

City of Watertown Position Description

Position Title	Fire Chief / Emergency Manager
Department	Fire Department
Division	
Pay Grade	180
Classification	Full-time
FLSA Status	Exempt
Reports To	Mayor & Police & Fire Commission
Direct Reports	Fire Department Personnel
Last Updated	01/2026

Job Summary

The Fire Chief shall be the chief executive of the fire department under the direction and control of the Mayor, Common Council, and the Police and Fire Commission as contained in State Statute 62.09 (13). Officers and other department personnel shall be under the direction and command of the Fire Chief. The Fire Chief plans, directs, manages, and oversees the activities and operations of the Watertown Fire Department including fire and emergency medical service functions, protection of life and property, and fire prevention. This is a professional managerial position that coordinates assigned activities with other departments and outside agencies and supervises all phases of operations. This position is on-call on a 24-hour basis, however, at times delegates duties to supervisory employees. The Fire Chief is the Emergency Manager for the City of Watertown which is responsible for the administration and coordination of Emergency Operation planning, response, and recovery.

The Fire Chief serves as a member of the City's senior leadership team and contributes to cross-departmental collaboration, strategic planning, and organizational decision making in support of overall city objectives.

Essential Functions and Responsibilities

The following duties are primarily performed and are essential for this position. Employees are expected to be able to perform each of these job duties satisfactorily and successfully with or without reasonable accommodation to be qualified for the position. Other duties may be required and assigned.

Administrative Work:

- Provides Strategic leadership for the department aligned with community priorities, Council direction and the City's mission, vision, and values.
- Plans, organizes, directs, and coordinates the work of subordinate professional, technical and clerical personnel in areas of fire suppression, prevention and inspection, emergency medical service, hazardous materials, training, public education, and administration/management.
- Uses data, performance metrics, and risk analysis to inform operational, staffing, and budget decisions.
- Ensures the Watertown Fire Department attracts, develops, and retains highly skilled, motivated, and diverse members.
- Develops, implements, and monitors department policies, procedures, goals, and objectives.
- Performs periodic reviews and revisions of department policies, procedures, goals, and objectives.
- Oversees Emergency Medical Services for EMS system design, demand management and regional coordination while ensuring quality assurance, medical control, and compliance with all applicable regulations.

- Becomes familiar with and enforces Federal, State, and local laws, rules, and regulations applicable to department operations.
- Becomes familiar with and applies for Federal and State grants which serve the goals of the department.
- Becomes familiar with Federal and State discrimination and privacy laws, rules, and regulations, and develops a proactive policy to assure compliance.
- Maintains the records of the Department.
- Administers labor agreements affecting department employees and participates in contract negotiations.
- Provides appropriate training, assignments, and discipline of department personnel; plans, organizes, directs, and coordinates the work of subordinate professional, technical, and clerical personnel; evaluates the effectiveness of training; evaluates job performance of personnel annually or as otherwise necessary.
- Prepares and administers the department budget.
- Conducts appropriate staff meetings; attends other job-related meetings.
- Reviews and approves payroll related functions and measures the effectiveness of personnel deployment to control overtime expenditures.
- Builds a culture of accountability, learning and continuous improvement; develops future leaders and succession capacity. Serves as a trusted advisor to elected officials on public safety risk, service delivery options, and long-term capacity planning for fire department related items. Engages residents, businesses, and stakeholders in community risk reduction and resilience initiatives.
- Develops a positive, cooperative, and supportive relationship with professional organizations and other Fire Departments and agencies at the local, State and Federal level, including working with peers in negotiating/administering mutual aid agreements.
- Responds to emergency incidents and assumes command, when appropriate, under Jefferson/Dodge County Emergency Government and in cooperation with involved Federal and State agencies.
- Serves as the City's Emergency Manager, providing leadership for comprehensive emergency management including preparedness, mitigation, response, recovery and continuity of operations.
- Coordinates citywide planning and operational readiness across departments, partner agencies and external stakeholders. Leads the development, maintenance and testing of the Emergency Operations Plan (EOP, Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP), and related annexes to ensure alignment with local, regional and state frameworks.
- Other duties as assigned.

