

Medal of Valor shall be the highest national award for valor by a public safety officer.

(Pub. L. 107-12, § 2, May 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 20.)

SHORT TITLE

Pub. L. 107-12, § 1, May 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 20, provided that: “This Act [enacting this chapter and amending section 2214 of Title 15, Commerce and Trade] may be cited as the ‘Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Act of 2001.’”

§ 15202. Medal of Valor Board

(a) Establishment of Board

There is established a Medal of Valor Review Board (hereinafter in this chapter referred to as the “Board”), which shall be composed of 11 members appointed in accordance with subsection (b) of this section and shall conduct its business in accordance with this chapter.

(b) Membership

(1) Members

The members of the Board shall be individuals with knowledge or expertise, whether by experience or training, in the field of public safety, of which—

(A) two shall be appointed by the majority leader of the Senate;

(B) two shall be appointed by the minority leader of the Senate;

(C) two shall be appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;

(D) two shall be appointed by the minority leader of the House of Representatives; and

(E) three shall be appointed by the President, including one with experience in fire-fighting, one with experience in law enforcement, and one with experience in emergency services.

(2) Term

The term of a Board member shall be 4 years.

(3) Vacancies

Any vacancy in the membership of the Board shall not affect the powers of the Board and shall be filled in the same manner as the original appointment.

(4) Operation of the Board

(A) Chairman

The Chairman of the Board shall be elected by the members of the Board from among the members of the Board.

(B) Meetings

The Board shall conduct its first meeting not later than 90 days after the appointment of the last member appointed of the initial group of members appointed to the Board. Thereafter, the Board shall meet at the call of the Chairman of the Board. The Board shall meet not less often than twice each year.

(C) Voting and rules

A majority of the members shall constitute a quorum to conduct business, but the Board may establish a lesser quorum for conducting hearings scheduled by the Board. The Board may establish by majority vote

any other rules for the conduct of the Board’s business, if such rules are not inconsistent with this chapter or other applicable law.

(c) Duties

The Board shall select candidates as recipients of the Medal of Valor from among those applications received by the National Medal of Valor Office. Not more often than once each year, the Board shall present to the Attorney General the name or names of those it recommends as Medal of Valor recipients. In a given year, the Board shall not be required to select any recipients but may not select more than 5 individuals, or groups of individuals, as recipients. The Attorney General may in extraordinary cases increase the number of recipients in a given year. The Board shall set an annual timetable for fulfilling its duties under this chapter.

(d) Hearings

(1) In general

The Board may hold such hearings, sit and act at such times and places, administer such oaths, take such testimony, and receive such evidence as the Board considers advisable to carry out its duties.

(2) Witness expenses

Witnesses requested to appear before the Board may be paid the same fees as are paid to witnesses under section 1821 of title 28. The per diem and mileage allowances for witnesses shall be paid from funds appropriated to the Board.

(e) Information from Federal agencies

The Board may secure directly from any Federal department or agency such information as the Board considers necessary to carry out its duties. Upon the request of the Board, the head of such department or agency may furnish such information to the Board.

(f) Information to be kept confidential

The Board shall not disclose any information which may compromise an ongoing law enforcement investigation or is otherwise required by law to be kept confidential.

(Pub. L. 107-12, § 3, May 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 20; Pub. L. 109-162, title XI, § 1112, Jan. 5, 2006, 119 Stat. 3103.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in subsecs. (a), (b)(4)(C), and (c), was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 107-12, May. 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 20, which enacted this chapter and amended section 2214 of Title 15, Commerce and Trade. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 15201 of this title and Tables.

AMENDMENTS

2006—Subsec. (c). Pub. L. 109-162 substituted “more than 5 individuals, or groups of individuals, as recipients” for “more than 5 recipients”.

§ 15203. Board personnel matters

(a) Compensation of members

(1) Except as provided in paragraph (2), each member of the Board shall be compensated at a

rate equal to the daily equivalent of the annual rate of basic pay prescribed for level IV of the Executive Schedule under section 5315 of title 5 for each day (including travel time) during which such member is engaged in the performance of the duties of the Board.

