

The following documents from the California Public Employee Retirement System (CalPERS) include a message from CalPERS CEO Jim Burton introducing the program to employees, a statement of the “recognition philosophy” of CalPERS, and a brochure distributed to CalPERS employees to solicit nominations for the organization's recognition awards.

— Editor  
*Customer Service Newsletter*  
[www.CustomerServiceGroup.com](http://www.CustomerServiceGroup.com)

## Employee Recognition

### A message from Jim Burton

Dear CalPERS Staff,

I'm very proud of our new formal recognition program, the CalPERS APEX Award. Members of the Employee Formal Recognition Design Committee designed it with input from many of you through focus groups and surveys. The committee also did extensive Best Practice research and benchmarking with other excellent organizations to design a formal recognition program to fit our unique culture.

This new program allows us to recognize teams as well as individuals and I believe it will place critical emphasis on those role models of “all-around” excellence who live our core values.

I know that you will use it to recognize excellence throughout our organization. Thank you all for your input and willingness to participate in this new peer-driven process. Please continue to give us feedback as we enhance the APEX Award in the coming years.

#### What is the CalPERS APEX award?

This formal recognition program marks a milestone in our history. For the first time ever, staff are able to nominate and select their peers or their supervision for this prestigious honor. Based on employee feedback and best practice research, the CalPERS APEX Award is a performance-based program that recognizes excellence in four critical success components. They are the demonstrated commitment to:

- Core values
- Our customer service principles
- Exceptional technical and interpersonal skills with an ongoing pursuit of self-improvement
- The overall success of CalPERS

#### Who is eligible?

Front line staff, teams, supervisors and managers are all eligible (with the exception of CEA-designated managers and above).

#### What are the minimum qualifications to be eligible?

All nominees must be performing satisfactorily with no pending corrective actions.

#### What does the CalPERS APEX award process look like?

January – March	April & May	mid-May	late-May
Nomination Period	Review & Selection	Presentation	Celebration

### **Who will be on the committee?**

Volunteers representing all levels of staff and a cross section of the organization. During April, they will review all the nominations using a numeric rating system much like those successfully used in many best practice organizations for their formal award.

### **When will the CalPERS APEX award recipients be announced?**

During May, all staff nominated for the award will be notified and if agreeable, publicized. Recipients will be honored with a personalized award at an informal staff forum at Lincoln Plaza. Later in the month, award recipients and guests will be hosted by Executive staff at a celebration luncheon.

### **What is the award package?**

A personalized award and a choice of cash, award voucher or a savings/investment option each with a pre-tax value of \$500, a celebratory luncheon with guests and Executive Staff, and ongoing public recognition through CalPERS Marquee Wall.

### **What are the specific criteria for the CalPERS APEX award?**

Demonstrated commitment to core values

- Acts with professionalism, integrity and openness
- Approaches work in a highly motivated and innovative way
- Produces a quality product, seeks to do the job right the first time
- Assumes accountability for their statements and actions
- Treats others with respect

Customer-service driven, demonstrated commitment to CalPERS customer service principles

- Responds to the customer with prompt and accurate service
- Treats customers with respect
- Anticipates customers' needs and exceeds them

Exceptional technical and interpersonal skills, with an ongoing pursuit of self-improvement

- Demonstrates strong technical, computer and problem-solving skills
- Handles multiple priorities with a quality focus
- Attends to details without losing sight of the overall goal
- Communicates with sensitivity to others, actively listening and providing feedback constructively

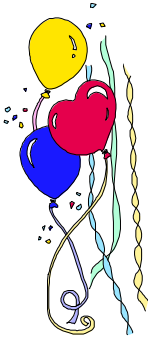
Commitment to the overall success of CalPERS

- Does quality work, mindful of how their work impacts others and contributes to the success of CalPERS
- Exhibits the spirit of teamwork
- Encourages collaboration
- Adapts to change and offers ideas to improve the way we do business
- Takes pride in being a public servant and a CalPERS employee