Supervision Exercised

Provides executive leadership and administrative direction over all Fire Department personnel through the department's chain of command.

Minimum Education Qualifications

Education and/or Experience Requirements:

- Requires 4 years of post-high school education (e.g. bachelor's degree)
- 10+ years of firefighting experience
- Four years+ as a Battalion Chief rank or higher
- Post-high school education may be substituted with additional experience.
- Executive Fire Officer preferred

- Designation as a certified Chief Fire Officer with CPSE (within 3 years of appointment.)

Licenses, Certifications, and Other Requirements:

- Certified as an NREMT and/or State of Wisconsin EMT Basic or higher. (Paramedic preferred)
- NIMS 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, 800 & G191
- Pro-Board or State of Wisconsin Firefighter I and II
- Pro-Board or State of Wisconsin Driver Operator
- Pro-Board or State of Wisconsin Emergency Services Instructor 1 (Must Maintain)
- Pro-Board or State of Wisconsin Fire Officer 1 & II

Minimum Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities Qualifications

In order to perform the functions and responsibilities of the position (listed above) the following knowledge, skills, and abilities are essential.

- Comprehensive knowledge of firefighting/emergency medical services methods, practices, and techniques.
- Comprehensive knowledge of fire prevention, and equipment/apparatus used in firefighting/emergency medical services.
- Comprehensive knowledge of management, regulations, ordinances, and laws regarding a firefighting/emergency medical services department.
- Ability to effectively plan and supervise, through supervisory officers, the administration of the department.
- Considerable knowledge of supervisory techniques and ability to provide effective leadership and to plan, assign, and direct the work of various operating units.
- Comprehensive knowledge of and experience in business practices used in developing and administering an annual budget.
- Ability to prepare studies and analysis of City growth and structure for long term planning.
- Ability to prepare studies and reports used to maintain equipment and facilities of a municipal firefighting/emergency medical services department.
- Ability to prepare requested reports and records necessary for the effective and efficient operation of a municipal firefighting/emergency medical services department.
- Ability to express ideas clearly and concisely while establishing good public relations.
- Ability to exercise sound judgment and discretion in developing, applying, and interpreting department rules, policies, and procedures.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships
- Ability to perform heavy physical tasks under varying weather conditions.

In evaluating candidates for this position, ORGANIZATION NAME may consider a combination of education, training, and experience which provides the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities to perform the duties of this position.

Physical Requirements

- Prolonged periods of sitting at a desk and working on a computer.
- Must be able to lift up to 25 pounds at times and transport distances to 50 yards.
- May experience frequent periods of standing, walking, stooping, kneeling, crouching, and lifting.
- Ability to communicate information and ideas so others will understand. Must be able to exchange accurate information in these situations.

- Must be able to operate a vehicle and fire suppression and medical response equipment and tools.

Work Environment

The work environment is primarily indoors in an office setting. Must be able to perform essential functions of the position in emergency environments, including command and operational oversight under physically and mentally demanding conditions. Ability to work in areas outside and tolerate weather fluctuations. Capable of climbing stairs, climbing ladders and maneuvering over obstacles that may be found in the path of travel. Some travel is expected for this position.

EOE / ADA Statement

The City of Watertown is an Equal Opportunity Employer. In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, the City of Watertown will provide reasonable accommodations to qualified individuals with disabilities and encourages both prospective and current employees to discuss potential accommodations with the employer.

Nothing in this job description limits management's right to assign or reassign duties and responsibilities to this job at any time. The duties listed above are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position. The job description does not constitute an employment agreement or affect the at-will nature of the employment arrangement between the employee and company and is subject to change by the employer as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.

Signatures:

Employee: _____

Date: _____

Department Head: _____

Date: _____