(2) All members of the Board who serve as officers or employees of the United States, a State, or a local government, shall serve without compensation in addition to that received for those services.

(b) Travel expenses

The members of the Board shall be allowed travel expenses, including per diem in lieu of subsistence, at rates authorized for employees of agencies under subchapter I of chapter 57 of title 5, while away from their homes or regular places of business in the performance of service for the Board.

(Pub. L. 107-12, § 4, May 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 21.)

§ 15204. Definitions

In this chapter:

(1) Public safety officer

The term “public safety officer” means a person serving a public agency, with or without compensation, as a firefighter, law enforcement officer, or emergency services officer, as determined by the Attorney General. For the purposes of this paragraph, the term “law enforcement officer” includes a person who is a corrections or court officer or a civil defense officer.

(2) State

The term “State” means each of the several States of the United States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

(Pub. L. 107-12, § 5, May 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 22.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in introductory provisions, was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 107-12, May 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 20, known as the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Act of 2001, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 15201 of this title and Tables.

§ 15205. Authorization of appropriations

There are authorized to be appropriated to the Attorney General such sums as may be necessary to carry out this chapter.

(Pub. L. 107-12, § 6, May 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 22.)

REFERENCES IN TEXT

This chapter, referred to in text, was in the original “this Act”, meaning Pub. L. 107-12, May 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 20, known as the Public Safety Officer Medal of Valor Act of 2001, which is classified principally to this chapter. For complete classification of this Act to the Code, see Short Title note set out under section 15201 of this title and Tables.

§ 15206. National Medal of Valor Office

There is established within the Department of Justice a National Medal of Valor Office. The

Office shall provide staff support to the Board to establish criteria and procedures for the submission of recommendations of nominees for the Medal of Valor and for the final design of the Medal of Valor.

(Pub. L. 107-12, § 7, May 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 22.)

§ 15207. Consultation requirement

The Board shall consult with the Institute of Heraldry within the Department of Defense regarding the design and artistry of the Medal of Valor. The Board may also consider suggestions received by the Department of Justice regarding the design of the medal, including those made by persons not employed by the Department.

(Pub. L. 107-12, § 9, May 30, 2001, 115 Stat. 22.)

§ 15208. Law enforcement tribute acts

(a) Short title

This section may be cited as the “Law Enforcement Tribute Act”.

(b) Findings

Congress finds the following:

(1) The well-being of all citizens of the United States is preserved and enhanced as a direct result of the vigilance and dedication of law enforcement and public safety personnel.

(2) More than 700,000 law enforcement officers, both men and women, at great risk to their personal safety, serve their fellow citizens as guardians of peace.

(3) Nationwide, 51 law enforcement officers were killed in the line of duty in 2000, according to statistics released by the Federal Bureau of Investigation. This number is an increase of 9 from the 1999 total of 42.

(4) In 1999, 112 firefighters died while on duty, an increase of 21 deaths from the previous year.

(5) Every year, 1 in 9 peace officers is assaulted, 1 in 25 is injured, and 1 in 4,400 is killed in the line of duty.

(6) In addition, recent statistics indicate that 83 officers were accidentally killed in the performance of their duties in 2000, an increase of 18 from the 65 accidental deaths in 1999.

(7) A permanent tribute is a powerful means of honoring the men and women who have served our Nation with distinction. However, many law enforcement and public safety agencies lack the resources to honor their fallen colleagues.

(c) Program authorized

From amounts made available to carry out this section, the Attorney General may make grants to States, units of local government, and Indian tribes to carry out programs to honor, through permanent tributes, men and women of the United States who were killed or disabled while serving as law enforcement or public safety officers.

(d) Uses of funds

Grants awarded under this section shall be distributed directly to the State, unit of local government, or Indian tribe, and shall be used for the purposes specified in subsection (c) of this section.