For submission of supplemental documents, please mail to:

National Medal of Valor Office

810 Seventh Street NW

Washington, DC 20531

Attention: Gregory Joy

Supplemental documents are not required, but if they are received in a timely manner, they will be made available to the MOV Review Board. Note that acceptable formats for documents and video files include: Word, WordPerfect, PDF, jpeg, gif, png, mpg, wmv.

At its discretion, the Board may also call for witness testimony.

13. Question: Can nominations be submitted for an act of valor that is outside the currently published nomination period?

Answer: Each year, the National Medal of Valor Office will open its online nomination system to accept nominations for acts of valor that took place between June 1 of the prior year through May 31 of the current year. Nominations cannot be considered for acts of valor that took place outside the current nomination period.

14. Question: Can an agency request that a nomination be removed from consideration after it has been submitted?

Answer: Yes, an agency may request that a nomination be removed from consideration. The agency may be asked to explain its rationale for making the request, and the request will be forwarded to the appropriate level of review based on the status of the nomination. Note: the removal of a nomination upon the request of the nominating agency is considered a final and irrevocable action.

15. Question: Can a nomination be submitted outside the online nomination system?

Answer: No. All nominations must be submitted via the online nomination system.

16. Question: Is there an avenue to submit a nomination after that nomination period is closed?

Answer: The only exception that would allow for the submission of a nomination after the close of the submission period would be to show a documented failure of the online Medal of Valor nomination system. Each successful nomination generates a confirmation that it was successfully received, and this confirmation is sent to the nominator's email address. But a public safety agency experiencing technical difficulties in submitting a nomination can request consideration for the submission of a nomination following the close of the nomination period. It must submit that request within 48 hours of the close of the nomination period to the Designated Federal Officer for the Medal of Valor Program, Gregory Joy, at Gregory.Joy@usdoj.gov.