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programs. When agencies involve employees, the method of involvement shall be in accordance with law.

(c) An agency award program shall provide for—

(1) Obligating funds consistent with applicable agency financial management controls and delegations of authority; and

(2) Documenting justification for awards that are not based on a rating of record (as defined in § 430.203 of this chapter).

[60 FR 43946, Aug. 23, 1995; 60 FR 47646, Sept. 13, 1995]

§ 451.104 Awards.

(a) An agency may grant a cash, honorary, or informal recognition award, or grant time-off without charge to leave or loss of pay consistent with chapter 45 of title 5, United States Code, and this part to an employee, as an individual or member of a group, on the basis of—

(1) A suggestion, invention, superior accomplishment, productivity gain, or other personal effort that contributes to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations or achieves a significant reduction in paperwork;

(2) A special act or service in the public interest in connection with or related to official employment; or

(3) Performance as reflected in the employee's most recent rating of record (as defined in § 430.203 of this chapter), provided that the rating of record is at the fully successful level (or equivalent) or above, except that performance awards may be paid to SES members only under § 534.405 of this chapter and not on the basis of this subpart.

(b) A cash award under this subpart is a lump sum payment and is not basic pay for any purpose.

(c) An award is subject to applicable tax rules, such as withholding.

(d) When an award is approved for—

(1) An employee of another agency, the benefiting agency shall make arrangements to transfer funds to the employing agency to cover the award. If the administrative costs of transferring funds would exceed the amount of the award, the employing agency shall

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absorb the award costs and pay the award; and

(2) A member of the armed forces for a suggestion, invention, or scientific achievement, arrangements shall be made to transfer funds to the agency having jurisdiction over the member in accordance with E.O. 11438, “Prescribing Procedures Governing Interdepartmental Cash Awards to the Members of the Armed Forces”.

(e) An award may be granted to a separated employee or the legal heir(s) or estate of a deceased employee.

(f) A time-off award granted under this subpart shall not be converted to a cash payment under any circumstances.

(g) When granting an award paid as a percentage of basic pay under 5 U.S.C. 4505a(a)(2), the rate of basic pay used must include any applicable locality payment under 5 CFR part 531, subpart F; special rate supplement under 5 CFR part 530, subpart C; or similar payment or supplement under other legal authority. For an employee receiving a retained rate under 5 CFR part 536, subpart C (or similar authority, such as 5 CFR 359.705), the rate of basic pay is the maximum payable rate for the employee's grade or level, rather than the retained rate.

(h) Programs for granting performance-based cash awards on the basis of a rating of record at the fully successful level (or equivalent) or above, as designed and applied, must make meaningful distinctions based on levels of performance.

[60 FR 43946, Aug. 23, 1995, as amended at 69 FR 70359, Dec. 6, 2004; 70 FR 31287, May 31, 2005; 70 FR 74995, Dec. 19, 2005; 72 FR 1270, Jan. 11, 2007]

§ 451.105 Award restrictions.

(a) In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 4508, agencies shall not grant awards under this subpart during a Presidential election period to employees who are—

(1) In a Senior Executive Service position and not a career appointee as defined under 5 U.S.C. 3132(a)(4); or

(2) In an excepted service position of a confidential or policy-determining character (schedule C).

(b) In accordance with 5 U.S.C. 4509, agencies shall not grant cash awards

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under this subpart to employees appointed by the President with Senate confirmation who serve in—

(1) An Executive Schedule position, or

(2) A position for which pay is set in statute by reference to a section or level of the Executive Schedule.

§ 451.106 Agency responsibilities.

(a) In establishing and operating its award program(s), an agency shall assure that a program does not conflict with or violate any other law or Governmentwide regulation.

(b) When a recommended award would grant more than \$10,000 to an individual employee, the agency shall submit the recommendation to OPM for approval.

(c) Agencies shall provide for communicating with employees and supervisors (e.g., through formal training) about the relevant parts of their award program(s).

(d) Agencies shall evaluate their award program(s).

(e) Agencies shall document all cash and time off awards in compliance with instructions in the OPM Operating Manual, THE GUIDE TO PROCESSING PERSONNEL ACTIONS, for sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents.

(f) Agencies shall file award documents in the Official Personnel Folder in compliance with instructions in the OPM Operating Manual, THE GUIDE TO PERSONNEL RECORDKEEPING, for sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents.

(g) Agencies shall report award data to the Central Personnel Data File in Compliance with instructions in the OPM Operating Manual, FEDERAL WORKFORCE REPORTING SYSTEMS, for sale by the U.S. Government Printing Office, Superintendent of Documents.

(h) Agencies shall maintain and submit to OPM such records as OPM may require.

(i) Agencies shall give due weight to an award granted under this part in qualifying and selecting an employee for promotion as provided in 5 U.S.C. 3362.

(j) Agencies shall take any corrective action required by OPM to ensure conformance with applicable law, regulation, and OPM policy.

§ 451.107 OPM responsibilities.

(a) OPM shall review and approve or disapprove each agency recommendation for an award that would grant more than \$10,000 to an individual employee.

(b) When a recommended award would grant more than \$25,000 to an individual employee, OPM shall review the recommendation and submit it (if approved) to the President for final approval.

(c) OPM shall review and approve or disapprove a request from the head of an Executive agency to extend the provisions of 5 U.S.C. 4505a to any category of employees within that agency that would not be covered otherwise.

(d) OPM may evaluate the operation and application of an agency's award program(s).

Subpart B—Presidential Awards

SOURCE: 51 FR 8419, Mar. 11, 1986, unless otherwise noted.

§ 451.201 Authority and coverage.

(a) Under chapter 45 of title 5, United States Code, the President may pay a cash award to and incur necessary expenses for the honorary recognition of an employee who:

(b) Awards granted under paragraph (a) of this section are subject to the restrictions as specified in § 451.105.

(1) By his/her suggestion, invention or other personal effort contributes to the efficiency, economy, or other improvement of Government operations, or achieves a significant reduction in paperwork; or

(2) Performs an exceptionally meritorious special act or service in the public interest in connection with or related to official employment.

(c) Except as provided in paragraph (b) of this section, this subpart applies to employees as defined by section 2105 of title 5, United States Code.