

Translation of the Law of the Republic of Abkhazia on State Awards and Honorary Titles of the Republic of Abkhazia

This Law establishes the types of state awards and honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia, defines their legal status, and regulates relations arising in connection with the awarding of state awards of the Republic of Abkhazia to citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia, foreign citizens, and stateless persons, and the conferment of honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia on citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia, foreign citizens, and stateless persons.

This Law also establishes the legal basis for the conferment of honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia to cities of the Republic of Abkhazia.

Chapter I. General Provisions

Article 1. State Awards and Honorary Titles of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. State awards and honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia are the highest form of recognition for outstanding service in the defense of the Fatherland, state building, socio-political, socio-economic, and cultural development of the Republic of Abkhazia, as well as for other outstanding services to the state and society.
2. State awards of the Republic of Abkhazia are: the highest degree of distinction – the title "Hero of Abkhazia," the Order of Leon, the Order of Akhdz-Apsa of three degrees, the Afyrkhatsarazya Order, the medal "Hero of Abkhazia," and the medal "For Courage."
3. The honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia are: "People's Artist of the Republic of Abkhazia," "People's Writer of the Republic of Abkhazia," "People's Poet of the Republic of Abkhazia," "People's Artist of the Republic of Abkhazia," "Honored Teacher of the Republic of Abkhazia," "Honored Artist of the Republic of Abkhazia," "Honored Doctor of the Republic of Abkhazia," "Honored Journalist of the Republic of Abkhazia," "Honored Worker of Culture of the Republic of Abkhazia," "Honored Worker of Physical Culture and Sports of the Republic of Abkhazia," "Honored Worker of Higher Education of the Republic of Abkhazia," "Honored Scientist of the Republic of Abkhazia," "Honorary Citizen of the Republic of Abkhazia," and "Hero City."
4. For the purposes of this Law, the term "state awards of the Republic of Abkhazia" (hereinafter referred to as state awards) includes the term "honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia," except in cases where this Law establishes special rules for honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia that differ from the rules established for state awards of the Republic of Abkhazia.

Article 2. People's Assembly - Parliament of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. Orders and medals are established, and the highest degrees of distinction and honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia are established and abolished by the People's Assembly - Parliament of the Republic of Abkhazia.
2. Statutes and regulations, descriptions and samples of orders, medals, and badges

for honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia, as well as certificates for them, shall be approved by the People's Assembly - Parliament of the Republic of Abkhazia.

3. Subjects with the right of legislative initiative may submit proposals to the People's Assembly - Parliament of the Republic of Abkhazia to establish state awards not provided for by this Law.

Article 3. President of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. The President of the Republic of Abkhazia:

- confers the highest degree of distinction and honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia;
- confers orders and medals of the Republic of Abkhazia;
- present orders and medals of the Republic of Abkhazia.

2. To consider matters related to state awards, the President of the Republic of Abkhazia shall establish a Commission on State Awards.

Article 4. Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. The Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia is a permanent body operating on a voluntary basis.

2. The Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia approves samples of the relevant documents required for submission for state awards.

3. The Regulations on the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia are approved by the President of the Republic of Abkhazia.

Article 5. Awarding of State Awards of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. State awards are conferred on citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia, foreign citizens, stateless persons, and cities of the Republic of Abkhazia.

2. Awarding is carried out by decrees of the President of the Republic of Abkhazia, which are subject to publication in the press.

3. When awarding state awards, the type of state award is determined by the nature and degree of the recipient's merits.

4. Awarding of state awards may be made posthumously.

Article 6. Statutes and Regulations of State Awards of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. A statute is approved for each order, and regulations are established for each medal, highest degree of distinction, and honorary title.

2. The statutes and regulations define the merits for which the award of an order, medal, highest degree of distinction, and honorary title is made, and also establish the procedure for awarding, conferring, and wearing awards, as well as other rules.

Article 7. Description and Samples of Orders, Medals, and Badges for Honorary Titles of the Republic of Abkhazia

The description and samples of orders, medals, and badges for honorary titles are developed through a competitive process and approved by the People's Assembly—the Parliament of the Republic of Abkhazia.

Chapter II. Highest Degree of Distinction of the Republic of Abkhazia

Article 8. The Highest Degree of Distinction of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. The Republic of Abkhazia has established the highest degree of distinction – the title of "Hero of Abkhazia."
2. The highest degree of distinction – the title of "Hero of Abkhazia" – is awarded for individual or collective service to the Republic of Abkhazia, involving the accomplishment of a heroic feat.
3. The Hero of Abkhazia is awarded a special distinction – the "Hero of Abkhazia" medal.
4. The Hero of Abkhazia may be re-awarded a special distinction – the "Hero of Abkhazia" medal – for a new heroic feat.

