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# The K9 Medal for Exceptional Service

## Background

Countries around the world recognize the services of their working dogs in both the military as well as federal and law enforcement agencies. Great Britain, for example, awards the Dickin Medal to honor the work of animals in war, and now, in times of terrorist events such as 9/11. At present the United States does not have a mechanism for honoring these canine heroes. During WWII, medals such as the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star were awarded to military dogs that have performed heroic service. Unfortunately, these awards were later rescinded. The thinking at the time was that awarding a medal to a canine would somehow be demeaning to servicemen.

K9s of the War on Terror, Inc., recognizing this injustice, intends to honor canines that have demonstrated exceptional acts in the War on Terror and into the future. The medal will be known as the 'K9 Medal for Exceptional Service'. The medal will be awarded to those dogs serving in the United States Military, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and Law Enforcement on the federal, state and local level. The awarding of this medal by a civilian group has a counterpart in awards presented by organizations such as the U.S. Navy League and the U.S. Marine Corps League.

## Objectives

The purpose of this medal is to recognize canines, who, alongside their handlers, have performed exceptional acts of service in the War on Terror and in the defense of this country. The awarding of this medal, which began with the War on Terror, is intended to continue long into the future as a tangible means of recognizing the accomplishments and sacrifices of our Military, Government and Law Enforcement K9 teams long after the War on Terror has concluded. The start date for consideration for this award is September 11, 2001. Canines who made significant contributions since this date may also be honored posthumously.

## Requirements

The following requirements must be met for a canine to be considered for the 'K9 Medal for Exceptional Service'.

1. The service performed by the canine must have been in direct support of this countries War on Terror, and must meet the accepted definition of terrorism as being, "An act that involves illegal activity, including the use of force or violence directed against the civilian population, and which is intended to coerce or intimidate a government, a civilian population, or noncombatants in furtherance of terrorist political or social objectives."
2. The act or service must have been documented by the canine's organization or department. This documentation should be included with the application for consideration for presentation of the medal. Should the act or service be of a classified nature, a letter from competent higher authority may be written, describing the event but omitting sensitive details.
3. Application for consideration of this medal does not require the canine to be living. An application submitted for a living or deceased canine will be weighed equally.
4. Applications shall be reviewed by a Medals Committee, whose members come from within the K9s of the War on Terror, Inc., Law Enforcement and professional individuals. Applicants will be notified of their status or need for further information within a reasonable time period after receipt of application.

## Description of K9 Medal

The K9 Medal for Exceptional Service has been uniquely designed for presentation to canines. Measuring 3 inches in diameter, the medal is meant to be hung from the collar. A slightly smaller version of the medal, in medallion form, will be presented to the canine's handler.

The K9 Medal is a unique one-of-a-kind decoration that has been specifically designed for presentation to canines. The medal is a 3 inch diameter metallic medal designed to be hung from the canine's collar

## Drawing Detail / K9 Medal for Exceptional Service



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1. Center of Medal – Logo of the K9s of the War on Terror, the presenting organization.
2. Surrounding the logo – The wording ‘Medal for Exceptional Service’ and ‘Presented for Excellence’.
3. The six pointed black star with gold rays represents the day and night operations of the canine teams.
4. The red border represents the canines that have been killed in the line of duty.
5. The eighteen silver points represent the aggressive nature of the work that these canines perform as part of their daily lives.
6. The gold border connecting the silver points represents the protection and security the canines provide for the United States in this War on Terror.
7. The name and serial number of the canine, as well as the date of award will be engraved on the reverse of the medal.

## Description of Medallion

Accompanying the presentation of the medal is a 2 inch diameter medallion which is presented to the handler along with an award citation. The face of the medallion is a copy of the K9 medal for Excellence and the reverse allows for an inscription documenting the canine, the handler and the date of presentation.



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APPLICATION FOR AWARD OF  
K9 MEDAL FOR EXCEPTIONAL SERVICE  
(See Instructions on next page)

**Name of Requesting Organization:**

**Name of K9:**

**Serial No:**

**Type of Dog:**

**Handler Information:**

**Name:**

**Rank:**

**Address:**

**Telephone:**

**Email:**

**Date of Action:**

**Location of Action:**

**Description of the Action:** (Additional pages can be added as well as copies of an official report)

**Name and contact information of Supervisor:**

**Name:**

**Rank:**

**Address:**

**Telephone**

**Email:**

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**For K9WT Use Only**

- Receipt of request \_\_\_\_\_
- Request vetted \_\_\_\_\_
- Request reviewed by Medals Committee \_\_\_\_\_
- Notification of requesting party \_\_\_\_\_
- Award made \_\_\_\_\_

## **K9 Medal for Exceptional Service**

### **Application Instructions**

Please keep in mind that the award of this medal is taken very seriously by the K9s of the War on Terror, Inc. [K9WT] Those applying for the award of this medal agree, by submitting this application, to having the information provided verified by the K9WT as part of the review process.

The following will provide all of the required information necessary for completion of this application.

**Name of Requesting Organization:** This refers to the military unit and service, Department of Homeland Security group, i.e. CBP, ICE, USCG, TSA, etc., and Law Enforcement department and division. Complete contact information including address, telephone and email should be provided.

**Name of K9:** Self explanatory

**Serial No:** In the case of military working dogs this is the serial number tattooed in the ear. In the case of DHS and Law Enforcement agencies it is either this type of number or some other identifier for that one animal

**Type of Dog:** Please indicate the breed.

**Handler Information:** This should be the full contact information for that individual including full name, rank, a current contact address, a telephone number and an email address.

**Date of Action:** This should be the date on which the event occurred. The date should be reference able when the information is verified. In other words the date should be the same as the one on any report.

**Location of Action:** This is the geographic location. Country, region, city, etc.

**Description of the action:** The description needs to include the circumstances leading up to the event, details of the event and the resolution of the event. Also the relevance of this action to the current War on Terror needs to be cited. Official reports can be attached as supporting documentation as well as additional sheets

**Name and contact information of supervisor:** This should be the individual who is the supervisor for the dog and handler and who can verify the statements made in the application.