

# Chapter 383-06 WAC

## GUIDELINES FOR THE EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM

**WAC**

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**DISPOSITION OF SECTIONS FORMERLY CODIFIED IN THIS CHAPTER**

383-06-050	Responsibilities of agency coordinators. [Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-050, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-050, filed 7/20/83.] Repealed by 99-24-093, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00. Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW.
383-06-060	Responsibilities of agency evaluators. [Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-060, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-060, filed 7/20/83.] Repealed by 99-24-093, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00. Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW.
383-06-110	Eligibility for cash awards. [Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-110, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-110, filed 7/20/83.] Repealed by 99-24-093, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00. Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW.

**WAC 383-06-010 Purpose.** The purpose of this chapter is to provide guidelines for the statewide employee suggestion program developed and administered by the productivity board and the agency unique suggestion program administered by the board's designee under the authority of chapter 41.60 RCW.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-010, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-010, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-010, filed 7/20/83.]

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**WAC 383-06-020 Definitions.** As used in these rules, these definitions refer only to the employee suggestion program(s) unless the context requires otherwise:

- (1) "Board" means the productivity board.
- (2) "Program" means the employee suggestion "brainstorm" program(s) developed by the board under RCW 41.60.020.
- (3) "Statewide employee suggestion program" means an employee suggestion program administered by the productivity board.
- (4) "Agency unique suggestion program" means an employee suggestion program designed and administered by an agency head with delegated authority.
- (5) "Delegated authority" means authority delegated to an agency head by the board to design and implement an agency unique program for the agency.
- (6) "Board designee" means an agency head with delegated authority from the board.
- (7) "The act" referred to in these rules is chapter 41.60 RCW.
- (8) "Employee" means:
  - (a) For purposes of participation in the program, any present employees in state agencies and institutions of higher education except for:
    - (i) Elected officials;
    - (ii) Agency heads and their confidential secretaries and administrative assistants; and
    - (iii) Productivity board members and staff;
  - (b) For purposes of eligibility to receive monetary awards through the program excludes any employee made ineligible by WAC 383-06-080.
- (9) "Suggestion" is a unique, useful or workable, constructive proposal offering a specific change or form of improvement which contributes to state efficiency, service, safety, economy or employee well-being.
- (10) "Agency" includes every subdivision of government which is eligible to participate under chapter 41.60 RCW, including institutions of higher education and merit system agencies.
- (11) "Multiagency suggestion" meets the criteria for a suggestion, as defined in WAC 383-06-100, and requires evaluation by two or more agencies.
- (12) "Award" means monetary or nonmonetary recognition.
- (13) Agency "head" includes the chief executive, whether appointed or elected, of each state agency or institution of higher education.
- (14) "Program manager" is the executive manager of the productivity board and serves as staff to the productivity board.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-020, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-020, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-020, filed 7/20/83.]

**WAC 383-06-030 Functions of the board—Statewide employee suggestion program.** The responsibilities of the board shall include:

- (1) Providing information about the program to agency heads and the legislature.
- (2) Establishing policies under which the program shall be promoted and administered, including criteria for suggestion acceptability for evaluation and the granting of awards.
- (3) Adopting rules and regulations necessary for the administration of the act.
- (4) Making the final determination whether an award should be made and the nature and extent of any award or recognition given.
- (5) Hearing of appeals pursuant to WAC 383-06-140.
- (6) Meeting upon the call of the chairman or a majority of the board at least four times per year. Four voting members shall constitute a quorum. Ex officio members may not vote.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-030, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-030, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-030, filed 7/20/83.]