Chapter III. Orders of the Republic of Abkhazia

Article 9. Order of "Akhdz-Apsha" (Order of Glory)

1. The Order of "Akhdz-Apsha" (Order of Glory) is the highest state award of the Republic of Abkhazia and consists of three degrees.
2. The highest degree of the Order of Akhdz-Apsha is the 1st degree.
3. The Order of Akhdz-Apsha, 1st degree:
 - is awarded to citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia for exceptional service to the Republic of Abkhazia, which has fundamentally influenced the fate of the people and the state;
 - may be awarded to foreign citizens for exceptional service to their people, as well as prominent military and socio-political figures who have contributed to strengthening peace and stability, as well as figures in science, culture, and art, whose work has received international recognition.
4. The Order of "Akhdz-Apsha," 2nd Class:
 - is awarded to military, government, public, and political figures, as well as figures in science, culture, and art of the Republic of Abkhazia who have made a significant contribution to the development of the Republic of Abkhazia, strengthening peace, who have demonstrated military leadership talent in defending the homeland, and who have received national recognition;
 - may be awarded to foreign citizens who have made a significant contribution to the development of their states, strengthening peace and friendly relations between peoples, and who have received recognition in their states.

5. The Order of "Akhdz-Apsa," 3rd Class:

- is awarded to citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia for courage displayed during military operations to defend the Republic of Abkhazia, strengthen the defense capability and security of the state, as well as to prominent government, political, and public figures, scientists, cultural figures, artists, and athletes;
- Foreign citizens may be awarded for services to their peoples, as defined by the statute for citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia.

6. The recipient is presented with a certificate of awarding the Order of "Akhdz-Apsa" along with the order.

Article 10. The Order of Leon

1. The Order of Leon is the highest military state award of the Republic of Abkhazia.

2. The Order of Leon:

- is awarded to citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia for exceptional bravery, selflessness, and courage demonstrated in the defense of the Republic of Abkhazia, as well as for other services to the state and society.
- may be awarded to foreign citizens and stateless persons.

3. The recipient is presented with a certificate of award of the Order of Leon along with the order.

4. Re-awarding of the Order of Leon is permitted in exceptional cases for exceptional bravery and courage in the defense of the Republic of Abkhazia.

Article 11. Afyrkhatsarazya Order (Order of Courage)

1. The Afyrkhatsarazya Order (Order of Courage) is a state award of the Republic of Abkhazia.

2. The Afyrkhatsarazya Order is awarded to military personnel of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Abkhazia, employees of the State Security Service of the Republic of Abkhazia, the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Abkhazia, the State Customs Committee of the Republic of Abkhazia, the State Security Service of the Republic of Abkhazia, and the Emergency Situations Department of the Republic of Abkhazia:

- for courage and bravery demonstrated in the performance of military or official duty under conditions involving a risk to life;
- for services in ensuring state security and the inviolability of the state border of the Republic of Abkhazia;
- for bravery and dedication demonstrated in the performance of military duty;
- for exemplary performance of special command assignments and other feats accomplished in peacetime.

The Order of Afyrkhatsarazya may be awarded to foreign citizens and stateless persons.

3. The recipient shall be presented with a certificate of awarding the Order of Afyrkhatsarazya.

Chapter IV. Medals of the Republic of Abkhazia

Article 12. Medals of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. The following medals of the Republic of Abkhazia are established:

- a special distinction – the Medal "Hero of Abkhazia";
- the Medal "For Courage".

2. The Medal "For Courage" is awarded for personal courage and bravery displayed in the defense of the Republic of Abkhazia and the fulfillment of military duty.

Chapter V. Honorary Titles of the Republic of Abkhazia

Article 13. Honorary Titles of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. The following honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia have been established:

- "People's Artist of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "People's Writer of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "People's Poet of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "People's Artist of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "Honored Teacher of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "Honored Artist of the Republic of Abkhazia".
- "Honored Doctor of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "Honored Journalist of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "Honored Worker of Culture of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "Honored Worker of Physical Culture of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "Honored Worker of Higher Education of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "Honored Scientist of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "Honorary Citizen of the Republic of Abkhazia";
- "Hero City".

2. Honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia are established to reward citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia for high professional excellence and long-term service.

Honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia may be awarded to foreign citizens and stateless persons.

The honorary title "Hero City" is established to commemorate the heroic deeds of the defenders of the Fatherland.

3. The same honorary title of the Republic of Abkhazia may not be awarded again.

4. Persons awarded honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia are presented with a badge and a certificate.

