

NOMINATION GUIDELINES

The Houston Employee Relief Organization (HERO) Mayor's Safety Award

The HERO organization awards \$3,000 twice a year for its HERO Mayor's Safety Award — once in the spring and again in the fall. Using the guidelines listed below, the award will be allocated to a major safety initiative or organizational change focused on sustainable proactive safety improvements.

HERO is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. HERO's purpose is to provide immediate financial assistance to municipal employees' families when their loved one dies while performing their duties for the city. HERO depends on city employees and others who do business with the city to support HERO so they can continue to support municipal employees' families in their time of need.

In keeping with the mission of the organization, we are excited to announce the creation of the Safety Hero Award. This award recognizes those municipal teams who aim to alter ideas, values, and practices to achieve safer behaviors and operations. We aim to award a group of motivated employees who exemplify these safe behaviors and practices through personal initiative.

The HERO executive board, along with the Mayor's participation, will select the winning team(s) using nominations submitted to the HERO organization through an online form. Nominations will be solicited from each department and coordinated by each department's Citywide Safety Committee representative. A maximum of three nominations is allowed from each department every six-month cycle. The award is only applicable to current City of Houston employees.

Departments will compete for the award based on their size. Each department has been assigned a group size (A, B, C, D) based on number of employees (see below). The HERO executive board will allocate \$750 for each winner of each group listed below.

Group A: >1,001 employees HHD, HAS, HPW, HFD, HPD

Group B: 401 to 1,000 employees HPL, SWM, PRD

Group C: 201 to 400 employees HEC, GSD, HR, MCD, FMD, ARA, HCD,

Group D: 1 to 200 employees CSC, OBO, CTR, PD, CNL, MYR, HITS, FIN, DON, LGL

Award design

- The winning nomination will aim to alter ideas, values, and practices to achieve safe(r) behaviors and operations.
- The award amount must be reasonable in value and should match the level of effort required.
- The award must be based on producing sustainable safe(r) behaviors and operational practices rather than on quarterly records or incident rates.
- Rewarding teams who improve performance more than rewarding individuals, hence the award should focus on teams over individuals.

Award criteria

- The award must clearly identify who is eligible for nomination and narrow the scope to a specific group of individuals e.g. field level employees only.
- The award must avoid selecting unworthy nominations in relation to other submissions. The level of effort required must be considered.
- The award must avoid basing rewards on statistics which can encourage employees to hide injuries and manipulate stats.
- An award with long-term incentives is more effective than short-term incentives. The method of disbursement and application of award funds should be carefully considered.

Submission evaluation

- The award should avoid awarding acts that are considered basic safety requirements (e.g. PPE, job safety analysis) and instead reward safety excellence.
- The award should focus on proactive action (leading indicator) rather than reactive action (lagging indicator).
- The award must reward employees for safe behavior(s) or act(s) rather than a response to an incident.
- Successful nominations should be initiatives that “stick” (long-term impact) rather than “slip” (short-term impact).