**WAC 383-06-031 Functions of the board—Agency unique suggestion program.** The responsibilities of the board shall include:

- (1) Reviewing agency proposals that request delegated authority to administer an agency unique suggestion program. The board shall make the determination whether to accept or reject an agency proposal to administer an agency unique program based on current board criteria.
- (2) Establishing rules, regulations, and reviewing policies under which the agency unique suggestion program shall be administered, including criteria for suggestion acceptability for evaluation and the granting of awards.
- (3) Handling hearings of appeals pursuant to WAC 383-06-141, when requested by the agency or suggester(s).
- (4) Reviewing agency reports submitted to the board. The board shall make the final determination whether to recertify agency unique programs contingent upon the findings in the report, and on additional information available to the board.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-031, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00.]

**WAC 383-06-040 Duties of productivity board staff.**

- (1) The program manager shall be responsible and accountable to the board for the administration of the program, and shall:
  - (a) Attend all meetings of the board and ensure an official record of its actions.
  - (b) Propose policies, rules, and regulations appropriate for the administration of the program.
- (2) Productivity board staff shall:
  - (a) Report to agencies about implemented suggestions, indicating those requiring a post audit.
  - (b) Establish and maintain records showing the use and effectiveness of the system, including the participation rate and results of involved agencies.

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- (c) Support agencies regarding program promotion and participation through such things as training, technical assistance, etc.

- (d) Perform other duties as required by the board.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-040, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-040, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-040, filed 7/20/83.]

**WAC 383-06-045 Responsibilities of agency—Statewide employee suggestion program.** (1) Each agency head or his/her designee shall appoint an individual(s) to act as liaison between the agency and the productivity board.

- (2) Encourage all levels of management to support the program.
- (3) Promote the program and distribute forms throughout the agency.
- (4) Assign an individual(s) to evaluate a suggestion recommending adoption, partial or modified adoption, or rejection of the suggestion. Facilitate evaluation of all suggestions referred by the productivity board office within forty-five days unless special circumstances exist that prohibit completion within the specified time frame. In this instance, the agency is required to notify the suggester(s) and the productivity board of the status of the suggestion and provide the suggester(s) and the productivity board with a new timeline.
- (5) Maintain documentation of all agency evaluations and implementation plans.
- (6) Notify the suggester(s) of the agency recommendation. Submit copies of the evaluation via hard copy, fax or on-line to the suggester and board.
- (7) Make the final decision to implement a suggestion.
- (8) Ensure that new employees receive orientation about the program.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-045, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-045, filed 1/30/86.]

**WAC 383-06-046 Responsibilities of agency—Agency unique suggestion program.** (1) Each agency head or his/her designee shall appoint an individual(s) to coordinate the agency unique suggestion program and act as liaison between the agency and the board.

- (2) Encourage all levels of management to support the program.
- (3) Promote the program and distribute forms throughout the agency.
- (4) Assign an individual(s) to evaluate a suggestion recommending adoption, partial adoption, or rejection of the suggestion. Facilitate evaluation of all suggestions within forty-five days unless special circumstances exist that prohibit completion within the specified time frame. In this instance, the agency is required to notify the suggester(s) of the status of the suggestion and provide the suggester(s) with a new timeline.
- (5) Maintain documentation of all agency evaluations and implementation plans.
- (6) Develop a documented program with published criteria and communicate the information throughout the agency.
- (7) Allow for suggestions submitted by nonagency employees to be evaluated within the agency.

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(8) Review internal suggestions and determine whether the suggestion is applicable for another agency. Forward internal suggestions that apply to another agency to the productivity board for dissemination.

(9) Make the final determination on whether an award should be made, except for appeals submitted to the board. Recommend and approve an award based on the payment award scale outlined in WAC 383-06-125 developed by the productivity board.

(10) Facilitate payment and recognition to the suggester for adopted suggestions.

(11) Notify the suggester(s) of the agency recommendation. Submit copies of the evaluation to the suggester.

(12) Notify the suggester(s) in writing of their appeal rights and the length of time they have to submit an appeal as specified in WAC 383-06-141. Inform suggesters of their right to appeal to the board if they believe the result of the internal appeal is unsatisfactory.

