

The Public Service Medal

Formal recognition of outstanding service

Nomination Guide



The **Public Service Medal**, established in 1989, is awarded twice a year by the Governor-General.

The Public Service Medal is part of the Australian honours and awards system. It recognises employees of the Australian Government and state, territory and local governments who have given outstanding service.

Outstanding service could be shown through:

- service excellence to the public, or to external or internal clients;
- innovation in program, project or policy development;
- leadership, including as a member of a team; or
- the achievement of more efficient processes, improved productivity or better service delivery.

This guide provides information on how to complete a nomination, how the Public Service Medal is awarded, and contact information for the Federal, state and territory Public Service Medal committees.

To nominate someone for the Public Service Medal please refer to the Public Service Medal nomination form.

The award

Only 100 awards of the Public Service Medal (PSM) can be made in any calendar year. Of these, up to 30 can be awarded to employees of Australian Government agencies and the remainder are awarded by the states and territories as follows: NSW (22); VIC (17); QLD (11); WA (6); SA (6); TAS (3); ACT (3); and NT (2).

Recipients of the PSM are entitled to use the post-nominal 'PSM' after their names to show that their outstanding service has been formally recognised.

What is the medal awarded for?

The sole criterion for the award of the PSM is outstanding public service. "Outstanding service" includes service above and beyond the normal requirements of the position, a special achievement or success in the performance of duty in difficult or unusual circumstances, or sustained high level performance by an individual with a focus on outcomes and recognisable benefits to clients and the workplace. Long service should not be used as a basis for making nominations.

Who is eligible?

All employees of the Australian Government and state, territory and local governments are eligible for the PSM, except for members of the Defence Force and other uniformed services (police, fire, ambulance and emergency services) who are eligible for comparable awards*. The PSM is not reserved for senior officers – it is open to all levels of the public service. Past awards have been made across a broad range of government services and locations.

The PSM may be awarded only once to each recipient. A person who has received a PSM and gives further distinguished service may be nominated subsequently for an award in the Order of Australia. Similarly, a person who has received an award in the Order of Australia is not excluded from receiving a PSM if the nomination relates to different service than that used for the Order of Australia. If the PSM nomination is for similar service, at least five years should elapse between the announcement of awards, in accordance with established honours convention.

** With regards to the suite of meritorious awards (Public Service Medal, Australian Police Medal, Australian Fire Service Medal, Ambulance Service Medal, Emergency Services Medal, Australian Corrections Medal, Australian Intelligence Medal and the Australian Antarctic Medal) it is possible to be awarded more than one type of meritorious award provided the award recognises **different service, for example, PSM and an AAM**. Please contact the Australian Government PSM Secretariat for further advice (see contact details on page 3).*

Citizenship

A person does not have to be an Australian citizen to be awarded the PSM. However, if the nominated person is not an Australian citizen, the Australian Government, in accordance with honours convention, must seek the agreement of the government of the country of citizenship before the award can be made. If the nominee is not an Australian citizen, the nomination should clearly indicate this, and if the nomination is recommended to the Governor-General, the Governor-General's office will arrange for the Australian Government to seek the appropriate agreement.

Retired officers

Awards of the PSM may be made to former public servants. Nominations must be submitted within 12 months of ceased service.

Posthumous awards

The PSM is not awarded posthumously.

How should nominations be prepared?

All nominations should be prepared in Word format

As the PSM is part of the official national honours system, it is important to provide:

- Full personal details of the nominee, including the full name and home address. (All information provided is treated as confidential, and if the nomination is successful, the nominee will have the opportunity to advise whether they wish their address details to be published).
- Full position details are required so that the PSM Committee can assess the nomination relative to the duties that would normally be expected of a person at a particular level. This is very important for the committee when comparing nominations.
- The nomination statement must contain comprehensive information on the service or achievement for which the nomination is being made. A list of positions held over a number of years is not sufficient. Because the nomination will be considered alongside other nominations in what is essentially a competitive process, the committee needs to be given a clear idea of what the nominee has done to fulfil the criterion of outstanding service.
- It should not be assumed that the committee has a detailed knowledge of the area in which the nominee has worked, or a full understanding of the significance of certain achievements. The nominee's service should be put into context in the nomination statement.

Referee support

Referee reports should be limited to 2 pages per report

- To be properly considered by the committee, all nominations must be accompanied by referee statements which comment on the service of the nominee.
- It is also often appropriate to obtain referee statements from outside the agency, especially if the nominee is being nominated for outstanding service to a particular community or industry.
- If the nominee's service relates to the work of another agency, a referee statement from that agency may also help the committee in their consideration of the nomination.
- A minimum of three referee statements is required.

Endorsement

All nominations must be endorsed by the relevant Departmental Secretary or agency head.

How are nominations considered?

The various PSM Committees consider nominations for eligible employees.

Committees meet twice a year to consider nominations for the Australia Day and Queen’s Birthday honours lists. Closing dates for nominations vary from state to state and should be checked with individual Committee Secretariats.

After considering the nominations, the committee recommends a list of proposed recipients to the responsible Minister or Premier, who then makes a recommendation to the Governor-General who has the authority to approve the awards.

Responsibility for contacting the proposed recipients rests with the Honours Secretariat at Government House, which arranges for the announcement of the awards to appear in the Commonwealth of Australia Gazette. Proposed recipients may decline an award if they wish. Sometime after gazettal, the recipient will be notified by Government House of the arrangements for them to receive their medal at an official investiture.

Public Service Medal Committee contacts

Australian Government	
PSM Committee Secretariat, Honours & Symbols Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet PO Box 6500 CANBERRA ACT 2600 Tel: 02 6271 5601 Email: psm@pmc.gov.au	
States and Territories	
MS Averil Yeo Protocol, Community and Events NSW Department of Premier and Cabinet GPO Box 5341 SYDNEY NSW 2001 Tel: 02 9228 3564 Email: awards@dpc.nsw.gov.au	Ms Gina Harris Senior Manager, Protocol and Events Strategic Communication, Engagement and Protocol Branch Department of Premier and Cabinet Tel: 1300 366 356 Email: psm@dpc.vic.gov.au
Events and Engagement Governance and Engagement Department of the Premier and Cabinet PO Box 15185 CITY EAST QLD 4002 Tel: (07) 3003 9200 Email: honours@premiers.qld.gov.au	PSM Committee Secretariat Public Sector Commission Locked Bag 3002 WEST PERTH WA 6872 Phone: (08) 6552 8551 Email: psm@psc.wa.gov.au
Ms Sarah Lang Australia Day Council of South Australia Office 18, 240 Currie Street ADELAIDE SA 5000 Tel: (08) 8212 3999 Email: sarah.lang@adcsa.com.au	Ms Fiona Birkett State Protocol Officer GPO Box 123 HOBART TAS 7001 Tel: 03 6270 5671 Email: protocol@dpac.tas.gov.au
Assistant Director, Protocol and Honours Communications and Engagement Division Chief Minister, Treasury and Economic Development Directorate GPO Box 158 CANBERRA ACT 2601 Tel: 02 6205 3031 Email: honoursandawards@act.gov.au	Ms Libby Doney Director, Strategic Workforce Planning and Development Office of the Commissioner for Public Employment GPO Box 4371 DARWIN NT 0801 Tel: 08 8999 4137 Email: swpd.ocpe@nt.gov.au