

Guilford County

Tom & T. Cooper James Government Improvement Awards Program



Policy and Overview

Purpose

Guilford County encourages County employees to think creatively when solving problems and providing services to the community. The Tom & T. Cooper James Government Improvement Awards (Improvement Awards) recognize the most innovative and impactful employee solutions each year.

Overview

The Improvement Awards offer any eligible full-time or part-time County employee an opportunity to submit award nominations for programs or solutions that improved County productivity during the prior fiscal year. The Budget Management & Evaluation Department and the County department primarily responsible for the impacted service review submittals that meet the eligibility criteria and verify submittal information. Verified submittals are reviewed by an award review team that selects one James Impact Award recipient and one James Innovation Award recipient, recognizing one program or solution that had the most significant impact and one that displayed the most creativity or innovation in improving a service.

Eligibility

All current Guilford County employees are encouraged to submit award nominations. In order to be eligible for an award, employees and submittals must meet the eligibility requirements below:

Employees

The following employees are not eligible to receive financial compensation as part of the Improvement Awards:

1. Members of the Guilford County Board of Commissioners
2. Management level staff, including division managers and above
3. Budget Management & Evaluation staff members

Submittals

Budget Management & Evaluation and the primary department impacted by a submitted program or solution will review submittals to verify their accuracy. Submittals should describe how the program or solution submitted for consideration improves the productivity of a County service. Productivity Improvement may include:

- Providing the same level of service at a lower cost
- Providing a higher level of service at the same (or lower) cost
- Avoiding future cost increases
- Improving service sustainability via products, practices, or technology
- Improving customer service / customer experience

Process

Additional program information, including the submittal forms, are available online at Oneplace. Employees must complete the entire form in order for their nominations to be considered. Completed submittal forms and questions may be submitted via email to the Budget Management & Evaluation Department at mhalford@myguilford.com.

The Budget Management & Evaluation Department receives the submittals and performs an initial review. If the form is complete and includes sufficient information to describe the program or solution, the suggestion is forwarded to the Department Head of the department that is the primary service provider of the submitted program or solution. The department is responsible for reviewing and confirming the details of the submittal and forwarding their approval or concerns back to the Budget Management & Evaluation Department.

Once the Budget Management & Evaluation Director and the Department Head sign off on the submittal, it is included for review by the Improvement Awards review team.

Tom & T. Cooper James Government Improvement Awards

Approved submittals are eligible for a Tom & T. Cooper James Government Improvement Award and are evaluated by the review team. The review team will include the County Manager or designee, the Budget Management & Evaluation Department Director, and one or more representatives from T. Cooper James & Associates Commercial Real Estate Developers. Additional review team members may be included at the request of the County Manager. The review team will evaluate all approved submittals, selecting award winners in the following categories:

Impact – is projected to have the greatest or most significant influence on the County organization and / or the greater Guilford County

Innovation – exhibits the most creative approach to providing or improving a service or addressing a County organization or community problem

The review team has discretion over how to select submittals to receive the awards. For example, the review team may award both the James Impact Award and the James Innovation Award to the same submittal, decide not to award one or both awards, or split the award among multiple suggestions.

Timeline

The Tom & T. Cooper James Government Improvement Awards recognize problems or solutions initiated during the previous fiscal year. In order to be eligible, an employee's suggestion must have been implemented by June 30 of the most recently completed fiscal year. Submittals must be received by September 1 to allow adequate time for evaluation. The review process and award presentation for the Improvement Awards will take place annually between September and November, with the awards announced on or around December 1.

Awards

An employee or groups of employees whose program or solution is selected to receive the James Impact Award or James Innovation Award are eligible to receive up to a total of \$2,500 per award, split evenly among employees listed on the approved submittal.