

Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal

The **Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal** (MOVSM) is a military award which was created under Executive Order 12830 by George H. W. Bush on January 9, 1993. The medal was designed by the Institute of Heraldry and was first issued in December 1993.



The Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal recognizes those members of the military (active duty, reserve and national guard) who perform substantial volunteer service to the local community above and beyond the duties required as a member of the United States Armed Forces. Such volunteer service must be made in a sustained and direct nature towards the civilian community, must be significant in nature to produce tangible results, and must reflect favorably on the military service and the United States Department of Defense. The definition of volunteer service is left intentionally vague, allowing for a wide variety of activities and volunteer duties which would qualify a service member for the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal. There is no time limit required for the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal, however most awarding authorities require that the volunteer service must exceed three years in length, and/or 100 hours of service. Since the award is classified as a service medal, there is no citation which accompanies the award, however most commanders will present a personal letter to those who receive the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal. Multiple awards of the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal are denoted by service stars.

The governing regulation for this award is DoD 1348.33-M, Manual of Military Decorations and Awards, September 1996.

1. Description: A bronze medal, 1 3/8 inches in diameter bearing on the obverse, five annulets interlaced enfiled by a star and environed by a wreath of laurel. On the reverse is a sprig of oak between the inscription "OUTSTANDING VOLUNTEER SERVICE" at the top and "UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES" at the bottom.

2. Ribbon: The ribbon is 1 3/8 inches wide and consists of the following stripes: 1/8 inch Bluebird 67117; 1/8 inch Goldenlight 67107; 3/16 inch Bluebird; 1/16 inch Green 67129; 5/32 inch Goldenlight; center 1/16 inch Green; 5/32 inch Goldenlight; 1/16 inch Green; 3/16 inch Bluebird; 1/8 inch Goldenlight; and 1/8 inch Bluebird.

3. Criteria: Awarded to members of the Armed Forces of the United States who, subsequent to 31 December 1992, performed outstanding volunteer community service of a sustained, direct and consequential nature. To be eligible, an individual's service must

- a. be to the civilian community, to include the military family community;
- b. be significant in nature and produce tangible results;

- c. reflect favorably on the Military Service and the Department of Defense; and
- d. be of a sustained and direct nature. While there is no specific time threshold to qualify for the Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal (MOVSM), approval authorities shall ensure the service to be honored merits the special recognition afforded by this medal. The MOVSM is intended to recognize exceptional community support over time and not a single act or achievement. Further, it is intended to honor direct support of community activities.

4. Components: The following are authorized components of the MOVSM:

- a. Medal (regular size): MIL-DTL-3943/160. NSN 8455-01-400-3295.
- b. Medal (miniature size): MIL-DTL-3943/160. Available commercially.
- c. Ribbon: MIL-DTL-11589/374. Available commercially.
- d. Lapel Button: MIL-DTL-11484.

5. Background:

- a. The Military Outstanding Volunteer Service Medal was established by Executive Order 12830, dated 9 January 1993. A proposed design, prepared by The Institute of Heraldry, was submitted to the Office of the Secretary of Defense on 12 April 1993. The design was approved by the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Military Manpower and Personnel Policy on 15 Jun 1993.
- b. The interlaced annulets emphasize the interaction of the military services with the civilian community and symbolize continuity and cooperation. The star commemorates outstanding service; the wreath of laurel denotes honor and achievement. Oak is symbolic of strength and potential. Medium blue is the color traditionally associated with the Department of Defense. Gold is for excellence and green alludes to the nurturing of life and growth.