(13) When a suggester appeals an agency recommendation, the agency shall send the productivity board a copy of the appeal. If the suggester requests to appeal to the board after the agency evaluates the appeal, the agency shall send a complete copy of the suggestion file to the board.

(14) Provide reports to the board showing agency statistics and any informative information that would benefit the board and agencies. Reports should be submitted to the board annually, or at the board's discretion.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-046, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00.]

**WAC 383-06-070 Procedures for processing multi-agency suggestions—Statewide employee suggestion program.** Multiple-agency suggestions require evaluation by two or more agencies. Productivity board staff will determine if the suggestion meets the criteria enumerated in WAC 383-06-020(11), following processing according to procedures developed in accordance to WAC 383-06-100. Productivity board staff will coordinate the multiagency evaluation processing.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-070, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-070, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-070, filed 7/20/83.]

**WAC 383-06-071 Procedures for processing multi-agency suggestions—Agency unique suggestion program.** Multiple-agency suggestions require evaluation by two or more agencies. The agency will determine if the suggestion meets the criteria enumerated in WAC 383-06-020(11), following processing according to procedures developed in accordance to WAC 383-06-100. An agency may advertise suggestions that are beneficial for other agencies through web sites, newsletters and other methods used for advertising by their agency. Agencies shall disseminate all suggestions to the productivity board that need review by another agency(ies). Agencies shall also disseminate suggestions to the productivity board that result in substantial savings or that could be beneficial for other agencies.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-071, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00.]

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**WAC 383-06-080 Eligibility for participation and monetary awards.** (1) Any employee, as defined in WAC 383-06-020(8), may participate in the program.

(2) Employees are ineligible to receive monetary awards through the program for the following categories, except through internal recognition in accordance with RCW 41.60.150. It is up to the agency head to make the determination whether the following categories of suggestions will receive internal recognition:

(a) Suggestions that fall within the suggester's job responsibility. The following circumstances are considered to fall within this category:

(i) Employees whose normal duties involve research and planning, unless unrelated to their routine work assignment;

(ii) The employee has the authority to implement the change;

(iii) The suggestion falls within the suggester's normal assigned job responsibilities;

(iv) The employee has been given the change as a work assignment or the suggested change has been tasked to a team that includes the suggester.

(b) Suggestions submitted after the idea is implemented. Implementation means the time the idea becomes fully operational.

(c) Suggestions wherein the suggester either directly or indirectly has a proprietary interest in the suggestion.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-080, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-080, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-080, filed 7/20/83.]

**WAC 383-06-090 Suggestion format—Statewide employee suggestion program.** (1) Suggestions shall be submitted via hard copy, fax or on-line:

(a) In a legible manner on the application forms to be provided by the agency or the productivity board office.

(b) To the productivity board at the address/ mailing information indicated on the form: P.O. Box 40244, Mail-stop: 40244, Olympia, WA 98504-0244.

(2) Submitted suggestions shall contain:

(a) A specific and concise narrative describing the solution and how it can be accomplished;

(b) A brief and concise narrative describing the present methods, practices or problem;

(c) A cost-benefit-analysis of the anticipated savings that will result from implementing the suggestion, and the method used to determine the calculated savings. If savings are not anticipated then a statement of the improved services or benefits which will accrue from adoption of the suggestion must be included.

(3) Suggesters shall research the suggested proposal to determine whether the proposal is practical.

(4) Suggestions must also include the suggester's signature or e-mail address, title of position, department and division, and mailing address. Social Security numbers are optional at the time of submittal, but are needed upon adoption for payment purposes.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-090, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-090, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-090, filed 7/20/83.]

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**WAC 383-06-091 Suggestion format—Agency unique suggestion program.** An agency with delegated authority to administer an agency unique suggestion program may develop their own forms and submittal process, and shall share copies of their forms with productivity board staff to ensure the intent is consistent with the statewide employee suggestion program.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-091, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00.]