Article 13.1. The honorary title "People's" is awarded to:

1. "People's Artist of the Republic of Abkhazia" - to theater, film, television, radio broadcasting, circus, and pop artists, as well as conductors, musicians, and soloists of orchestras and ensembles who have achieved exceptionally high performance skills, created highly artistic images, plays, films, and television productions, performances, and made a special contribution to the development of the arts in the Republic of Abkhazia, the education of a new generation of creative people, and the growth of the spiritual and cultural level of the population.
2. "People's Writer of the Republic of Abkhazia" - to writers for the creation of outstanding works of fiction and drama that have earned national recognition.
3. "People's Poet of the Republic of Abkhazia" - to poets who have created highly artistic works and have made special contributions to the development of folk art.
4. "People's Artist of the Republic of Abkhazia" - to individuals in the fine arts for outstanding achievements in the field of fine arts, the creation of outstanding works of painting, sculpture, graphics, cinema, theater, monumental and decorative arts, and the development of a new generation of creative people.

Article 13.2. The honorary title of "Honored" is awarded to

1. "Honored Teacher of the Republic of Abkhazia" - to highly qualified teachers, lecturers, and educators of educational institutions of all types and levels, and orphanages, for achievements in pedagogical and educational activities, ensuring that students and pupils acquire in-depth knowledge, develop and improve their creative skills potential, working in this field for at least 15 years.
2. "Honored Artist of the Republic of Abkhazia" - to theater, film, television, radio, circus, and pop artists, as well as conductors, musicians, and soloists of orchestras and ensembles who have achieved high performing skills, created highly artistic images, plays, films, television programs, and performances, or who have made significant contributions to the education and training of personnel and have been engaged in creative activities for at least 15 years.
3. "Honored Doctor of the Republic of Abkhazia" - to highly professional doctors for their services to public health, organizing and providing medical and preventive care using modern advances in medical science and technology in their practice, and who have worked in their specialty for 15 years or more.
4. "Honored Journalist of the Republic of Abkhazia" – to highly qualified journalists from all types of media for outstanding achievements in the development of journalism and the enhancement of their creative potential, who have worked in this field for at least 15 years.
5. "Honored Worker of Culture of the Republic of Abkhazia" – to highly qualified employees of institutions, organizations, and bodies in the fields of culture, art, printing, press, radio, and television, participants in amateur arts, and individuals participating in the work of cultural organizations, institutions, and bodies on a voluntary basis for achievements in the development of culture and who have worked in this field for at least 15 years.

6. "Honored Worker of Physical Culture and Sports of the Republic of Abkhazia" – to organizers of the physical culture movement, scientists and coaches, employees of physical culture teams, sports facilities, physical culture organizations, and educational institutions for their services in the development of physical culture and sports, in organizational, methodological, educational, training, and scientific-pedagogical activities, in improving the system of physical education for the population, mass sports, and high-performance sports, and for those who have worked in the field of physical culture and sports for at least 15 years.

7. "Honored Worker of Higher Education of the Republic of Abkhazia" – to highly professional teachers, employees of higher, postgraduate, and relevant additional education systems, and to state higher education authorities for their services in pedagogical and scientific work, significant contribution to the training of highly qualified specialists, and for those who have worked in their specialty for 20 years or more.

8. "Honored Scientist of the Republic of Abkhazia" – awarded to outstanding scientists, holding a candidate or doctoral degree, employees of research institutes and institutions, and higher education institutions for particularly valuable scientific work, active scientific-practical and scientific-popularization activities, and the training of scientific personnel and highly qualified specialists.

Article 13.3. Honorary Title "Honorary Citizen of the Republic of Abkhazia"

The honorary title "Honorary Citizen of the Republic of Abkhazia" is awarded to foreign citizens and stateless persons who have achieved recognition in the Republic of Abkhazia for their social, charitable, cultural, scientific, economic, or other activities with outstanding results for the Republic of Abkhazia.

Article 13.4. Honorary Title of "Hero City"

The honorary title of "Hero City" is awarded to cities of the Republic of Abkhazia in whose territory military-strategic defense command centers were established during the Patriotic War, as well as to cities in the immediate vicinity of which, during fierce battles, defenders of the Fatherland demonstrated courage, fortitude, and mass heroism, preventing enemy invasion.

Chapter VI. Procedure for Nomination of State Prizes of the Republic of Abkhazia

Article 14. Nominations for state awards of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. Petitions for state awards may be submitted to military units of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Abkhazia, reservist units, structural subdivisions of the Ministry of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Abkhazia, the State Security Service of the Republic of Abkhazia, the State Tax Service of the Republic of Abkhazia, the Customs Committee of the Republic of Abkhazia, the Supreme Court of the Republic of Abkhazia, as well as to the staffs of enterprises, institutions, and organizations.

