

## Chapter 6. Ideas Processing Phase 2: Award Determination

6-1. Definition. If an Idea is adopted, it passes into Phase II, Award Determination. The Ideas Officers and staff have the lead-responsibility for the determinations in Phase II.

Phase II has three primary decision points:

- (3) Cost/Benefit Verification
- (4) Job-Relatedness Determination
- (5) Award Calculation

6-2. Decision point 3: Cost/benefit verification. The Ideas staff will review the cost/benefit analysis provided by the program staff to make sure it appears complete and reasonable. For Ideas with potential savings of \$250,000 or more, the Inspector General in Headquarters or a Regional Inspector General for Audit (RIGA) will be asked to verify the savings prior to award.

6-3. Decision point 4: Job-relatedness determination

a. Purpose. A job-relatedness determination is made because employees may not be paid twice for doing what is expected of them. Therefore, if an adopted Idea is determined to be job related, the suggester will be eligible to receive only a nonmonetary award from the IDEAS Program. The suggester may receive monetary recognition via a performance award, however.

b. Definition. Employees should be eligible to receive monetary awards if at all possible. Therefore, for the purposes of the IDEAS Program, a suggestion will be considered job related only if:

- o The suggester has the ability and authority to implement it by himself or herself, without higher level approval, or
- o The suggestion resulted from a specific assignment or specific management directive given to that employee.

c. Process. The determination of job relatedness will be made by the Ideas Officer based on one or more of the following:

- (1) Review of the employee's position description (PD) at the time the suggestion was submitted;

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- (2) Review of the employee's performance standards

at the time the suggestion was submitted;

(3) Discussion with the suggester's supervisor about the nature of the suggester's assignments at the time the suggestion was submitted;

(4) Written recommendation of the suggester's supervisor at the time the suggestion was submitted;

(5) Review of classification standards for the employee's series and grade at the time the suggestion was submitted;

(6) Review of the qualifications standards for the employee's position at the time the suggestion was submitted; and

(7) Review of functional statements of the organization to which the employee was assigned at the time the suggestion was submitted, as described in the official Departmental Organizational Handbook.

Normally, Ideas adopted for Departmentwide implementation which are submitted by Field employees will not be considered job related, since it typically is not the responsibility of Field employees to develop Departmentwide policies and procedures.

Additional guidelines for completing the job-relatedness determination are provided in Appendix H, Section 8.

d. In cases in which job relatedness is not clear, the decision will favor the suggester.

#### 6-4. Decision Point 5: Award Calculation

a. Types of Awards. Ideas can be recognized monetarily or nonmonetarily.

(1) Nonmonetary Awards. All suggesters of adopted Ideas will receive honorary recognition via Certificates of Commendation. Copies of the certificates will be sent to the servicing personnel offices for inclusion in the Official Personnel Files. This documentation is important since employee suggestion awards, like performance awards, can be considered in merit staffing and promotion actions.

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(2) Monetary Awards. Except in cases in which the suggestion is job related, adopted Ideas also will be recognized monetarily.

Monetary awards will be based on the tangible or intangible benefits of the suggestion. Tangible benefits

are defined as being quantifiable dollar savings achieved either through decreased costs or cost avoidances. Intangible benefits are those which clearly improve the efficiency, effectiveness, or services of the Government but which cannot be quantified. Additional guidance on determining benefits can be found in Appendix F.

Whenever possible, tangible benefits will be determined.

6.4 - FIGURE 3: AWARD APPROVAL AUTHORITY

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AWARD AMOUNT	APPROVAL AUTHORITY
\$25 - \$2,000	Directors, Office of Administration, in Regional Offices
\$25 - \$5,000	Director, Office of Productivity and Management Improvements
\$5,001 - \$10,000	Assistant Secretary for Administration or Deputy Assistant Secretary for Administration
\$10,001 - \$25,000	Both Secretary of HUD and Office of Personnel Management (OPM)
\$25,001 - \$35,000	Secretary of HUD, OPM, and the President (all three)

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(3) Supplemental Awards. The suggester retains reconsideration rights for the Idea for 2 years from the date of notification of adoption. During the retention period, the suggester may request the IDEAS Program Officer to reconsider the award amount if one or both of the following are true:

- o If the actual first-year savings are significantly higher than was projected at the time the initial award was made; or

- o If the suggestion is implemented more broadly than was anticipated when the initial award was made.

b. Approval Authority. Monetary awards may range from \$25 to \$35,000. Approval authority is redelegated as described in Figure 3.