**WAC 383-06-100 Suggestion acceptability.** Suggestions considered acceptable are those which improve the efficiency and/or the effectiveness of state government.

(1) This may include, but is not limited to:

- (a) Savings in time or money;
- (b) Generation of revenue;
- (c) Elimination of waste or duplication;
- (d) Improved service or product;
- (e) Energy conservation;
- (f) Improved working conditions.

(2) Suggestions shall be considered in the order of the date by which they are officially received by the productivity board or the agency.

(3) Suggestions may be unacceptable when a remedy exists through other established administrative procedures, such as:

- (a) Personalized complaint affecting suggester only;
- (b) Proposing items in state stock be issued and used for their intended purpose;
- (c) Changing salary, position, classification, employee benefits, state holidays, leave benefits, retirement compensation, or any other compensation to an employee;
- (d) Enforcement of laws, policies, procedures, regulations, rules, etc.;
- (e) Common sense ideas;
- (f) Outside purview of state government.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-100, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-100, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-100, filed 7/20/83.]

**WAC 383-06-120 Payment of cash awards—State-wide employee suggestion program.** (1) Cash awards shall be based on the payment award scale developed and maintained by the productivity board and outlined in WAC 383-06-125.

(2) Awards for suggestions which will result in actual cost savings shall be recommended by the evaluating agency and the board shall make the final award determination in light of the agency recommendation and the payment award scale after consideration of the savings to be effected.

(3) Suggestions which will result in cost-avoidance, intangible improvements such as benefits in safety, health, welfare, morale, etc., or when savings cannot be calculated shall receive internal recognition from the agency permitted through RCW 41.60.150. The award shall not exceed the amount permitted in RCW 41.60.150. The nature and extent of the award shall be determined by the agency in light of the payment award scale outlined in WAC 383-06-125.

(4) The board may direct incremental payment of any award.

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(5) The acceptance of cash awards shall constitute an agreement that the use by the state of Washington of the suggestion for which the award is made shall not form the basis for a further claim of any nature upon the state by the employee or the employee's heirs or assignees. Upon adoption the suggested idea becomes the property of the state of Washington.

(6) When a suggestion is submitted by more than one employee, any resulting award will be shared by the cosuggesters listed on the suggestion form.

(7) Cash awards may not be used for the purpose of computing a retirement allowance under any public retirement system of the state.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-120, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-120, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-120, filed 7/20/83.]

**WAC 383-06-121 Payment of cash awards—Agency unique suggestion program.** (1) Cash awards shall be based on the payment award scale developed and maintained by the productivity board and outlined in WAC 383-06-125.

(2) Awards for suggestions which will result in actual cost savings shall be determined by the agency after consideration of the savings to be effected in accordance with the payment award scale outlined in WAC 383-06-125.

(3) Suggestions which will result in cost-avoidance, intangible improvements such as benefits in safety, health, welfare, morale, etc., or when savings cannot be calculated shall receive internal recognition from the agency permitted through RCW 41.60.150. The award shall not exceed the amount permitted in RCW 41.60.150. The nature and extent of the award shall be determined by the agency in light of the payment award scale outlined in WAC 383-06-125.

(4) The acceptance of cash awards shall constitute an agreement that the use by the state of Washington of the suggestion for which the award is made shall not form the basis for a further claim of any nature upon the state by the employee or the employee's heirs or assignees. Upon adoption the suggested idea becomes the property of the state of Washington.

(5) When a suggestion is submitted by more than one employee, any resulting award will be shared by the cosuggesters listed on the suggestion form.

(6) Cash awards may not be used for the purpose of computing a retirement allowance under any public retirement system of the state.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-121, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00.]

**WAC 383-06-125 Payment award scale.** The following payment award scale shall be developed by the productivity board and shall be used by the statewide employee suggestion and agency unique programs when determining awards.

