



## Employee Suggestion Award Program

### Q & A

#### General Instructions:

Complete the suggestion filing form to the best of your ability. If you cannot provide all the information requested, fill out the form as completely as possible. All suggestions will be reviewed and evaluated equally. However, the more information you can provide us about the suggestion, the better we can review and evaluate it.

Remember that it is your suggestion, and we may not be immediately familiar with the details. Therefore, present the suggestion clearly, avoid jargon, acronyms, and overly technical explanations, and supply supporting information as needed to explain the suggestion. Above all, give your suggestion considerable thought and research it if needed. A suggestion is more than an idea- it is a concrete proposal to make the University of St. Thomas the best it can be.

**Q. What types of suggestions can be submitted?**

A. Any suggestion that will enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the University through increased efficiencies, net savings, new revenue, and/or significant improvements in the operations of St. Thomas.

**Q: Are there any types of ineligible suggestions?**

A. Generally excluded from consideration are suggestions related to:

1. Employee compensation and benefits program and plans
2. Routine care of buildings, grounds, and safety practices
3. Minor revisions of University forms
4. Changes as a result of employee complaints and/or grievances
5. Suggestions to outsource or restructure a unit or to enforce existing University policies and procedures
6. Suggestions that relate to objectives or initiatives that are already in progress.
7. Matters that are the result of assigned or contracted audits, studies, surveys, reviews, or other research projects;
8. Enforcement of or compliance with existing federal, state, or local regulations, statutes, or laws

**Q: Are the cash awards taxed?**

A: Yes, awards are subject to regular tax withholding rules, but the University will pay the personal income taxes on the award for the suggestor(s).

**Q: What if my suggestion is not adopted?**



**A:** Any employee may request reconsideration of an unfavorable determination made during the review and evaluation process. That request must be in writing and received by the Associate Vice President for Human Resources within 30 days from the date of the notification letter. The request for reconsideration must outline the reasons the employee believes the adverse decision was in error. The Employee Suggestion Awards Committee shall meet with the employee to discuss the issues raised and recommend to both Executive Vice Presidents final action.

**Q: What if my suggestion does not have identifiable savings?**

**A:** Suggestions that have intangible benefits are eligible for an award. The amount will be determined through an evaluation of the extent of impact the suggestion will have and the amount of improvement that is attributed to it. In other words, the Committee will determine whether the suggestion affected the entire University, multiple departments, or a single department or process. We will then look at how much of an improvement was made- major, moderate, or minor. The amount of the award depends on the extent of impact and the degree of improvement.

**Q: What if the department modifies my suggestion, will I still get credit?**

**A:** Yes. Modified suggestions are eligible for an award so long as the suggestion was the source of the University's action.

**Q: How long does the process take?**

Suggestions are reviewed and evaluated on a first come basis. The goal is to complete the evaluation within 60 days of receiving the suggestion. In some situations, it may not be possible to do so due to the nature of the suggestion. The Employee Suggestion Award Program Committee makes the award determinations. The committee meets quarterly. You will be notified within three business days of the Committee's determination.

**Q: Can I make an anonymous suggestion?**

**A:** No, all suggestions must be signed by the suggester(s).

**Q: If the department is already using my idea, can I still submit it for consideration?**

**A:** Yes, you have up to 6 months from the time your idea was used by the University to submit your idea to the suggestion program.