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State Suggestion Program

Sec. 5-263a-1. Purpose and objective

The State of Connecticut suggestion program is designed to provide the opportunity for all state residents and employees to contribute practical ideas which will improve government operations.

The purpose of the program shall be to save the state money through suggestions concerning cost-effective practices or improvements, to offer an opportunity to communicate ideas which would increase revenue, to improve services to the public, or to improve work environments.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-2. Definitions

(a) "Agency" means each state board, commission, department or officer, other than town or regional boards of education.

(b) "Central office" means the office of the state suggestion program in the department of administrative services.

(c) "Central staff" means the central office staff.

(d) "State agency suggestion coordinator" means the state employee responsible for coordination of the suggestion program within a state agency.

(e) "Suggestion" means a positive, constructive idea based on a specific observation which offers a significant improvement over existing methods, conditions, practices, or other state governmental activity.

(1) The suggestion must be directed to the increase of efficiency and economy in the administration and operation of state government through:

- (A) Increased productivity.
- (B) Reduction of costs.
- (C) Increased efficiency of work operations.
- (D) Safer or healthier work environments.
- (E) Improved services to the public.
- (F) Increased revenue.

(2) Each suggestion shall be presented in a manner which provides a specific detailed description of:

- (A) The condition, procedure, or method, now being utilized.
- (B) The recommended improvement.

(C) An explanation of how the suggestion will save the state money, or otherwise benefit the state.

(3) General suggestions must be avoided. For example, a suggestion should not merely state that motor vehicle department lines should be speeded up. Such a suggestion should be accompanied by the description of a new method of speeding the lines.

(4) Each suggestion should refer to a particular state agency for evaluation and implementation.

(f) "Suggestion program administrator" means the administrative head of the state suggestion program and the central office.

(g) "Suggestion review panel" means the review panel established by Connecticut General Statutes Section 5-263a (b), which shall evaluate suggestions made under the state suggestion program and make recommendations to the commissioner of administrative services concerning awards.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-3. Eligibility

(a) General

(1) Any resident of the State of Connecticut or any employee of the state is eligible to submit a suggestion to the state suggestion program except for elected state officials and officials appointed by the Governor, including department heads as defined in Section 4-5 of the General Statutes of Connecticut, deputies to department heads, employees on the suggestion program central staff, and members of the suggestion review panel. Agency personnel appointed to coordinate suggestion program activities in their agencies may not submit suggestions relative to the activities of their respective agencies.

(2) No person other than the signatory of an accepted suggestion shall be eligible to receive an award for that particular suggestion.

(b) Suggestions not eligible for consideration

(1) Suggestions which simply express grievances, complaints, or criticisms, which are beyond the purpose and objectives of the state suggestion program set forth in section 5-263a-1 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies or do not meet the requirements of the definitions of a suggestion in section 5-263a-2 (e) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. However, such suggestions shall be referred to the appropriate state agency for consideration apart from the state suggestion program. The suggestion shall not be regarded as a suggestion for the purposes of the state suggestion program, and the suggester shall be notified accordingly.

(2) Suggestions that constitute "opinions" only, and which cannot be supported by demonstrating a better idea, and the need for same, as required by section 5-263a-2 (e) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(3) Suggestions concerning any matter subject to collective bargaining.

(4) Suggestions other than those submitted on the suggestion form prescribed by section 5-263a-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(5) Suggestions circumventing competitive procurement procedures provided by statute, regulation, or policy. (Only generic references to products, systems, or services are acceptable in the program. All others must be returned.)

(6) Suggestions which recommend or require formal studies, surveys, investigation, or similar research activity to establish the benefits of a suggestion referred to in section 5-263a-2 (e) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. Suggestions must be expressed with a degree of certainty regarding the subject matter and the recommended solutions.

(7) Suggestions conflicting with federal or state statutes, regulations or policies, or municipal ordinances, regulations or policies.

(8) Suggestions which are hypothetical, vague, based on inconclusive justification, or deal with generalities, as provided by section 5-263a-2 (e) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(9) Suggestions concerning the structure of lottery games conducted by the Division of Special Revenue of the Department of Revenue Services including, but not limited to, game design, prize patterns, draw dates and draw frequency.

(c) Suggestions not eligible for awards

(1) State employees and contractors.

(A) Suggestions which are related in any way to the employee's job responsibilities including, but not limited to, those in job specifications, job descriptions or specific assignments.

(B) Suggestions by an employee whose primary duty is auditing, research, planning, or investigating, unless the suggestion concerns a matter which is clearly unrelated to the employee's primary duty.