(1) Cash awards for suggestions generating actual cost savings and/or revenue to the state shall be ten percent of the actual net savings and/or revenue generated. Savings and/or revenue shall be calculated for one full year and should be for the first year of implementation.

(2) Cash awards for suggestion teams shall be up to twenty-five percent of the actual net savings and/or revenue

generated to be shared by the team in a manner approved by the agency head. In order for suggestion teams to receive a cash award they must have the approval of the agency head or designee. A suggestion team is a group of individuals involved in the suggestion and the implementation process.

(3) No award may be granted in excess of ten thousand dollars.

(4) All suggestions that result in cost-avoidance, for which benefits to the state are intangible or for which savings cannot be calculated, shall receive recognition. Internal recognition shall be given in accordance with RCW 41.60.150. Internal recognition may be monetary and/or nonmonetary recognition and may not exceed the amount permitted by RCW 41.60.150. The agency may consider additional recognition, such as a certificate of appreciation, a letter thanking the suggester for the idea, recognizing the suggester(s) for the suggestion at an agency event, meeting, etc.

(5) Awards shall be consistent and given in a timely manner.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-125, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00.]

**WAC 383-06-130 Recognition of merit.** The board may issue nonmonetary recognition of merit in such form and manner as it determines.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-130, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-130, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-130, filed 7/20/83.]

**WAC 383-06-140 Appeal/perfection of right to appeal—Statewide employee suggestion program.** (1) A suggester, or the suggester's representative, may, by written appeal, request that either a denial of award or the amount of an award be reconsidered. To be valid, the appeal must be received by the board within thirty calendar days of board action. For an appeal to be accepted, new evidence or new information must be supplied. Such appeal must state with specificity the grounds for the appeal and a statement of the relief sought.

(2) Productivity board staff shall make the determination whether an appeal request is accepted or rejected based on the new information or new evidence that is submitted by the suggester. An agency shall reconsider accepted appealed suggestions based upon new information or new evidence provided in the written appeal and report its findings to the productivity board. The board shall reconsider the suggestion in light of new information and/or evidence and evaluations.

(3) If a rejected suggestion is implemented within two years of board action, the employee may file an appeal based on the suggestion's implementation. Such appeal must be filed within two years of board action.

(4) The board reserves the right to rule on cases which involve extenuating circumstances.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-140, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00; 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-140, filed 1/30/86; 83-15-063 (Order 831), § 383-06-140, filed 7/20/83.]

**WAC 383-06-141 Appeal/perfection of right to appeal—Agency unique suggestion program.** (1) A suggester, or the suggester's representative, may, by written appeal, request that either a denial of award or the amount of

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an award be reconsidered. To be valid, the appeal must be received by the agency within thirty calendar days of the agency's formal action of the suggestion. For an appeal to be accepted, new evidence or new information must be supplied. Such appeal must state with specificity the grounds for the appeal and a statement of the relief sought.

(2) If a rejected suggestion is implemented within two years of the agency's formal action of the suggestion, the employee may file an appeal based on the suggestion's implementation. Such appeal must be filed within two years of agency action.

(3) The agency shall direct all appeals to the agency head with a copy to the productivity board.

(4) The agency shall make the determination whether an appeal request is accepted or rejected based on the new information or new evidence that is submitted by the suggester. An agency shall reconsider accepted appealed suggestions based upon the new information and/or evidence provided in the written appeal and report its findings to the suggester.

(5) If the suggester believes the agency appeal process is unsatisfactory the suggester may appeal to the board. An agency head may also request the appeal be turned over to the board if he/she believes an outside party should become involved with the appeal process. The agency shall inform all suggesters of their rights to appeal to the board if they are not satisfied with the agency appeal evaluation. When a suggester or the agency head appeals to the board, complete copies of the suggestion file must be submitted to the board.

(6) The board reserves the right to rule on cases which involve extenuating circumstances.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 99-24-093, § 383-06-141, filed 11/30/99, effective 1/1/00.]