

Presidential Medal of Freedom (PMOF)

Information and Nominating Procedures



Description: The PMOF was established by Executive Order 11085 (signed by President John F. Kennedy) on February 22, 1963. It is the highest civilian award and most prestigious non-military recognition granted by the United States Government. It is awarded by the President of the United States alone and only to those persons whom he deems to have made especially meritorious contributions to the security or national interests of the United States, to world peace, or to cultural or other significant public or private endeavors. The medal may be awarded to citizens of other nations and may be awarded posthumously. The granting of the medal may take place at any time during the year and presentation is usually at the held at the White House. As this is nation's highest civilian recognition, the White House advises that this Medal should be regarded with the same degree of prestige and level of significance as is the Medal of Honor for military personnel.

NOTES:

- (1) While the President alone may bestow either medal upon any individual of his choosing, he will entertain recommendations by the general public. Any individual may recommend a person who meets the extraordinarily high standards outlined above by writing directly to the President. However, official nominations by Department of Defense must be processed in accordance with the procedures outlined in Section D.
- (2) **Only individuals that meet the extremely high caliber of contribution and prominent stature as that of former recipients for either medal (see listing**

of former recipients in Section D, Number 8 and 9) may be sponsored by DoD.

- (3) DoD may sponsor an individual only if the sponsoring individual has personal knowledge of the contributions of the nominee, can provide testimony to the veracity of the contributions and only if the contributions directly benefit the Department of Defense or are in the national security interests of the United States.
- (4) While private citizens, who have made exceptionally meritorious contributions to the DoD, may be eligible for sponsorship by the Department of Defense, contractor personnel are not.
- (5) Private citizen nominees sponsored by the Department must have recently been awarded the Department of Defense Award for Distinguished Public Service.

NOMINATING PROCEDURES FOR DOD SPONSORS

1. DoD 1400.25-M, Subchapter 451, "Awards," assigns the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Force Management Policy) (recent title change to the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness) (PDUSD(P&R)) (1) the responsibility to review Presidential-level awards that are sponsored by DoD personnel and (2) the responsibility for recommending to the Secretary of Defense any noteworthy nominations to be endorsed to the President. The Secretary of a Military Department, a Director of Defense Agency, or an OSD Principal at the ASD level or above (referred to hereafter as DoD component heads) may sponsor proposed nominations via a memorandum to the PDUSD(P&R). All nominations originating from field commands or activities must be endorsed to the PDUSD(P&R) via a memorandum from the respective component head (component heads identified above).
2. The nominating official is responsible for preparing the supporting information (justification), which is described below in paragraph 3. The appropriate component head must request consideration via a memorandum to the Principal Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Personnel and Readiness.) The Office of the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense (Civilian Personnel Policy.) will review the nomination package and if the nomination meets the criteria will prepare a recommendation to the Secretary of Defense.
3. The sponsoring official is responsible for preparing the background information supporting the nomination, which includes the following:
 - a. "Title and Summary Page" – This page precedes the narrative description and includes - (1) the name of the award which serves as a title to this page, (2) the nominee's full name, (3) date and place of birth, (4) current title or position, (5) previous employment positions or titles, (6) previous recognition (receipt of the Department of Defense Award for Distinguished Public Service or DoD Distinguished Career

Service Award is mandatory for consideration), medals or awards that support the nominated achievements.

- b. “Narrative Description of Contributions or Achievements” – This is a narrative that fully describes in detail the specific contributions or accomplishments that meet the extraordinarily high level of contribution required and which are similar in merit as that of former medal recipients. The narrative description should be at least 3 pages in length, single-spaced.
 - c. A “Citation” (summary/highlights) of the contributions should be at least one page, double-spaced.
4. All nominations must include original documents, i.e., title page, narrative description, citation, endorsement memoranda. Only testimonials, i.e., newspaper articles, etc. (if included) may be copies of original documents.
 5. The nomination package, i.e., title page, narrative justification, and citation must be typed in “Word” in 13 pitch and a 3x5 inch disc provided in the package.
 6. As the decision to award these medals is made by solely by the President, there is no timeline for approving or bestowing the medals. When the White House receives a nomination, it is “under consideration” until it is approved by the President. The Department will not be informed of on-going status of nominations.
 7. The President presents the Medals at White House ceremonies.
 8. **Presidential Medal of Freedom.**
Among those who have received the PMOF are:
 - Ansel Adams, Photographer
 - Arthur Ashe, Athlete
 - Pearl Bailey, Entertainer
 - Cesar Chavez, Union Leader
 - Walter Cronkite, Journalist, TV Anchor
 - Gen. Colin Powell, Ch. JCS
 - Majory Stoneman Douglas, Environmentalist
 - Martha Raye, Entertainer
 - Mohamed Anwar el-Sudat, Former President of Egypt
 - R. Sergeant Shriver, Former Head of Peace Corps
 - Barry Goldwater, United States Senator
 - W. Averell Harriman, Diplomat
 - Richard Cheney, Secretary of Defense
 - Bob Hope, Entertainer, Humanitarian
 - Barbara Jordan, Member of Congress
 - Joseph Lane Kirkland, Union Leader
 - Dr. Jonas Salk, Medical Scientist