



Superior Accomplishment Awards Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Department of the Army, Defense Civilian Intelligence Personnel System (DCIPS)

May 2022

Superior Accomplishment Awards Overview 1

Special Act or Service Awards (SASAs) 2

On-the-spot cash award (OTS)..... 3

Time Off Awards (TOA)..... 3

Special Act or Service Awards Resources 4

Superior Accomplishment Awards Overview

The evaluation and recognition of performance is an essential element in DCIPS performance management process. Superior Accomplishment Awards are utilized to ensure mission-centric performance is recognized and rewarded in a timely and meaningful way. The types of Superior Accomplishment Awards include:

- **Special Act or Service Awards (SASA)** - A SASA is a cash award given to recognize a meritorious personal effort, act, service, scientific or other achievement accomplished within or outside assigned job responsibilities. All appropriated fund employees are eligible for this award. Cash awards range from \$25 to \$25,000, depending on the achievement being recognized. (An additional award exceeding \$25,000 may be approved at the direction of the President of the United States.)
- **On-the-spot cash award (OTS)** - The OTS cash award is a small SASA (\$50 to \$500) which may be given by a supervisor for day to day accomplishments of subordinate employees. Processing of the OTS awards will be accomplished as expeditiously as possible.

UNCLASSIFIED

- **Time Off Award (TOA)** -TOAs are granted in recognition of superior accomplishment or other personal effort that contributes to the quality, efficiency, or economy of government operations. TOAs grant employees time off without loss of pay or charge to leave. TOAs may be given in a range of up to 40 hours for any single contribution. The total time off awarded to a full-time employee may not exceed 80 hours in a leave year.

What are the Superior Accomplishment Awards eligibility requirements?

Awards shall be granted only to employees with current overall performance evaluations of record of "Successful" or higher, in accordance with the DCIPS performance management system. Employees with current evaluations of record of "Unacceptable" or "Minimally Successful" are not eligible for awards. If an employee does not have an evaluation of record from the DCIPS performance management system at the time an award is contemplated, the organization with DCIPS positions shall determine that the latest rating is equivalent to "Successful" or above under the Army DCIPS system and relevant prior to granting an award. Organizations with Army DCIPS positions shall exercise discretion in determining award eligibility for new employees and others who have not received an evaluation of record from any system.

What is the maximum amount an employee can be awarded?

Army organizations can approve up to \$10,000. Anything above \$10,000 must be endorsed by DCS, G-2 and boarded by the Army Incentive Awards Board (AIAB) and forwarded to DoD if \$25,000 and above for review, endorsement and forwarding for approval.

How are employees nominated for a Superior Accomplishment Award?

An employee's supervisor or any individual having direct knowledge of the act, service, scientific, or other achievement, in coordination with the employee's supervisor, may initiate an award nomination. Nominations should be submitted within 30 calendar days after the act, service, or achievement to be recognized. Final action should be taken within 30 calendar days thereafter, unless nominations must be forwarded to higher headquarters. DA Form 1256, Incentive Award Nomination and Approval, will be used to process these awards (OTS, SASA, and TOA). DA Form 1256 is available at:

https://armypubs.army.mil/pub/eforms/DR_a/ARN34215-DA_FORM_1256-003-WEB-2.pdf.

UNCLASSIFIED

Special Act or Service Awards (SASA)

What is the maximum lump-sum monetary award that can be given to a DCIPS employee without an exception to policy?

The maximum lump-sum monetary award paid to a DCIPS employee shall be an appropriate amount relative to the special act or effort, but will not exceed \$2,000.

Note, USD(I&S) is in the process of eliminating the \$2,000 cap from DoDI 1400.25, Volume 2008 (DCIPS Awards and Recognitions), until this cap is formally eliminated and codified in policy, Army will continue to grant a blanket waiver permitting cash awards in excess of \$2,000 but no greater than \$10,000 as it has issued annually, in writing, for Fiscal Year 2021 and 2022. Cash award of \$10,001 and greater must be approved by HQDA G-2 and boarded by the Army Incentive Awards Board run by HQDA G-1, Assistant G-1 for Civilian Personnel.

How are SASA cash amount determined?

Except for the OTS and TOA of 1 day or less, all SASA amounts will be determined using the cash award criteria for tangible or intangible benefits listed in AR 672-20, chapter 7.

Can a SASA be used to pay for other personnel actions or pay entitlements?

No. This award is not to be used as a substitute for other personnel actions, pay entitlements, or other forms of recognition.

Are SASAs used to recognize long-term project?

The SASA is particularly appropriate to recognize the following short-term accomplishments:

(a) In a regularly assigned position; (b) During a detail; (c) At the conclusion of a successful special project; (d) When honorary awards are not appropriate.

Can you award a Soldier and a DCIPS Civilian with a SASA?