(C) Individuals under any contractual arrangement with the state shall be subject to the same eligibility requirements as state employees.

(2) All suggesters.

(A) Suggestions concerning matters of a periodic, routine, or maintenance nature including, but not limited to, cleaning, repairing, building, adjusting, or replacing. When documented repeated complaints to the proper authorities have not resulted in correction, the suggestion shall be considered for an award if corrective action is taken as a result of the suggestion, and a substantial benefit to the state is provided.

(B) Suggestions which involve a change of a present method, design, or plan, but do not specify improvements.

(C) Suggestions shown through documentation to have been considered otherwise officially within three years prior to the date of the suggester's submission, as provided by section 5-263a-7 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, or implemented otherwise officially prior to such date, except that a state employee's suggestion implemented within his or her agency prior to its submission to the state suggestion program shall be considered for an award provided:

(i) Failure to submit properly the suggestion, accompanied by the letter referred to in section 5-263a-3 (c) (2) (C) (ii) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, to the Suggestion Program within thirty days of the date of implementation will result in no award unless good cause for such failure is shown.

(ii) The suggestion is accompanied by a letter from the suggester's agency head or deputy attesting:

(aa) The suggestion was originated by the employee;

(bb) The date of implementation of the suggestion;

(cc) The suggestion is not considered to be part of the employee's duties and responsibilities;

(dd) Implementation of the idea contained in the suggestion was caused directly by the suggestion;

(ee) Good cause for implementation of the suggestion prior to its submission to the suggestion program.

(D) Suggestions which do not directly cause adoption of the idea contained in the suggestion.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-4. Suggestions requiring legislative action

Suggestions which are deemed to have merit by an agency, but require legislation to implement, shall not be implemented through the program and shall not result in an award. Such suggestions shall be returned to the suggester with the names and addresses of the suggester's state senator and representative. Any further pursuit of the suggestion in question shall be by the suggester through legislative representation and the established legislative process.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-5. Suggestion forms

(a) All suggestions must be submitted on an official suggestion form. The form must be typed or clearly printed in ink. The signature of the person who originated the suggestion is required. The State of Connecticut reserves the right to revise the suggestion form at any time and may require suggestions to be resubmitted on the latest form.

(b) Each suggestion must be submitted on a separate form and reasonably detailed as provided in section 5-263a-2 (e) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

Documentation or materials which would further support or illustrate the suggestion may be included, but may not substitute for a properly detailed suggestion form.

(c) Illegal suggestions, incomplete suggestions, suggestions not on the official suggestion form, and suggestions containing more than one idea shall be returned to the suggester for resubmission.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-6. Multiple suggesters

For a suggestion submitted jointly, an award shall be divided equally between suggesters. Joint suggestions by state employees are subject to all eligibility requirements including those in section 5-263a-3 (c) (1) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. Joint suggestions shall provide the name of one suggester as a correspondent on the suggestion form referred to in section 5-263a-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. The names and other pertinent information regarding all other suggesters shall be listed on a different official suggestion form. An award not to exceed a hundred dollars in value pursuant to section 5-263a-12 (a) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall be issued to the correspondent with its value distributed according to agreement among all suggesters.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-7. Acknowledgment of suggestions

All suggestions received shall be acknowledged by letter. Suggestions are date stamped upon receipt by the central office. The date stamped on the suggestion form is the official date of submission for eligibility determination. Suggestions shall be assigned a suggestion number, a reference to which shall be made in all correspondence. Suggestions which are returned to a person for resubmission as explained in section 5-263a-5 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies shall not be eligible until properly executed, received, and date stamped accordingly.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-8. Duplicate suggestions

If similar suggestions are received by the central office on different days, only the earliest received shall be considered for an award. If similar suggestions are received on the same day, any award granted shall be divided equally between suggesters.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-9. Evaluation

(a) All suggestions shall be reviewed by the central office to determine eligibility, in accordance with section 5-263a-3 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, prior to determining the evaluating agency. An ineligible or improperly submitted suggestion shall be returned to the suggester with reasons for ineligibility or improper submission.

(b) An eligible suggestion shall be submitted for evaluation under the circumstances existing at the time of the suggestion's submission, to the agency referred to in the suggestion pursuant to section 5-263a-2 (e) (4) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies or the agency where implementation is most appropriate.

(c) The agency's evaluation and recommendations regarding adoption and any award shall be returned to the central office for review for compliance with section 5-263a of the General Statutes of Connecticut and sections 5-263a-1 to 5-263a-15, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. Upon approval of an

agency's evaluation and recommendations by the central office, a suggester shall be notified by the central office in writing of the disposition (acceptance or rejection) of his suggestion and an award, if applicable.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-10. Disposition of suggestions

(a) Suggesters shall be mailed notice of the disposition of their suggestions within ninety-five days of receipt by the central office.

