

Reclamation Manual

Directives and Standards

Subject:	Non-Monetary Awards and Promotional Items
Purpose:	This Directive and Standard (D&S) provides Bureau of Reclamation required procedures, limitations, and requirements for approval and purchase of non-monetary awards and promotional items as required by the Department of the Interior. The benefit of this D&S is that it promotes consistency and clarity on the process and understanding of the two separate categories-non-monetary awards and promotional items.
Authority:	5 U.S.C. 4303 and Chapter 45, 5 CFR, Part 451; Department of the Interior Personnel Bulletin Number 19-16, Executive Order 13589- Promoting Efficient Spending; Memorandum, Department of the Interior Acquisition and Assistance Policy-0038- Restriction on the Purchase of Promotional Items, Reclamation Acquisition Circular 12-17- Promotional Items.
Approving Official:	Deputy Commissioner - Policy, Admin and Budget and Director, Mission Support Organization
Contact:	Human Resources (HR) Policy Office (84-12100) and Acquisition and Assistance Management Division (84-27800)

1. **Introduction.** The purpose of non-monetary awards is to provide recognition to employees of Reclamation for their superior accomplishment of regularly assigned duties, exceptional achievement of project goals, noteworthy accomplishments over a sustained period, and/or specific contributions to Reclamation's mission. This D&S establishes the requirements and criteria that apply to all non-monetary awards and promotional items. Additionally, managers and supervisors may use Special Thanks for Achieving Results (STAR) and time-off awards, when possible and appropriate. Promotional items are an umbrella term used to describe items for distribution at meetings and conferences and Information/Educational (I/E) items promoting an initiative or an appropriated program. I/E items also include items purchased for employees and volunteers or gifts to foreign officials in the interest of diplomacy and protocol. Promotional items are commonly distributed to employees or participants at an event for the sole purpose of promoting or advertising the agency/event; whereas non-monetary awards are used to recognize accomplishments of Federal employees.
2. **Applicability.**
 - A. For non-monetary awards, this D&S applies to all Reclamation managers and, supervisors, servicing HR offices, acquisition personnel including purchase cardholders, and employees. It does not apply to contractors, contractor employees, private-sector organizations and their employees, customers, and private citizens whose contributions directly or indirectly support the Department's mission; these individuals cannot receive non-monetary awards (Pub. L. 109-125).

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- B. For promotional items, this D&S applies to Federal employees, private citizens, and foreign dignitaries/officials. It does not apply to non-monetary awards purchased to reward employees for satisfactory performance, employee relation and training programs, or uniforms.
- C. For any purchases specific to a conference, please see Reclamation Acquisition Circular (RAC) 20-02- Conference and Purchase of Entertainment.

3. Requirements and Responsibilities.

- A. All Reclamation employees are eligible to receive non-monetary recognition. All Reclamation employees, private citizens, conference attendees, and foreign dignitaries/officials are eligible to receive promotional items, contingent upon approval.
- B. Approved Items:
 - (1) All non-monetary items will contain Reclamation's or the Department's name, logo, award title, and/or mission. For promotional items, the item may include the Reclamation logo and/or contain the logo or message specific to the initiative.
 - (2) Non-Monetary awards should be commensurate with the employee's effort expended, the behavior exemplified, or the results achieved. Bureau approving officials can tailor recognition of their employees based on the personal interests of the individual. Approving officials may ask an employee how he/she would like to be rewarded. Plaques and framed certificates with Reclamation's logo awarded for retirement or length of service are non-monetary awards.
 - (3) Items that can be easily converted to cash (i.e., gift cards, gift certificates, U.S. Savings Bonds, tickets, or similar items), are not authorized as non-monetary awards.
 - (4) Non-monetary awards and Promotional Items must be purchased from a Reclamation approved vendor(s). Contact your servicing acquisition office to initiate the purchase.
- C. Non-monetary award items that exceed the nominal cash value shall:
 - (1) be reserved to recognize the most valued achievements made by an employee or group of employees;
 - (2) be something that the recipient could reasonably be expected to value, but not something that conveys a sense of monetary value;