A SASA award is awarded to DCIPS civilians for scientific achievement such as the following:

(1) An act, deed, or accomplishment that established a scientific or technological basis for later technical improvements of military or national significance; (2) A scientific or technological accomplishment of such quality and effectiveness as to have materially advanced the research and development achievements of an activity, group, or project; (3) A significant scientific or technological achievement that contributes materially to the welfare of the armed services and the nation; (4) An article accepted for publication in a scientific publication; (5) A technical paper presented to a professional society that constitutes a substantial contribution to scientific knowledge.

UNCLASSIFIED

On-The-Spot (OTS) Awards

What is the maximum dollar amount that can be awarded with OTS?

The OTS cash award is a small SASA (\$50 to \$500)

Are OTS typically given for long-term projects?

No. The OTS is given for day-to-day accomplishments.

What is the timeframe that OTS Awards should be given?

Processing of the OTS awards will be accomplished as expeditiously as possible.

Time Off Awards (TOAs)

Is there a limit to how many TOA hours an employee can receive in one year?

Full-time employees may not receive more than 80 hours during a leave year in TOAs. Additionally, the maximum amount of time off allowed for a full-time employee for any single contribution is 40 hours. The maximum amount of time off granted for a single contribution for part-time or uncommon tour employees will be one-half the maximum amount of time that could be granted in the leave year for the employee.

Must the time-off award be used by a certain date?

Time off granted as an award must be used within 1 year after the effective award date and will not transfer with an employee to a new Component or other government organization.

Are there any limits to the number of hours that can be granted as a time-off award?

Time-off awards must be commensurate with the individual's contribution or accomplishment and may not exceed 40 hours for any one contribution or accomplishment and may not exceed 80 hours for any one employee in any leave year.

What is the criteria used to determine the amount of time off granted?

The table which list the criteria is found in the AR 672-20, Chapter 7, Table 7-3

UNCLASSIFIED

**Table 7-3
Time Off Awards scale for a single contribution**

Value to organization	Number of hours
Moderate:	1 to 10
A contribution to a product, activity, program, or service to the public which is of sufficient value to merit formal recognition.	
Beneficial change or modification of operating principles or procedures.	
Substantial:	11 to 20
An important contribution to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	
Significant change or modification of operating principles or procedures.	
High:	21 to 30
A highly significant contribution to the value of a product, activity, program, or service to the public.	
Complete revision of operating principles or procedures, with considerable impact.	
Exceptional:	31 to 40
A superior contribution to the quality of a critical product, activity, program, or service to the public.	
Initiation of a new principle or major procedure with significant impact.	

Special Act or Service Award Resources:

How is the SASA budget determined?

DCIPS's awards budget is determined annually based on policy from the Office of Personnel Management, Office of Management and Budget, and OUSD(I&S). HQDA, ADCS G-2 approves the Army DCIPS awards budget.

Is there a limit to how many SASAs an employee may receive in one year?

There is no limit to the number of SASAs that can be received by one employee within one calendar year (12-months) provided that their salary does not exceed statutory limitations (pay cap) cap. However, in accordance with the Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence and Security (USD(I&S)) policy, employees are prohibited from receiving multiple Special Act or Service Awards for the same act. Each submitting supervisor and Directorate/Office is responsible for ensuring that employees are recognized only once for the same exceptional performance event within a 12-month period.

When is the SASA Program budget finalized and communicated?

HQDA, ADCS G-2 communicates the budget to each Army Command at the start of the fiscal year once communicated down from OPM/OMB/DoD and USD(I&S)

UNCLASSIFIED

Are there limits to the amount of an award an agency can approve under its own authority?

Army organizations can approve up to \$10,000. Anything above \$10,000 must be endorsed by DCS, G-2 and boarded by the Army Incentive Awards Board (AIAB) and forwarded to DoD if \$25,000 and above for review, endorsement and forwarding for approval.

Can Joint Duty Rotation (JDR) Employees receive Special Act or Service Award?

Inbound JDR employees are eligible for Special Act or Service Award subject to the terms of the employee's Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). The JDR Special Act or Service Awards process requires coordination between the employee's home Agency.

Note: All questions regarding an employee's MOU should be addressed to the JD Program Manager.

What policies covers DCIPS Awards and Recognition?

[AP-V 2008 - Awards and Recognition \[09/12/2016\]](#) and [DoDI 1400.25-V2008, DCIPS - Awards and Recognition \[09/12/2012, w/Change 1 dtd 10/4/2015\]](#)

Is there training available for the DCIPS Awards and Recognition Program?

Yes. DCIPS Awards and Recognition Training and Guides can be found at <https://www.dami.army.pentagon.mil/site/dcips/LC-ER%202008.aspx>

Is there a User Guide for how to submit Awards?

Yes. It is called *How to Submit a Monetary or Time-Off Award – AUTONOA User Guide* and it is located <https://www.dami.army.pentagon.mil/site/dcips/LC-ER%202008.aspx> Under *SOPs, Templates and Forms*.