(b) Unless an extension of time is granted by the central office, agency evaluations shall be returned to the central office within sixty days of receipt by the agency.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-11. Declined suggestions

A suggester shall be notified by letter of a declined suggestion, stating the reasons the suggestion was rejected. Declined suggestions shall retain priority over all similar suggestions for one year from the date of the declination letter. If a suggester submits a similar suggestion following this one year period, it shall be treated as a new suggestion. However, if supplementary information is furnished, a declined suggestion may be submitted as a new suggestion at any time. A suggestion which has been declined shall be reconsidered for an award if, within one year from the date of the declination letter, the state implements the suggestion as a direct result of it and the suggester provides written evidence of such implementation. The state's implementation of a suggestion more than a year after the suggestion is rejected shall not result in an award unless a new suggestion has been received in the interim.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-12. Awards

(a) Suggesters shall be notified by letter of adopted suggestions and any award payments. Adopted suggestions which produce benefits not measurable or impractical to measure in dollar savings shall result in an award not to exceed a hundred dollars in value. Suggestions with anticipated measurable accrued annual savings shall be eligible for an award of the lesser of ten thousand dollars or twenty-five per cent of the net savings during the first year of implementation. A preliminary award of fifty dollars shall be made at the time the suggestion is implemented for a trial period to determine the first year's annual savings, and the central office shall notify the suggester in writing of the remaining award, according to the above formula, within sixty days following the trial period, assuming the trial period demonstrates savings. The trial period shall not exceed one year and may be shorter where cycles of agency activities permit. Suggestions resulting in a one-time, immediate savings shall be eligible for an award made immediately upon implementation, and such award shall be calculated at the time of agency evaluation referred to in section 5-263a-9 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies.

(b) Net savings shall be determined by deducting implementation costs from gross savings. Costs involved in the implementation of a suggestion include, but are not limited to, the cost of facilities and equipment, installation, and labor. Neither awards nor suggestion program administrative costs shall be deducted from gross savings in determining net savings.

(c) Suggestions which save the state time in a work operation (labor intensive suggestions) and result directly in "cost avoidance" rather than "savings" because payroll and benefits are not reduced shall be eligible for awards based on "savings," as provided in sections 5-263a-12 (a) of the Regulations of Connecticut State

Agencies, if verification cost avoidance is provided by specific statements from agency officials as to use of the time savings to increase overall productivity or to provide more or better services with cost savings. If the suggestion is adopted without such verification, an award not to exceed a hundred dollars in value shall be made.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-13. Reconsideration

(a) A suggester may request reconsideration of the evaluation and disposition of his suggestion and any award, as provided in sections 5-263a-9 (c) and 5-263a-12 (a) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. Failure to request reconsideration within thirty days from mailing the notice of decision will result in no reconsideration unless good cause for such failure is shown.

(b) Requests for reconsideration must be submitted in writing to the administrator of the state suggestion program. Requests must demonstrate with specificity, as grounds for reconsideration, the decision's failure to comply with section 5-263a of the General Statutes of Connecticut or sections 5-263a-1 to 5-263a-15, inclusive, of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies or a clearly improper evaluation. Requests for reconsideration on such grounds shall be submitted to the suggestion review panel for review.

(c) The panel's recommended disposition of the request shall be referred to the suggestion program administrator for use in determining the appropriate course of action.

(d) The administrator shall ordinarily notify the suggester in writing of the disposition of his request within ninety days of the receipt of the request.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-14. Adoption and use of suggestions

Any state agency may implement, without further claim by the suggester, a suggestion following its implementation by the agency to which the suggestion was submitted pursuant to section 5-263a-9 (b) of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies, once a final award has been made in accordance with section 5-263a-12 of the Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies. As a method of disseminating to all state agencies information on adopted ideas which may offer further benefit to the state, a summary of all adopted suggestions, in receipt of final awards, shall be published periodically for circulation to all budgeted state agencies.

(Effective October 25, 1988)

Sec. 5-263a-15. Departure from state service-survivorship

(a) The suggestion of an employee who leaves state service for any reason after submitting a suggestion shall be processed under the regulations applicable to state employees with full entitlement to awards accordingly. Similarly, a resident who becomes a state employee after submitting a suggestion shall have the suggestion processed under the regulations applicable to residents.

(b) In case of death, any pending award shall be paid to the suggester's estate.

(Effective October 25, 1988)