

Local Guidelines
University of California, San Diego
Staff Appreciation and Recognition Plan (the STAR Plan)
July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2016

This guideline provides a framework for the local implementation of an annual Staff Appreciation and Recognition (the “STAR Plan”) for the fiscal year for policy-covered staff employees and is governed by Personnel Policies for Staff Members (PPSM 34 - Incentive and Recognition Award Plans - Managers & Senior Professionals and Professional & Support Staff).

Plan Purpose

Star Plan cash recognition awards are discretionary and may be awarded to employees for the purpose of recognizing and rewarding excellence in University service; recognizing and rewarding significant achievements and contributions; and recognizing and rewarding outstanding individual and team contributions. Cash awards are non-base building. The University will not place restrictions or conditions on an employee’s use of any cash awarded under this Plan. (Employee non-cash awards and other gifts, including gift cards and gift certificates, are regulated under UC Business and Finance Bulletin No. G-41.)

The STAR Plan provides a tool to managers to recognize, acknowledge and reward employees for exceptional performance related to and supportive of individual, departmental, divisional and/or organizational goals and objectives.

Plan Oversight

Development, governance and interpretation of the STAR Plan will be overseen by an independent Administrative Oversight Committee (AOC) at the UC Office of the President comprised as follows:

- The Senior Management Advisory Committee
- The Vice President-Human Resources
- The Executive Director–Compensation Programs and Strategy

Plan Approval

Annual approval by the Administrative Oversight Committee (AOC) is required. The STAR Plan may be implemented at the sole discretion of the Chancellor. The STAR Plan will be implemented each year upon the approval of the AOC if no substantive or material changes are being recommended. If the AOC recommends any substantive or material changes to the STAR Plan, the AOC will obtain the approval of the President before implementing such changes. Reasonable efforts, given all circumstances, will be made to delay implementing substantive or material STAR Plan changes until the end of the current Plan year.

Plan Year

The STAR Plan year will correspond to the University’s fiscal year, beginning July 1 and ending the following June 30.

Plan Eligibility

Eligibility for cash awards under the STAR Plan is outlined below. Senior Management Group (SMG) members and many employees covered by a collective bargaining agreement (union) **are not eligible** for any awards under the STAR Plan.

Policy-covered career, contract and limited PSS employees, students and MSP employees, as well as exclusively represented employees in the Clerical Unit (CX) are eligible for STAR Plan cash awards if, at the time of the award, they:

- Have successfully completed their probationary period, if applicable;
- Are on active pay status or on an approved unpaid leave; and,
- Received a “meets expectations” or better overall rating on their most recent annual performance evaluation. (PPSM 23 requires that written performance evaluations be completed annually.) Employees who have not yet received an annual performance evaluation may be eligible for an award if their manager confirms on the nomination form that they are “meeting expectations.”

An employee may not receive an award under the STAR Plan if the employee is a participant in an incentive award plan that prohibits the receipt of a recognition award.

An employee’s receipt of an award under the STAR Plan does not establish any right or guarantee that the employee will be eligible for or entitled to an award in any subsequent plan year.

Selection Criteria and Performance Standards

Under the STAR Plan, managers are able to recognize, acknowledge and reward employees for exceptional performance and/or significant contributions related to and supportive of individual, departmental, divisional, and/or organizational goals and objectives. Managers may acknowledge and reward individuals and teams demonstrating:

- Exceptional performance: Demonstrated and sustained exceptional performance that consistently exceeds goals and work expectations in quantity and/or quality.
- Creativity: One-time innovation or creation that results in time/dollar savings, revenue enhancement, and productivity improvement; and/or ongoing innovative/creative activities that benefit organizational systems, protocols, and/or procedures.
- Organizational abilities: Exhibiting extraordinary skills in leadership resulting in the accomplishment of significant departmental or divisional goals and objectives; effective project management, which could include developing a project and/or implementing a project with substantial success; and/or demonstrating organizational capability leading to a greater level of effectiveness.
- Work success: Significantly exceeding productivity, customer service, quality of care or similar goals, including demonstrating superior interactions with managers, peers, supervisors, subordinates, the University community, and/or clients and customers served.

- Teamwork: Acting as an exceptionally effective and cooperative team member or team leader for a team that has significantly exceeded the goals/objectives of the department/unit.

STAR Plan cash awards should be awarded as soon as possible after the accomplishment or event in order to provide immediate recognition to employees.

