

	Policy: Voluntary Suggestion Program Policy	Effective Date: June 1, 1999
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	Policy Number: HR-26	Page 1 of 10
	<u>Jerry E. Cox</u> Jerry E. Cox, City Manager	<u>Human Resources</u> Responsible Party

PURPOSE

The Voluntary Suggestion Program is designed to motivate non-management employees toward problem identification and problem solving, to recognize employees as valuable resources, and to reward employees by offering them an opportunity to benefit from their efforts to improve operations and customer service.

The purpose of this policy is to inform employees of the Voluntary Suggestion Program; the supervisor's, department head's and Review Committee's role in the Program; and the general rules and procedures governing the Program. A copy of the guidelines is available for review in the office of the Human Resources Director in City Hall.

POLICY

The Voluntary Suggestion Program will recognize and reward employees who make valuable contributions, above and beyond their normal responsibilities, to make the City a more effective, efficient, and customer service oriented organization. This Program will initially be a pilot program for employees in the Energy Services and Water Resources Departments.

Objectives include:

- A. To implement a more efficient and effective method of operation to serve the needs of the citizens of Monroe.
- B. To promote employee involvement in the management of the City's obligations and responsibilities.
- C. To develop an "esprit de corps" among City employees.

Eligibility of Suggestors:

Any non-management, part-time, or full-time employee is eligible to submit suggestions. However, the following employees are **NOT** eligible for monetary or non-monetary awards:

- A. Department Heads and Department Managers
- B. An employee whose suggestion is found by the Department Head to be within the scope of the employee's duties and responsibilities.
- C. An employee whose suggestion is part of a specific assignment which includes problem identification, analysis, and/or solution. For example, special projects of which the employee is expected to provide these skills as a routine part of the assignment.

Eligible Suggestions:

To be eligible, the suggestion must be submitted on the proper form, be reviewed, adopted, and implemented in whole or in part, and result in tangible or intangible savings.

- A. A tangible suggestion award is granted when a suggestion results in a measurable cost savings or cost avoidance.
- B. An intangible suggestion award is granted when a suggestion does not result in direct measurable savings to the City of Monroe, but improves safety, health or security, internal service quality or reliability, or public service.
- C. A suggestion may combine tangible savings and various types of intangible benefits. In such cases, the final award will reflect the actual cost savings and intangible benefits.

Criteria for Suggestion Awards:

- A. Tangible -
 - 1. The award will equal 10 percent of the one-year savings or \$50, whichever is greater, for suggestions that are implemented. In no event shall the total award exceed \$3500.
 - 2. The employee will receive one-half of the award, up to \$300, six months after the suggestion is approved by the City Manager and initially implemented. This monetary award will follow a preliminary analysis to confirm that the suggestion is on target to produce the measurable savings as planned.
 - 3. The balance of the award will be given at a time no less than one year and no more than eighteen months after implementation and upon examination of actual documented cost savings.
- B. Intangible –
 - 1. If the suggestion affects only one department and will be implemented, the employee will receive a maximum \$50 award.
 - 2. If the suggestion affects more than one department and will be implemented, the employee will receive a maximum \$75 award.
 - 3. If the suggestion has citywide impact and will be implemented, the employee will receive a maximum \$100 award.

If a suggestion award winner leaves employment within one year from the date of implementation, he or she shall forfeit the remaining portion of any monetary award received.

Ineligible Suggestions:

Those suggestions which are ineligible include:

- A. Complaints which fail to offer a constructive solution
- B. Personal grievances
- C. Classification and pay of positions
- D. Verbal suggestions
- E. A duplicate suggestion already received by the program within the previous 24-month period
- F. Matters requiring legal adjudication
- G. Suggestions that contain an idea already under consideration, in process of being implemented, or which has been implemented by the City, independent of the suggestor
- H. Suggestions which involve stricter enforcement of existing rules and/or regulations
- I. Suggestions found by the Department Head and Supervisor to be within the normal scope of duties and responsibilities of the employee's position
- J. Suggestions included as a solution in a specific assignment or recommended in an internal audit, consultant's report, or a management task force committee
- K. Suggestions which compromise or detract from the safety of the service being provided to the residents of Monroe or compromise or detract from the safety of any employee carrying out the normal duties and responsibilities of his/her position

VOLUNTARY SUGGESTION PROGRAM PROCESS

Suggestion Process:

- The Assistant City Manager, Human Resources Director, Chief Accountant, and two Department Heads will constitute the review committee.
- The Human Resources Director logs the suggestion in the order received, assigns a number, and forwards it to the employee's Department Head for review. The employee submitting the suggestion is advised by the Human Resources Director of the receipt and transmittal of the suggestion and its assigned number within ten (10) days of its submission.

