

# Title 383 WAC

## PRODUCTIVITY BOARD

**Chapter**  
**383-06**      **Guidelines for the employee suggestion program.**

### **Chapter 383-06 WAC** **GUIDELINES FOR THE EMPLOYEE SUGGESTION PROGRAM**

#### **WAC**

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

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 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.]

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

- (1) "Board" means the productivity board.
- (2) "Program" means the employee suggestion program developed by the board under RCW 41.60.020.
- (3) "The act" referred to in these rules is chapter 41.60 RCW.
- (4) "Employee" is any person subject to chapter 41.06 or 28B.16 RCW.
- (5) "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.
- (6) "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.
- (7) "Multi-agency suggestion" meets the criteria for a suggestion, as defined in WAC 383-06-100, and requires evaluation by two or more agencies.

(8) "Award" means monetary or noncash recognition.  
(9) Agency "directors" include the chief executive, whether appointed or elected, of each state agency or institution of higher education.

(10) "Administrator" is the executive manager of the employee suggestion board and serves as staff to the productivity board.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 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.** The responsibilities of the board shall include:

- (1) Promoting the program to agency directors 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 as to whether or not 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) The board shall meet 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. 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 383-06-040 Duties of the program administrator.** The program administrator shall be responsible and accountable to the board for the administration of the program, and shall:

- (1) Attend all meetings of the board and ensure an official record of its actions.
- (2) Propose policies, rules, and regulations appropriate for the administration of the program.
- (3) Report to agencies about implemented suggestions, indicating those requiring a post audit.
- (4) Establish and maintain records showing the use and effectiveness of the system, including the participation rate and results of involved agencies.
- (5) Interact with agency coordinators regarding program promotion and participation.
- (6) Perform other duties as required by the board.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 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 Role of agency management.** Each agency director or designee shall:

- (1) Appoint a coordinator to act as liaison between the agency and the board.
- (2) Encourage all levels of management to promote and participate in the program.
- (3) Make the final decision to implement a suggestion.
- (4) Ensure that new employees receive orientation about the program.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 86-04-039 (Order 85-1), § 383-06-045, filed 1/30/86.]

**WAC 383-06-050 Responsibilities of agency coordinators.** Coordinator(s) shall function as agency liaison with the board and shall be responsible to:

- (1) Promote and coordinate the program among agency employees.
- (2) Distribute suggestion forms in their agency.
- (3) Facilitate timely evaluation of all suggestions referred by the productivity board office.
- (4) Maintain documentation of all agency evaluations and implementation plans.

[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.]

**WAC 383-06-060 Responsibilities of agency evaluators.** Evaluators designated by the agency to review a particular suggestion shall:

- (1) Conduct the review in a timely manner; and
- (2) Recommend adoption, partial adoption, conditional adoption, or rejection of the suggestion as submitted; and
- (3) Return evaluated suggestion with their recommendation to the agency coordinator within thirty days. If more than thirty days is required, agency coordinators must be notified of the need for an extension of time. An interim report may be required when lengthy delays are anticipated.

[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.]

**WAC 383-06-070 Procedures for processing multi-agency suggestions.** Multiple-agency suggestions require evaluation by two or more agencies. The program administrator will nominate to the board any suggestion which meets the criteria enumerated in WAC 383-06-020(7), following processing according to procedures developed in accordance to WAC 383-06-100. The administrator will coordinate investigation of the suggestion through the multi-agency evaluation processing. Such coordination may entail:

- (1) Obtaining all pertinent information concerning the merits of the suggestion from representative agencies; and
- (2) Making a formal report to the productivity board about the suggestion.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 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.]

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**WAC 383-06-080 Eligibility for participation.** (1) Employees of merit system and higher education system agencies under chapters 41.06 and 28B.16 RCW may submit suggestions.

Employees whose normal duties involve research and planning may participate but may not receive cash awards unless the subject matter is unrelated to their routine work assignment.

Employees with the authority to make the change suggested may not receive an award.

(2) Productivity board members and staff may not participate.

(3) If a suggestion is adopted for implementation, an employee is eligible to receive an award in accordance with WAC 383-06-110.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 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.** (1) Suggestions shall be submitted:

In a legible manner on the special forms to be provided by agency coordinators or the productivity board office.

(2) To the program administrator at the address indicated on the form: P.O. Box 1789, Mailstop: FE-11, Olympia, WA 98504.

(3) Submitted suggestions shall contain:

- (a) A specific statement of what is suggested and how it can be accomplished;
- (b) A brief statement describing the present methods, practices or problem;
- (c) A statement of the savings, improved services, or benefits which will accrue from adoption of the suggestion.

(4) Suggestions must also include the suggester's signature, title of position, department and division, mailing address and Social Security number.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 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.]

**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) Elimination of waste or duplication;
- (c) Improved service or product;
- (d) Energy conservation;
- (e) Improved working conditions.

(2) Suggestions shall be considered in the order of the date by which they are officially received by the program administrator.

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

- (a) The need for routine maintenance of buildings or grounds;
- (b) Personalized complaint affecting suggester only;

(c) Recommendation for a study, review, survey, design, audit, research, development, investigation, etc., without stating what the expected outcome should be or what solution might result from it;

(d) Proposing items in state stock be issued and used for their intended purpose;

(e) Changing salary, position or classification;

(f) Enforcement of laws, policies, procedures, regulations, rules, etc.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 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 383-06-110 Eligibility for cash awards.** Qualified employees are eligible for awards for adopted suggestions, except that awards shall not be made for:

(1) Suggestions which are within the scope of an employee's assigned responsibilities.

(2) Suggestions submitted more than sixty days after the idea is implemented. Implementation means the time the idea becomes operational. When the decision of the agency to adopt the suggestion is withheld until the close of a trial period, the board may in its discretion provide for a certificate of award.

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

[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.]

**WAC 383-06-120 Payment of cash awards.** (1) No cash awards shall be for less than twenty-five dollars or for more than the maximum amount permitted by RCW 41.60.041.

(2) Awards for suggestions which will result in demonstrable savings of money shall be determined by the board after consideration of the savings to be effected.

(3) Suggestions which will result in intangible improvements, such as benefits in safety, health, welfare, morale, etc., may be granted cash awards in amounts to be determined by the board. The board shall set guidelines, insofar as possible, to make such awards commensurate with the benefits anticipated from the suggestion.

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

(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 employees heirs or assignees.

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

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 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.** (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 postmarked within thirty calendar days of notification of board action. Such appeal must state with specificity the grounds for the appeal and a statement of the relief sought.

(2) At the direction of the productivity board, an agency shall reconsider appealed suggestions based upon new information provided in the written appeal and report its findings to the productivity board. The board shall reconsider the suggestion in light of new evidence and evaluations.

(3) If a rejected suggestion is placed in effect within two years of board action, the employee may file an appeal based on the suggestion's implementation. Such appeal must be filed within sixty days of the date that the suggestion was placed into effect.

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

[Statutory Authority: Chapter 41.60 RCW. 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.]