2. Nominations for state awards for representatives of all the above-mentioned units, structures, and teams are submitted by the heads of the relevant units, structures, and teams.

3. An award sheet of the established format is prepared for each person nominated for an award and sent along with the nomination to the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia.

4. Nominations for state awards to foreign citizens and stateless persons residing in the Republic of Abkhazia are made on a general basis.

5. Nominations for state awards to foreign citizens and stateless persons residing abroad are made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Abkhazia and plenipotentiary representatives of the Republic of Abkhazia.

Chapter VII. Procedure for Presenting State Awards of the Republic of Abkhazia

Article 15. Presentation of State Awards of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. State awards shall be presented by the President of the Republic of Abkhazia.

2. Upon instruction of the President of the Republic of Abkhazia, state awards may be presented on his behalf by:

- heads of state authorities and plenipotentiary representatives of the President of the Republic of Abkhazia;
- ambassadors of the Republic of Abkhazia;
- military commanders of the Republic of Abkhazia.

The President of the Republic of Abkhazia may also entrust the presentation of state awards to other persons.

3. State awards and accompanying documents shall be presented to the recipients in a ceremonial setting no later than two months from the date of entry into force of the decree of the President of the Republic of Abkhazia on the award.

4. A protocol shall be drawn up regarding the presentation of the state award. The protocol of the presentation shall be submitted to the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia.

5. A repeat award of a state award for new merits is possible no earlier than three years after the previous award, with the exception of awards for heroic deeds, courage, and bravery.

6. Repeat awards of state awards of the same name are not permitted, with the exception of awards of state awards with degrees, and awards for courage and bravery.

7. For bravery, courage, and heroism, the highest degree of distinction, or the award of an order or medal, may be awarded posthumously.

State awards and accompanying documents of persons awarded posthumously are transferred for safekeeping as a memento to one of the spouses, father, mother, son, or daughter (hereinafter referred to as the heirs).

8. In the event of the death of the recipients, state awards and accompanying documents remain with the heirs. In the absence of heirs, state awards and their accompanying documents are subject to return to the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia.

Chapter VIII. Rights and Obligations of Those Awarded State Awards of the Republic of Abkhazia

Article 16. Rights and Obligations of Those Awarded State Awards of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. In cases of loss of orders, medals, insignia, and badges of honorary titles in combat, as a result of a natural disaster, or under other circumstances where it was impossible to prevent the loss of state awards, the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia may issue duplicates of the state awards or replicas thereof to those awarded.

2. Petitions for the issuance of duplicates of orders, medals, insignia, and badges of honorary titles to civilians are initiated upon applications from those awarded after verification of the circumstances of the loss of the state awards. Along with the petition, the awardee's application, award documents, and a certificate regarding the reason for the loss of the state award are submitted to the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia.

3. Duplicate documents for state awards, to replace those lost under the circumstances specified in paragraph one of this article, are issued to the awardee by the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia, provided that the awardee's application and a petition from the local government body of the district or city where the awardee resides are available.

4. In all other cases of loss of documents for state awards of the Republic of Abkhazia, the awardee is issued a certificate of the award of state awards.

5. With respect to military personnel, civilian personnel of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Abkhazia, government agencies, employees of the internal affairs agencies of the Republic of Abkhazia, and individuals who lost state awards and their accompanying documents, as well as badges of honorary titles during military service or in combat situations, requests for duplicate orders, medals, insignia, badges of honorary titles, and documents of state awards shall be initiated by local government authorities.

6. State awards and their accompanying documents of a deceased or posthumously awarded recipient may be transferred to state museums with the consent of the heirs, by decision of the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia, upon the museum's petition, supported by the relevant state authority of the Republic of Abkhazia under whose jurisdiction the museum is located. The museum sends the acceptance certificate for state awards to the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia. State awards transferred to the museum for storage and display will not be returned to the heirs of a deceased or posthumously awarded recipient. This requirement also applies to awards transferred to the museum prior to the adoption of this Law.

7. State awards cannot be stored in museums that operate on a voluntary basis and are not provided with the necessary conditions for storing state awards.

8. Citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia, foreign citizens, and stateless persons awarded state awards who are leaving the Republic of Abkhazia abroad have the right to export state awards upon presentation of documents confirming their award.

9. Heirs of a deceased recipient of an award who are leaving the Republic of Abkhazia abroad have the right to export state awards upon presentation of documents confirming their deceased relative's award.