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- (3) have lasting display value and be displayed or presented as “recognition” given in appreciation of superior work; and
 - (4) clearly symbolize the employer–employee work relationship in some fashion.
- D. Non-Monetary Award Nominations, Approvals, Process and Documentation
Nominating and/or Delegated Approving Officials for non-monetary awards shall ensure:
- (1) fiscal prudence in the approval and use of non-monetary awards, avoid selecting items that may have potential appearance of misuse of government funds, be commensurate with the employee’s effort expended, and avoid any cause of embarrassment to the Department;
 - (2) timely nomination, concurrence, and/or approval of non-monetary award item(s) for deserving employees;
 - (3) all requests that are submitted to the servicing acquisition office are accompanied with an approved signed DI-451;
 - (4) obtaining and/or ensuring proper signatories on the DI-451;
 - (a) Non-Monetary Awards at or below nominal cash value - the DI-451 must be signed by the supervisor or manager as the “Approving Official.”
 - (b) Non-Monetary awards exceeding the nominal cash value - the DI-451 must be signed by the supervisor or manager as the “Reviewing Official” and signed by the Bureau Deputy Commissioner, Policy, Administration and Budget as the “Approving Official.”
 - (5) employees do not receive more than three non-monetary awards in a fiscal year (FY) and that no individual award exceeds \$100; and
 - (6) that employees concur in the granting of taxable award items (items that exceed nominal cash value) prior to submitting a request for purchase of non-monetary award.
- E. Bureau Director or Deputy Commissioner, Policy, Administration and Budget will approve the purchase of any non-monetary items that exceed nominal cash value, by signing as the Approving Official on the Recommendation and Approval of Awards form, DI-451, after consultation with the Office of the Solicitor and the Bureau Procurement Chief that have determined the appropriateness of the non-monetary award being proposed that exceeds \$100 in cash value.
- F. Servicing HR Offices. Servicing HR offices are responsible for:

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- (1) validating compliance with non-monetary award guidelines and approvals;
- (2) ensuring all DI-451's received are tracked by their office;
- (3) processing any award in excess of \$100 as taxable income;
- (4) maintaining non-monetary award files on a FY basis. Files will be destroyed when 3 years old or sooner, if no longer required for current business needs; and
- (5) accountability review of non-monetary award requirements outlined within this D&S will occur during servicing HR office Accountability Reviews.

G. Servicing Acquisition Offices. Servicing Acquisition offices are responsible for:

- (1) purchasing any non-monetary awards and promotional items and ensuring compliance with ordering procedures.

H. Promotional Item Approvals, Process and Documentation:

- (1) Program Office Requestors will ensure:
 - (a) fiscal prudence in the approval and use of promotional items, avoid selecting items that may have potential appearance of misuse of government funds, be commensurate with the activity, and avoid any cause of embarrassment to the Department;
 - (b) all sections of [RAC 12-17 Promotional Items Attachment 1- Justification for Purchase of Promotional Items](#) are completed prior to submitting to their Servicing Acquisition Office; and
 - (c) requests to purchase promotional items, at any value, shall follow the procedures outlined in RAC 12-17. If approved, authorized ordering officials will process the order and ensure the justification is filed with the purchasing documentation.
- (2) Chief of the Contracting Offices will ensure:
 - (a) program office requestors receive the assistance required to complete a fully supported justification; and
 - (b) submit the justification to Acquisition Assistance Management Division Policy in accordance with Reclamation Acquisition Circular 12-17 Promotional Items.

I. Thresholds. The following thresholds apply for non-monetary awards:

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- (1) Non-monetary award spending is not included within the annual FY budgetary award limitations; however, spending for non-monetary awards must be done judiciously.
- (2) The cash value limit on any one non-monetary award cannot exceed \$100. Employees are limited to 3 non-monetary awards per FY. If an employee receives an annual Safety Award it is counted towards the yearly limit.
- (3) If a non-monetary award item exceeds the nominal cash value, it is considered to have significant value and its entire value must be included in the employee's gross wages for tax purposes.

4. **Definitions.**

A. **Items that Exceed Nominal Cash Value.** Non-monetary recognition valued at more than \$100 but not in excess of \$250.

B. **Nominal Cash Value Items.** Non-monetary recognition valued at \$100 or less.

5. **Review Period:** The originating offices will review this release every 4 years.

RECLAMATION MANUAL TRANSMITTAL SHEET

Effective Date: _____

Release No. _____

Ensure all employees needing this information are provided a copy of this release.

Reclamation Manual Release Number and Subject

Summary of Changes

NOTE: This Reclamation Manual release applies to all Reclamation employees. When an exclusive bargaining unit exists, changes to this release may be subject to the provisions of collective bargaining agreements.

Filing instructions

Remove Sheets

Insert Sheets

All Reclamation Manual releases are available at <http://www.usbr.gov/recman/>

Filed by: _____

Date: _____