



THE CITY OF WEST PLAINS

IS SEEKING A

CHIEF OF POLICE





OUR COMMUNITY

West Plains, the county seat of Howell County in rural southcentral Missouri, has a population of about 12,300. The city serves as a key service, retail, and employment hub for the region, accommodating over 30,000 regional residents daily.

HEALTHCARE

The City of West Plains is home to Ozarks Healthcare, a comprehensive healthcare system that includes primary and specialty clinics, as well as rehabilitation, behavioral health, and home health services. The 114-bed acute care hospital handles over 5,400 admissions annually, while the entire health system records more than 364,000 patient visits each year across South Central Missouri and Northern Arkansas.

HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITIES

Missouri State University-West Plains is a public, two-year, open-admission campus within the Missouri State University system, known for providing quality education in a relaxed, personal environment. The campus offers university housing, a variety of student activities, intercollegiate athletics, and financial aid options such as scholarships, grants, loans, and the A-Plus state scholarship for eligible students.

CITY ORGANIZATION

The city employs 200 full-time employees and 40 seasonal/temporary employees during the summer. West Plains has general fund revenues of \$11.4 million and a total operating budget of approximately \$14.2 million. The city is a full-service municipality with several departments, including Administration (city administrator, city clerk, finance, human resources, municipal court), Community Services (parks, a public golf course, civic center, library, tourism, facility maintenance), Transportation (streets, airport, cemetery), Emergency Services (police department, fire department, emergency management), Planning (building and development, GIS Maps, stormwater, nuisance and property maintenance, economic development), and Utilities (water distribution, water treatment, wastewater treatment, sewer collection, sanitation, electric, and fiber).

CITY GOVERNMENT

West Plains, incorporated in 1883, is a home rule charter city. Council members are elected at-large and serve staggered four-year terms, with one elected each year. The mayor also serves a four-year term and is elected by the public. The West Plains City Council, consisting of the mayor and four council members, sets policy, approves the budget, and represents residents' interests. The city administrator, appointed by the council, manages daily city operations, implements policies, and oversees city staff. This governance model promotes accountability, transparency, and responsiveness. The City of West Plains emphasizes resident engagement through public meetings, advisory boards, and community forums, fostering shared responsibility and community pride. The collaboration between the city council, city administrator, and residents ensures a safe, inclusive, and vibrant community with effective and equitable public services.

THE DEPARTMENT

The West Plains Police Department, with a budget of approximately \$3.78 million, is fully staffed with 32 sworn officers and 7 civilian staff. It is a service-oriented agency committed to integrity, professionalism, respect, and teamwork. The department works hard to maintain public trust and in return enjoys strong community support. Dedicated to excellence in policing, community engagement, and innovative practices, its mission goes beyond crime prevention, focusing on community outreach, crisis intervention, and proactively addressing social issues that impact public safety.

THE POSITION

The police chief is an at-will position appointed by the city council and reports to the city administrator. As a member of the executive team, the chief oversees police services including law enforcement, criminal investigations, community relations, traffic control, dispatch, evidence collection, records maintenance, crime prevention, and animal control. The chief of police is assisted by the command staff, comprised of two lieutenants, 4 sergeants, and 6 corporals.



POSITION CHALLENGES

Current challenges we're facing include strengthening community police relations, supporting the growth and development of younger staff members within our agency, securing necessary funding to expand our force, and combating the persistent issue of drug-related crime within the community. Addressing these challenges requires strategic thinking and innovative solutions to ensure the success and safety of our community.

CANDIDATE PROFILE

The ideal candidate for police chief will have a strong commitment to fostering trust and collaboration between the police and the community, a proven record of ethical leadership, and extensive experience in law enforcement with a demonstrated track record of success. The chief is expected to actively engage with our community, build relationships that transcend traditional boundaries, and create a shared vision for safety and well-being. The candidate should possess strong leadership skills, including visioning, strategic planning, and communication, and be able to partner effectively with community members, advisory bodies, and city departments. Empathy, sensitivity, and respect toward community members are crucial, as is the ability to continuously improve and identify areas for enhancement.

The police chief will work closely with the city administrator and other stakeholders to deliver a vibrant vision for the police department while fostering teamwork and a culture of excellence within the department. They must also possess a collaborative and inclusive leadership style, balancing diverse viewpoints and interests while being visible and accessible in the community. The ideal candidate will value diversity, equity, and inclusion, and uphold the highest ethical standards, fostering an environment of integrity and trust within the department and the broader community.

QUALIFICATIONS & EXPERIENCE

The next chief of police for West Plains should have a robust background in law enforcement, supported by a strong educational foundation. Qualifications include a minimum of ten years in law enforcement, with significant leadership experience in a municipal police department, demonstrating successful community engagement and collaborative problem-solving in diverse settings. A bachelor's degree in criminal justice, business or public administration, or a related field is required, while a master's degree and completion of advanced law enforcement training, such as the FBI National Academy, are highly preferred.

Combinations of experience and training that provide the necessary knowledge and abilities are acceptable, including at least ten years of law enforcement experience, four of which should be in senior management. The candidate should hold a valid Missouri Driver's License with a safe driving record and possess/obtain Missouri POST certification. Successful candidates will also need to pass background investigations, physical and psychological examinations, and drug screenings to meet established qualification standards.



COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The chief of police position has a salary range of \$77,480.00 - \$108,035.20, based on candidate qualifications. In addition, a comprehensive benefit package is offered, which includes:

Retirement - The City contracts with Missouri Local Government Employee Retirement System (LAGERS) to provide retirement benefits which are fully funded by the City (no cost to employee) with vesting after 5 years.

Health Plans - The City contracts with Anthem BCBS for medical insurance. The City offers coverage at zero cost to the employee, with dependent coverage offered at the employee's cost.

Dental Plans - The City offers employees two (2) dental plans. The City offers coverage at zero cost to the employee, with dependent coverage offered at the employee's cost.

Vision Plans - The City offers employees two (2) voluntary vision plans. The premium is paid by the employee.

Vacation - Employees accrue eight (8) hours per pay period.

Holidays - 12 paid holidays provided per year.

Life Insurance and Long-Term Disability (LTD) - The City provides group term life insurance equal to \$40,000 and LTD coverage at no cost to the employee.

Additional Benefits - Cafeteria Plan IRS Section 125, Deferred Compensation 457(b) Plans, Flexible Spending Account (FSA) and Supplemental Life, Accident, Cancer coverage, and an Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCESS

Interested candidates should submit their resume and cover letter along with a list of at least five references to hr@westplains.gov. The position is open until filled with first review of applicants occurring after January 17th, 2025. Candidates who are selected to continue in the process will participate in a panel interview. All offers of employment are contingent upon successful completion of all pre-employment or post-offer testing, including but not limited to, a drug and alcohol screening, thorough background investigation, credit check, medical examination and verification of required qualifications.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

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