Award Limits and Restrictions

The following limitations apply to STAR Plan cash awards.

- No single STAR Plan cash award may exceed 10% of the employee's base salary or \$10,000, whichever amount is lower.
- Cumulative STAR Plan cash awards paid to an employee in a plan year may not exceed 10% of the employee's base salary or \$10,000, whichever amount is lower.
- STAR Plan cash awards are strictly discretionary and may not be promised or guaranteed in advance.
- "Across-the-board" type awards (e.g., awards to a category of employees without regard to a recipient's performance or relative contribution) are not allowed under the STAR Plan. Awards must be based on the recipient's achievement as an individual or as part of a team.

Exceptions to the above monetary award limits will not be made except in rare circumstances. Any exception will require the approval of the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO). If the CHRO approves, the CHRO will need to secure the approval of the Chancellor, the AOC and the President. Recommendations for an award that would be an exception to these limits must be submitted in writing to the CHRO and include a compelling justification for making the exception.

Nomination, Review and Award Approval Processes

- Individual Award Nominations

Individual employees may be nominated for STAR awards based on one or more of the performance standards set forth in the STAR Plan. Input will be required from the manager/supervisor if different than the nominating individual.

- Team Award Nominations

Team Awards may be granted to teams of employees who meet one or more of the performance standards set forth in the STAR Plan for work on a project within the same department or for work on the development and/or implementation of inter-departmental projects. Input will be required from the team leader and supervisor/manager if different than the nominating individual.

The employee's department head is responsible for confirming that the employee is eligible for an award and must approve the employee's award, regardless of the funding source for the award.

The award approval process for all STAR Plan cash awards requires endorsement of the employee's immediate supervisor and approval of the next level manager. STAR Plan cash awards over \$500 also require department head approval. STAR Plan cash awards above \$5,000 also require the approval of the Chancellor or designated Vice Chancellor.

How to Pay an Award

Complete the STAR Plan Payment Authorization form (attached) and send it via email to cspeaks@ucsd.edu with a copy to eduenas@ucsd.edu. You can also submit the request via inter-department mail using mail code 0922 attention Caprece Speaks-Toler or Liz Duenas.

Compensation will review all requests to ensure compliance of the \$10,000 fiscal year limit and/or 10% of the employee's base salary, whichever is lower and will forward the form, once approved to Payroll for processing. Compensation will contact the department to inform them of any request(s) that have been denied and the reason for denial. All forms must indicate the performance standard met or accomplishment(s) necessary to support the award request and need to be consistent with the Selection Criteria and Performance Standards section of the STAR Plan.

Administrative Provisions, Requirements and Procedures

The local STAR Plan will be subject to the Chancellor's discretion and implemented only after it has been approved by the AOC. It will be funded locally at a level determined by the Chancellor. The assigned Description of Service (DOS) codes specific to the STAR Plan **must** be used when paying awards to employees. These codes are XSC for cash awards that are funded through a central pool and XSL for cash awards that are not funded through a central pool.

Local implementation and administration of the STAR Plan will be consistent across this location, and the office of the Chief Human Resources Officer (CHRO) will be the official designee to ensure consistency.

Local eligibility requirements may not be more generous or less restrictive than those set forth by the University of California STAR Plan guidelines.

The Senior Vice President-Chief Compliance and Audit Officer will assure that periodic audits will be performed to ensure that locations are in compliance with the STAR Plan.

The STAR Plan may be terminated or replaced at any time for any reason by the President. The Chancellor may suspend or terminate this location's implementation of the STAR Plan at any time.

Questions regarding the local STAR Plan may be directed to the appropriate Vice Chancellor office or contact Caprece Speaks-Toler in the Campus Staff Human Resources Office at cspeaks@ucsd.edu or x44130.

Record Keeping and Compliance

Recordkeeping will be done by departments. However, copies of documentation must be made available to the Campus Staff Human Resources Office upon request.

Treatment for Benefit Purposes

STAR Plan cash awards are not considered to be compensation for University benefit purposes, such as the University of California Retirement Plan or employee life insurance programs.

Tax Treatment and Reporting

Under Internal Revenue Service (IRS) regulations, payment of STAR Plan cash awards must be included in the employee's income as wages subject to withholding for federal and state income taxes and applicable FICA taxes. Payment is reportable on the employee's Form W-2 in the year paid.