Ohio Department of Administrative Services Human Resources Division Ted Strickland, Governor Hugh Quill, Director

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OhioAS

To: Agency Human Resources Administrators

From: DAS/HRD Policy and Office of Budget and Management

Date: September 8, 2009

Employee Recognition Programs Re:

The Office of Policy Development within the Human Resources Division of the Department of Administrative Services and the Office of Budget and Management have received a number of inquiries involving Employee Recognition Programs and the ability and/or propriety of awarding gifts and monetary awards to employees in light of Executive Order 2008-01S, Implementing Expenditure Reductions and Spending Control Strategies Necessary to Maintain a Balanced Budget, Executive Order 2009-07S, Implementing Additional Spending Control Strategies, and corresponding directives from OBM.

According to section 124.17 of the Ohio Revised Code, the Director of Administrative Services is authorized to "establish a program for the recognition of exemplary performance of employees." In addition, sections 123:1-27-04 and 123:1-27-05 of the Ohio Administrative Code set forth general principles for agencies in establishing an employee recognition program for the acknowledgement of exemplary employee performance. Employees may be recognized for specific work performance, employee motivation, and attitude, and other qualities that demonstrate exemplary employee performance, but achievement recognition is limited to workrelated performance.

As a reminder to all agencies, although employee recognition awards may be established by agencies, all employee recognition programs must first be submitted to DAS/HRD Policy for review. DAS will consider each program and determine whether the program is in accordance with the provisions set forth in the Ohio Revised and Administrative Codes. DAS will also work with OBM, who will review the affordability of the proposed program within current appropriations.

Given the current economic environment, agencies must thoughtfully scrutinize discretionary spending and direct limited resources to those services and programs that matter most to the citizens of Ohio. We support recognizing employees for their good work, but during challenging economic times, all state agencies and employees must do their part to use every available cost-saving measure to ensure that vital services are not impaired. We encourage you to find creative ways to recognize your employees in ways that do not cost money - e.g. an employee recognition certification, created on the computer, and attached to an all-employee email - or other ideas that acknowledge the very hard work our state employees are doing.

Should you have questions regarding this guidance, please contact the Office of Policy Development at (614) 752-5393 or the Office of Budget and Management at (614) 466-2181.