The procedure for exporting state awards made of precious metals is regulated by the legislation of the Republic of Abkhazia.

10. The illegal acquisition or sale of state awards, the creation and production of badges with the same or similar names or external resemblance to state awards, as well as the wearing of orders, medals, insignia, honorary title badges, order ribbons, and medal bars by unauthorized persons, are prohibited. These actions entail liability established by the legislation of the Republic of Abkhazia.

11. The rules stipulated by this Law and the legislation of the Republic of Abkhazia apply to citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia who have been awarded state awards of the USSR and the Abkhaz ASSR.

The procedure for wearing USSR orders, medals, order ribbons, medal bars, and other insignia is maintained.

12. Citizens of the Republic of Abkhazia may be awarded foreign state awards.

13. If the recipient holds state awards of the Republic of Abkhazia and the USSR, the state awards of the Republic of Abkhazia are placed before the state awards of the USSR.

14. If the recipient holds orders, medals, insignia, and badges of honorary titles of the Republic of Abkhazia, the USSR, and foreign states, the orders, medals, and badges of foreign states are placed below the state awards of the Republic of Abkhazia and the USSR.

15. Orders and medals with bar holders, as well as insignia, are worn on the left side of the chest. Orders and medals without bar holders are worn on the right side of the chest, unless other wearing rules are provided for by the statutes of the orders.

Badges of honorary titles are worn on the right side of the chest and are placed below the orders.

16. Orders, medals, and certificates for them are numbered. Badges of honorary titles are not numbered.

17. The ribbon bar for wearing orders and medals is pentagonal, with one corner facing downward. The bar has a notched cutout in the lower corner for attaching the order or medal to the bar.

18. When wearing multiple orders and medals, the tops of the bars are adjacent to each other, forming a straight line without interruption, and each bar located on the right partially covers the bar located to the left.

19. Awardees may wear the ribbons of orders and medals on bars.

20. The bar for wearing the ribbons of orders and medals is rectangular, convex, covered with the appropriate ribbon.

Chapter IX. Deprivation of State Awards of the Republic of Abkhazia and Restoration of Rights to State Awards of the Republic of Abkhazia

Article 17. Deprivation of state awards of the Republic of Abkhazia and restoration of rights to awards of the Republic of Abkhazia

1. Deprivation of state awards is carried out by decrees of the President of the Republic of Abkhazia in the following cases:

- the awardee is convicted of a serious crime by a court verdict in accordance with current legislation;
- the person commits an offense that discredits them as an awardee – upon a submission by the body authorized to submit a proposal for an award.

2. The President of the Republic of Abkhazia revokes the award decree if the nomination for a state award is found to be inaccurate or unfounded.

3. State awards confiscated by law enforcement and customs agencies from persons illegally possessing them, including those deprived of state awards by a court verdict, as well as state awards whose owner has not been identified, are sent to the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia.

4. A state award and accompanying document presented to an individual for whom a decree revoking the award has been issued are subject to return to the Commission on State Awards under the President of the Republic of Abkhazia. Officials who have unjustifiably nominated an individual for a state award are liable in accordance with the legislation of the Republic of Abkhazia.

5. The President of the Republic of Abkhazia may reinstate a citizen of the Republic of Abkhazia's right to state awards:

- in the event of their rehabilitation;
- if the act committed by the recipient for which they were stripped of their state awards has ceased to be socially dangerous.

After the decree of the President of the Republic of Abkhazia on reinstatement of rights to state awards comes into force, the recipient's state awards and accompanying documents are returned.

Chapter X. Benefits Granted to Individuals Awarded State Awards of the Republic of Abkhazia

Article 18. Benefits Established for Those Awarded State Awards

1. Individuals awarded state awards enjoy benefits and advantages in the manner and cases stipulated by the legislation of the Republic of Abkhazia.

2. Individuals awarded the honorary title "People's" shall receive a 20% salary supplement, determined on the basis of the Unified War Rate Schedule.

4. Individuals awarded the honorary title "Honored" shall receive a 10% salary supplement, determined on the basis of the Unified War Rate Schedule.

Chapter XI. Final Provisions

Article 19. Final Provisions

1. Upon the entry into force of this Law, the General Provision "On Orders and Medals of the Republic of Abkhazia," approved by the Resolution of the Supreme Council of the Republic of Abkhazia dated December 4, 1992, shall be deemed invalid.
2. Develop statutes and regulations for state awards in accordance with this Law.
3. Develop designs for badges for honorary titles in accordance with this Law.

Adopted by the People's Assembly – Parliament of the Republic of Abkhazia

June 13, 2005.

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF ABKHAZIA S. BAGAPSH

Sukhum

June 23, 2005

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