

**CHAPTER 12**

**BENEFICIAL**

**SUGGESTIONS**

NOTE: This chapter should be read in conjunction with local activity instructions and with any negotiated agreements between your activity and an exclusively recognized labor organization. Contract language will take precedence over conflicting provisions in this manual. Areas of uncertainty should be discussed with the Human Resources Office.

## BENEFICIAL SUGGESTIONS

### 1. DEFINITIONS

#### **BENEFICIAL SUGGESTION**

A contribution, which offers a constructive proposal that contributes directly to, increased economy, efficiency or effectiveness of government operations.

### 2. BENEFICIAL SUGGESTIONS

- a. A beneficial suggestion proposal need not be an original idea and may result from the suggestor's previous work experience, research or education.
- b. **Exclusions**  
Ideas that deal with employee services, benefits, working conditions, housekeeping, routine safety practices or maintenance of buildings and grounds normally are not eligible for consideration as suggestions.
- c. **Who Is Eligible**  
All employees paid from appropriated and non-appropriated funds, including military personnel, are eligible to participate in this program.
- d. Suggestions, which are adopted, will be considered for monetary award recognition based on the resulting tangible and/or intangible benefits for the first year of use of the idea.
- e. A suggestion is considered adopted and eligible for award consideration when it is actually put into effect by managers. The adoption action may be taken by the originating activity, another activity, or another Government department or agency. A suggestion need not be adopted in the form in which originally submitted in order to be eligible for award consideration. If the suggestion is instrumental in motivating a management action, an award should be made based on the value of the contribution.
- f. **Three Year Adoption Restriction**  
To be eligible for an award, a suggestion must be adopted within three years after its receipt by the Suggestion Program Administrator, unless the adoption is delayed beyond the three-year period because of actions such as trial test, experimentation, or investigation outside of the originating activity needed to determine the value of the suggestion. The determination must be made as to whether the suggestion will or will not be adopted. If, after an investigation, a suggestion is not adopted and then later, after expiration of the three-year period, the idea is placed into operation, the suggestion is not eligible for an award. When a suggestion is not adopted, the suggestor maintains the right to the suggestion within the local activity for the remainder of the three-year period. If, during that period, management decides to implement the idea, the suggestor is entitled to adoption credit and award consideration.

### 3. INVENTION AWARDS CONSIDERATION AND QUALIFICATIONS

- Contributes to the efficiency, economy or other improvement in Government operations
- Is in the public interest and is associated with the employee's official employment.

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- An initial award will be granted in cases where the reported invention has been favorably evaluated by a federal agency as having a value to its mission.
- An additional award is appropriate if a patent is issued and the Government either owns the invention or has a license.
- Further awards may be granted when the invention benefits the public, as evidenced by the number of patent licenses granted, or whenever it provides benefit to the Government.

#### 4. BENEFICIAL SUGGESTION PROCESSING PROCEDURES

- a. Employees, or supervisors on behalf of their employees, will submit a suggestion form available from the Suggestion Program Administrator for processing.
- b. The Suggestion Program Administrator will review the suggestion for completeness, eliminating those, which duplicate other suggestions, and forward the suggestion to designated reviewers with relevant technical expertise to provide an in-depth evaluation of the suggestion. If the reviewer recommends adoption, a cost analysis of potential savings will be completed and the award amount will be computed by using the tangible/intangible scales. Employees submitting suggestions are eligible for non-monetary awards. If the reviewer determines the suggestion should be adopted locally, the reviewer will prepare a justification validating the practical application and benefits of the suggestion and verifying Government savings. The Administrator, with the concurrence of the activity head or activity designee, may provide an initial monetary payment to the suggestor. When the designated reviewer conducts a thorough and expeditious review, including possible improvements to a complex suggestion, and/or develops additional distinct ideas, the reviewer will be considered for an Individual Cash Award.
- c. **Outside Activity Impact**  
If an idea may have a positive or negative impact on other offices outside the activity, the Suggestion Program Administrator will ensure that those offices are given the opportunity to evaluate and comment on the suggestion. Similarly, if other agencies could benefit from the suggestion, the Suggestion Program Administrator will contact the command headquarters Suggestion Program Administrator for assistance.
- d. Once a suggestion has been approved for implementation, the Suggestion Program Administrator will find out the estimated start-up and completion dates of the project. A final determination of the actual impact of the suggestion must be completed within three months of the implementation. After that is done, an award, if applicable, will be issued to the suggestor. Should the implementing officials do an exceptionally prompt or good job of implementing and/or improving on the suggestion, they may be considered for an Individual Cash Award.