Kia ora. My name is Emma Smart. Thank you for listening in to this short information video about one of our awards programmes: Te Rā Ratonga Tūmatanui | Public Service Day Awards.

In this presentation, I’m going to cover a bit of background about the awards, talk about which agencies are eligible to nominate their employees, about the two awards, the approximate timeline and deadlines throughout the year that you need to be aware of, and a bit about the nomination process, including some tips for those of you who are preparing to write nominations.

Firstly, a bit of background. The first Public Service Act 1912 was passed on the 7th of November, so each year on that day, we celebrate Public Service Day.

Since 2018, Te Kawa Mataaho Public Service Commission has held our Public Service Day Awards ceremony on or around that date.

Here you can see a selection of photos from award ceremonies over previous years. An important point to note about Public Service Day Awards – these are awarded to individuals. This is different to Spirit of Service Awards, which is mostly in recognition of initiatives.

So, who is eligible for these awards? Public servants who are currently employed departments and departmental agencies and Crown agents. That is, agencies listed in the top middle box of this diagram you can see. Please note this is different eligibility to the Spirit of Service awards, which you can see in the rest of the diagram shown here, the broader public sector.

This diagram just highlights the difference between the Public Service – eligible for these awards – and the broader Public Sector – eligible for the Spirit of Service Awards.

Typically, these are for people currently working in the Public Service, but exceptions have been made previously on occasion for posthumous or recently retired people.

Both awards for Public Service Day Awards are for people who demonstrate an exceptional spirit of service. This is one of the two awards: Public Service Commissioner’s Commendation for Excellence and listed here are the attributes for this award. ​

This is awarded for outstanding spirit of service shown by a public servant. Nominees for this commendation will be those in Public Service delivery roles, such as frontline, operational, legal policy, corporate, technical or specialist roles. These people are responsible for the delivery of work rather than its management.​

This is the other award: The New Zealand Public Service Medal. It was established by [Royal Warrant in 2018](http://www.legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2018/0151/latest/whole.html) and is part of the New Zealand Royal Honours system.

It is awarded to public servants who have given service that’s worthy of merit. The attributes are quite similar, but perhaps worthy of note is the criteria ‘people who bring significant benefit to New Zealand or the Public Service’

Let’s have a look at the timeline for this year. It’s important to note that you can submit a nomination for these awards at any time of the year, but there is a deadline for when nominations are due if you would like them to be considered in any given year. This year, that deadline is Friday 18 July.

It’s important to be having the conversations about which people your agency might like to nominate early in the year, as your chief executive or board chair needs to support and endorse the nomination. You also need to supply at least two letters of support for your person. Each agency might run this internal process a little bit differently – sometimes it’s run by a Comms team, or Chief of Staff, or Organisational Development, or People team.

Please note that the nomination should be confidential and not shared with the nominee. Chief executives are often very interested in these awards, so it’s important that your senior leadership team is aware or involved in the nomination and selection in your agency. We are happy to help talk through your process and how you do things if you need any tips.

Some considerations for your agency might include whether someone is likely to retire or leave soon. Or someone who has flown under the radar but really shines in what they do. Or someone whose work brings significant benefit to New Zealand. Note that the two different awards have different criteria.

We recommend submitting a maximum of two nomination forms per agency, and maybe consider nominating across both awards. There are no more than ten recipients per award each year, although there have been years with exceptional circumstances in the past, e.g. COVID, when there were more recipients.

In mid to late August, the selection panel will meet to choose recipients.

The selection panel consists of six members, chaired by a Statutory Deputy Public Service Commissioner. It includes a representative from the Honours Unit and four other senior public servants, usually chief executives or tier twos.

We notify all chief executives or Board Chairs and agency key contacts of the outcomes in early September, and recipients are also then contacted to see if they accept the award.

Finally, the Awards ceremony is held each year on or around 7 November – Public Service Day – and the ceremony is held in Wellington.

Let’s have a look at the nomination form. On our website you will see a Role and Purpose section – from here you can find our Spirit of Service section and then the different awards programmes. All the information you need on submitting a nomination is here.

There is one nomination form for both Public Service Day Awards and the selection panel will make the decisions regarding which award to recommend for which recipients.

The prompts on the nomination form are short and succinct. The first question is really about what the person does and it’s really important to read the award criteria and speak to that.

The second question is about how the person demonstrates a spirit of service and the descriptors are listed to prompt you on this.

A key tip for this stage would be to consider involving someone from your Comms team, to tell the story of this person as well as possible.

You also need to source at least two letters of support. The selection panel really *do* look carefully at the letters of support and they can often affect the outcome of the nomination. I highly recommend that you avoid copying and pasting sections from the letters into the nomination form and vice versa because it’s really noticeable.

If the nomination is successful, the words in the nomination form and letters of support are used later to write citations and speaking points for the awards ceremony.

You want the nomination to really highlight why this person stands out and why they should be selected. The selection panel usually don’t know these people, so they need to be convinced of why they should select this person over another? ​

Once recipients accept the award, there are a number of steps to be taken before the awards ceremony. There’s a lot of back and forth on our part and theirs this stage.

If you are a key contact at your agency, there may be some support you can provide at this stage, potentially with taking a great photo, helping with the citation, or helping to arrange transport to the ceremony.

Typically, recipients can bring two guests to the ceremony.

Chief executives of agencies with recipients are also invited to the ceremony.

That brings us to the end of this information video. Thank you for tuning in. If you have any questions at all, my main piece of advice is to get in touch with us at any stage of the process. We would love to help you to recognise those outstanding people who really deserve the recognition and celebration. Kia ora