



Facilities Management SPARK Award Program – FAQ

Q: Why have an employee recognition program?

A: An employee recognition program encourages sustainable, consistent recognition and appreciation of Facilities Management (FM) employees. This program is designed to support a culture that upholds and reflects the core values that define CSU Facilities Management.

Q: Who can receive SPARK awards and who can give SPARK awards?

A: All Facilities Management full-time and part-time non-student employees, including supervisors, are eligible to receive a SPARK award. Any FM supervisor can give any eligible employee a SPARK award.

Q: How do supervisors nominate an employee for a SPARK award?

A: Supervisors who see an employee demonstrate a core value in their work can give that employee a SPARK award card. That supervisor then submits a short online form to the FM Engagement & Recognition Committee. The [form](#) will be located on the Facilities Management [SPARK webpage](#) and is accessible on mobile devices. During SPARK award redemption times, the employee can exchange their SPARK award card for a gift card.

Q: Can I recommend someone for a SPARK award if I am not a supervisor?

A: If you are not a supervisor, you can recommend any eligible employee for a SPARK award by speaking with any FM supervisor or the Engagement & Recognition Committee. Explain the details of the observed core value to the supervisor/committee and ask them to help you submit a SPARK award.

Q: How can groups of people be recognized?

A: SPARK awards can be given for an observed action or event that aligns with FM core values. A form needs to be filled out for each individual who receives an award, even in the situation of more than one person receiving an award for a shared action or event. For recognizing groups, we also encourage you to use the Employee Appreciation Board (<http://csueab.colostate.edu/>). One of the main objectives of the board is the monthly recognition of a work unit. The Engagement & Recognition Committee is happy to help submit recognition for a group—please [email us](#), so we can assist.

Q: Are hourly employees eligible for the SPARK awards?

A: All Facilities Management full-time and part-time non-student employees are eligible for a SPARK award.

Q: How can student employees be recognized?

A: The SPARK award is intended as recognition for Facilities Management full-time and part-time non-student employees and cannot be awarded to student hourly employees. For student recognition, we encourage you to write notes of appreciation and specific thanks using our FM stationary cards (can get

these from the FM AVP office). You can also nominate them for the Student Employee of the Year award (<https://career.colostate.edu/career-impact-awards/>).

Q: What are SPARK awards redeemable for?

A: When an employee receives a SPARK award, the employee can trade in their SPARK award card for a \$20 gift card. The employee can choose a gift card from different vendor options (RamCash, Wal-Mart, King Soopers, Cinemark, Home Depot, Scheels Sporting Goods).

Q: When can I exchange my SPARK award for a gift card?

A: Gift cards are available for exchange on the first and third Wednesdays of the month from 10:00–11:00 a.m. and 3:30–4:30 p.m. in the Pitkin Conference Room, Facilities Management North Building.

Q: Will the taxed award put me in a higher tax bracket?

A: For specific questions relating to taxes or tax bracket information, please contact CSU Central HR at 491-myhr (6947).

Q: Is there a limit on how many awards a supervisor can give to employees?

A: Other than the annual budget for the program – there is no limit or quota on the amount of SPARK awards supervisors can give.

Q: Can employees receive SPARK awards more than once?

A: Yes, employees can receive more than one SPARK award – one per each unique action or event.

Q: If an employee is recognized for more than one core value, do they receive more than one SPARK award business card and gift card?

A: No. One action may be recognized as a demonstration of several core values, but the employee will receive one SPARK award per action or event.

Q: Does the campus community have access to give a SPARK award to FM employees? Can a building proctor give an award of recognition?

A: The SPARK award program is internal for Facilities staff. However, external departments can send accolades and compliments to an employee’s supervisor to recognize exceptional work, and the supervisor can choose to give a SPARK award based on the action or event described. Additionally, any CSU employee or campus partner can “Thank a Colleague” for their efforts and support by publicly acknowledging an FM employee or FM group in the FM newsletter. Send your note to fac_news@Mail.colostate.edu for inclusion in an upcoming *Facilities Focus* issue.

Q: Is this a program just for employees who go above and beyond? How do we recognize someone for doing an outstanding job by just doing their job?

A: SPARK is actually an award for behavior that aligns with the FM core values. It does not have to be for an above and beyond action, and is primarily for recognizing employees who enact and embody the core values as part of their daily habits. Often a SPARK action is demonstrated in consistently executing routine duties and responsibilities in exemplary fashion. Other times a SPARK action may occur through an above and beyond moment. SPARK encompasses a range of activities in various settings and roles across the university. It manifests regularly among FM employees, and the SPARK award is one way to

acknowledge that fact. When an FM employee demonstrates one or more core values in their work, then it is an opportunity for any FM supervisor to acknowledge their work/action with a SPARK.

Q: Why not take the funding used to run and staff the SPARK program and use it for pay increases, giving raises to employees instead?

A: One of the Principles of Community is Service; the SPARK program is staffed by FM volunteers who participate in committee initiatives without being paid extra. The funding received for SPARK is specifically gained through a proposal for an employee recognition program that fosters engagement and alignment with the department's core values. The committee chose this approach because research indicates that a targeted, values-based approach such as this is critical to successful implementation of a recognition program and can provide measurable results. Because of CSU's system of employment, we are not allowed to provide raises through SPARK funding. FM employees exist under a variety of position designations, such as salaried (administrative professional or state classified) and hourly positions; funding for those positions as well as limitations for funding occurs from diverse sources, depending on the classification. The SPARK program must be kept separate from employee end of year evaluations as a condition of the program.

Q: Why can't we exchange our SPARK awards for cash rather than gift cards?

A: Facilities Management no longer carries petty cash funds. Even if petty cash was still available, the committee could not hand cash to employees. It would have to be added to their next paycheck, and employees would have to wait longer to receive anything. Adding funds into employee checks also requires much more oversight and planning to manage, and the program would have to dedicate more resources to this. The SPARK award is meant to be an immediate form of recognition. The opportunity to choose from gift cards occurs four times a month on the first and third Wednesday of the month.

Q: What if I don't want a \$20 gift card?

A: Employees have the choice to opt out of exchanging their SPARK award for a gift card. The larger point of the award is to be recognized and thanked for enacting the FM core values within the workday.

In addition to the FM SPARK Award, there are many other opportunities to recognize FM employees at CSU for ongoing outstanding effort, commitment, and achievement. A few of these include:

- The Classified Personnel Council's Outstanding Achievement Award, Positive Action Award and Everyday Hero awards (<http://cpc.colostate.edu/annual-cpc-awards>).
- The Administrative Professional Council's Distinguished Administrative Professional Award, the AP Star Award, and others (<http://ap.colostate.edu/awards>)

For additional information about CSU employee recognition programs, scholarship or professional development opportunities, please speak with the [FM Engagement & Recognition Committee](#).