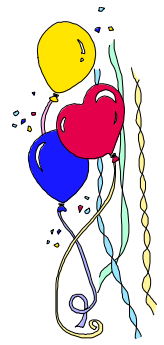
*The CalPERS APEX award is the highest form of recognition we can give.*

*It is an honor to be nominated and an even greater honor to be recognized as a recipient.*

— Jim Burton, CEO



# CalPERS' Recognition Philosophy



Respecting and appreciating our employees for their contributions to the organization is integral to living our values. Continuous recognition of employee accomplishments and behaviors is also one of the most effective ways to reinforce organizational values, support business objectives, and retain motivated, high performing employees.

To this end, we will seek opportunities to provide our people with **meaningful recognition on a consistent and ongoing basis** that encourages them to be their very best, to grow and learn, and enjoy themselves in the process: recognition that is fun, memorable, appreciates the everyday, honors the exceptional, and celebrates successes. Such recognition will be sincere, specific, timely and fit the individual or team, as well as the accomplishment.

# What does it take to receive an "ACE"?

## Criteria:

Nominations are based on the individual or team meeting any or all of the following criteria:

1. Demonstrates and encourages two-way communication
  - Openly shares information
  - Actively listens and shows respect for others opinions and perspectives
  - Offers feedback
  - Seeks clarity and understanding
2. Takes personal responsibility for being informed
  - "If you want to know, ask. If you want to hear, listen."
3. Effectively communicates in all directions
  - Considers who needs to know and when. Networks and shares related information with those impacted.
  - Actively communicates CalPERS core values, vision and mission
4. Actively supports the communication plan goals and objectives of their division or office.

## Award:

Each award recipient will receive an "ACE" lapel pin presented by his/her AEO and/or Division Chief at an informal celebration. All recipients will be announced through the "UpDate" and the CalPERS Insider.

## Nomination Form

### Whom are you recognizing for an ACE?

Individual Nomination

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Division \_\_\_\_\_

Team Nomination

Names \_\_\_\_\_

Division(s) \_\_\_\_\_

### Which of the communication criteria did this "ACE" demonstrate (check all that apply)?

See criteria to the left

- Demonstrates and encourages two-way communication
- Takes personal responsibility for being informed
- Effectively communicates in all directions
- Actively supports the communication plan goals and objectives of their division or office.

### What are you recognizing your ACE for?

(Please give specific examples. This information will appear on the award.

Attach an additional sheet if needed.)

Demonstrates and encourages two-way communication • Takes personal responsibility for being informed • Effectively communicates in all directions • Actively supports the communication plan goals and objectives of their division or office • Demonstrates and encourages two-way communication • Takes personal responsibility for being informed • Effectively communicates in all directions

### Tell us about yourself

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Division \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_

Give the completed form to your Division/Office ECC representative

The background of the slide is a dark blue color with a pattern of white stars and swirls. The stars are of various sizes and orientations, and the swirls are large and elegant. The text is in a white, serif font.

## What is CalPERS “ACE” Award?

The Achieving Communication Excellence (or “ACE”) award serves to recognize individuals who demonstrate excellent communication skills, and are dedicated to continuously improving CalPERS communication environment.

### Eligibility:

All CalPERS employees, with the exception of consultant staff, are eligible to receive an “ACE” award.

### Nomination Process:

Any CalPERS employee may nominate another employee, supervisor, manager, chief or team who meets the criteria (no self-nominations please) by completing a nomination form (see reverse). Nominations may be submitted to your Employee Communication Committee (ECC) representative at any time.

For a listing of ECC members, check the Insider under Internal Communication. This nomination form is also available on the Insider. Print it out if you wish to nominate additional people.

At the end of each quarter, ECC representatives will forward the nominations to the C-STARs team for review and certification. All nominees meeting the criteria will receive the “ACE” award. Awards will be given on a quarterly basis.

## CalPERS “ACE” Award

“Achieving  
Communication  
Excellence”