- The employee's supervisor and Department Head shall review and discuss all suggestions to determine eligibility.
- If the suggestion is determined to be ineligible, the Human Resources Director is informed and prepares a letter to the suggestor advising him or her of such.
- Eligible suggestions shall be forwarded to the appropriate supervisor for evaluation and recommendation for approval/disapproval. A committee to evaluate the suggestion should be comprised of the supervisor and key employees with the technical work unit. Written evaluation responses will be returned to the Department Head within twenty (20) days of receipt.
- If it is determined that a tangible award is merited, a Department evaluator is assigned to complete the twelve (12) month report required to determine amount of award related to revenue or savings generated. The Directors of Energy Services and Water Resources will forward this document to the Human Resources Director after approval.
- If the suggestion is found to merit an intangible award, the Review Committee and appropriate Department Heads will determine the departmental impact of the suggestion. This will be forwarded to the Human Resources Director after approval of the appropriate monetary award. The appropriate monetary award will be given to the suggestor following this determination.
- All recommendations for tangible or intangible awards must have the final approval of the City Manager. The Human Resources Director is responsible for forwarding the recommendation to the City Manager for final approval.

DEPARTMENT HEAD RESPONSIBILITIES

Recommend the authorization of tangible or intangible awards to the City Manager for final approval; notify employee and issue appropriate award.

PATENTABLE SUGGESTIONS

It is anticipated that, in most cases, ownership of patentable suggestions made under this Program will vest in the City of Monroe.

APPEALS

Employees may appeal the disposition of their suggestion by filing a written request for reconsideration with the Department Head within thirty (30) working days following the date of the letter notifying the employee of the suggestion disposition. This will be the only avenue of appeal available to the employee.

CITY OF MONROE RIGHTS

The use by the City of any suggestion shall not form the basis of a future claim upon the City of Monroe by the employee or employee's beneficiary as named on his/her City of Monroe group life insurance policy.

No award will be made by the City for any idea disclosed by employees in any way not in accordance with the rules herein.

The City reserves the exclusive right to terminate, amend, or modify the Program, including award amounts, without prior notice.

The decision of the City Manager shall be final and conclusive as to suggestions and employees' eligibility, adoption or non-adoption of suggestions, awards, and all other matters concerning submitted suggestions.

This Program is being implemented as a Pilot Program in the Energy Services and Water Resources Departments only.

REVIEW

The policy will be reviewed annually by the City Manager, assisted by the Human Resources Director and revised as necessary to conform with the Voluntary Suggestion Program Guidelines of the Department of Human Resources.

- ❑ Number of persons assigned for this work.
- ❑ Skills required – Work requiring highly skilled work may require simplifying so that less skilled personnel can do it.
- ❑ Schedules not met – backlogs and overtime resulting.
- ❑ Poor quality – Not meeting standards, scrap.
- ❑ Excessive work – Energy, materials, time.
- ❑ Unsafe work practices and conditions – numerous accidents and near accidents or dangerous job.
- ❑ Fatiguing – Great physical activity and requires frequent rest periods.
- ❑ Unpleasant – Undesirable work because of dust, noise, fumes, temperature, humidity, exposure to rain or snow, etc.
- ❑ Bottleneck operations – Stoppages or hold-up of work which interferes with the smooth flow of the work.

PRODUCTIVITY IMPROVEMENT IDEAS

- ❑ Methods Improvement – Can a task be eliminated, combined or rearranged?
- ❑ Safety Practices – Can accidents or industrial injuries be reduced?
- ❑ Administrative Procedures – Can any step be eliminated? Is there too much “red tape”?
- ❑ Operating Procedures – Are the right supplies, equipment or methods being used?
- ❑ Paperwork Simplification – Can a report, a form or a copy be eliminated or redesigned?
- ❑ Layout and Location of Facilities and Equipment – Will a different arrangement reduce costs, delays and travel time?
- ❑ Material Management – Is the right inventory level being maintained? Is the quality appropriate? Are proper controls established?
- ❑ Work Distribution – Is the work distributed fairly? Is it properly delegated? Can you plan for high or low points of activity?

- ❑ Records Management – Is your filing system efficient? Do you store records unnecessarily?
- ❑ Energy and Fuel Conservation – Can you reduce the use of electricity? Can you use your vehicles more efficiently?
- ❑ Job Satisfaction – Can the job be done easier? Can a machine be used? Are there duplicate efforts? Can boredom and fatigue be reduced?
- ❑ Time Management – Is time wasted? Are work activities properly scheduled? Is travel time planned?

ESP # _____

EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM

COST SAVINGS SHEET

A. TIME REDUCTION (Labor):

	_____	Hours/Month Before Improvement
-	_____	Hours/Month After Improvement
=	_____	Hours/Month Saved
x	<u>12</u>	Months/Year
	_____	Hours Saved Annually
x	_____	Dollars/Hour Salary at Mid-Range (Class Code _____)
	_____	Salary Saved Annually
x	1.25	Fringe Benefit Adjustment
	\$ _____	Annual Savings
-	()	Improvement cost ÷ Improvement Life (in years)
=	()	Annual Maintenance/Operating Costs of Improvement
\$	_____	<u>COST AVOIDED ANNUALLY</u>

B. OTHER COST AVOIDANCE:

CLASSIFICATION:

_____ Extend Life of Resource	Asset Impacted: _____
_____ Avoid Future Investment	
_____ Annual Cost Savings (Ex. Electrical)	

SAVINGS CALCULATIONS:

(List formulas, data, etc. used to obtain savings figures)