

THE CITY OF
Fergus Falls, Minnesota



INVITES YOUR INTEREST IN THE POSITION OF

Police Chief



FERGUS FALLS – AN EXCEPTIONAL OPPORTUNITY



ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Fergus Falls, Minnesota offers a unique blend of natural beauty, rich history, and small-town charm, making it the perfect place for you to call home.

While we love this community and call it home, Fergus Falls is a tourism destination. We are located three hours from the Twin Cities and a short hour drive to Fargo, North Dakota. Rich farmland stretches to the west while a fantastic lakes region can be found to the east of the community.

With 14,000 residents, Fergus Falls is small enough to feel like home, but we have enough amenities to never want to leave. We have a fabulous public library, a community ice arena, the new Spies Riverfront Park and Pavilion, Otter Cove Children's Museum, an accessible playground and the new downtown splashpad. More community excitement will arrive in the summer of 2025 with the addition of an aquatics center and improvements to the Delagoon Campground and ballfields.

Otter Tail County has more than 1,100 lakes that offer opportunities for open water and ice fishing, boating, and beautiful sunsets meant for relaxing pontoon rides. Hunters can find numerous varieties of birds, deer, and wild game in the nearby fields and wooded areas. Paved and rustic biking and hiking trails wind through scenic wooded and prairie destinations. The city has 28 parks spanning nearly 600 acres of parkland. The Prairie Wetlands Learning Center is a jewel to the community with an expansive property known as the duck factory as it is home for nesting waterfowl and outdoor recreation areas.

Fergus Falls has vibrant arts and cultural scene, with galleries, theaters, and historic sites like the iconic Fergus Falls Regional Treatment Center. The downtown area boasts local shops, cozy cafes, and welcoming restaurants that make every visit feel like a warm escape.

Fergus Falls is a family-oriented community with a great public school system, private K-12 school and the M-State college. Housing is affordable, healthcare is readily available, the job market is strong, and the town has been full of friendly faces. We would like to see yours join us!

ABOUT THE ORGANIZATION

The City of Fergus Falls was organized as a municipal corporation in 1872 and operates under a Home Rule Charter.



The Charter prescribes a Mayor-Council form of government in which the City Council serves as the City's legislative body and determines all matters of policy. The City Council is comprised of eight members, two elected from each of the City's four wards. The Mayor is elected at large. The Mayor and members of the City Council serve overlapping four-year terms.

The City Administrator serves as the chief administrative officer, responsible for managing a total budget of \$40 million. Eight departments report to the City Administrator including Public Works, Engineering, Library, Public Safety, Fire, Finance, Human Resources and Community Development. The City has a workforce of 122 regular and 68 temporary and seasonal employees. Four employee bargaining groups represent most of the City's regular employees.

ABOUT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Fergus Falls Police Department is authorized for 24 sworn officer positions in administration, patrol, investigations, school resource officer, and drug task force support with an operating budget of approximately \$5M. The department employs five full-time and one part-time support staff members. The Fergus Falls Police Department provides community-oriented policing with a fully staffed, cohesive team that enjoys a high degree of camaraderie in the Department's balance of mid-career, long-tenured, and new officers and the civilian staff.



The Department is highly regarded, respected and supported by the community. Officers build and maintain the public trust through their participation in the life of the community through attendance of festivals and sporting events, school and family activities, and volunteerism during off duty hours. Department leadership has a history of maintaining administrative neutrality in political matters, ensuring that City management and policy makers benefit from technical law enforcement expertise that hews closely to the established law and best 21st Century Policing practices. Facilities and equipment are up to date, and the Department is well resourced. The Fergus Falls Police Department is highly functioning, operationally sound, and works seamlessly with partner agencies, City Departments, the City Council, and community stakeholders.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate for the Fergus Falls Police Chief position should be capable of building trust and legitimacy, promoting transparency and accountability, and fostering strong relationships between law enforcement and the community. The ideal candidate will serve as a key, collaborative member of the City's management team working seamlessly with other public safety agencies, departments, and the school system. He or she will remain attuned to community needs and those of the City Council, and be a highly visible, approachable, and participating member of the Fergus Falls community. The Chief will need to employ an open-door policy that supports officers professionally and personally. Accessible leadership is desired to retain the positive and highly valued workplace culture, which is key to continued success in the recruitment and retention of this fully staffed agency.

The ideal candidate will have the expertise and leadership qualities needed to maintain all that is working well, and to identify areas for positive change. The new Chief will need to demonstrate the ability to communicate and educate to gain buy-in for change and innovation, as well as the skill to implement and manage new initiatives. To that end, experience in a larger department and community with a level of complexity of policing issues would be beneficial. The new Chief must be able to articulate a clear vision, gain buy-in and support, manage resources effectively, and be willing to commit to the Fergus Falls community.



EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE

Graduation from a four-year college or university with a degree in police science, law enforcement, criminal justice, public administration or a closely related field; a master's degree is preferred; and ten (10) years of experience in police work, seven (7) years of which must have been equivalent to police sergeant or higher; or a two-year degree with 20 years of service and at least 10 of those years at a rank of police sergeant or higher; or any equivalent combination of training, experience and education that provides the requisite knowledge, skills, and abilities for the position.

Must possess a valid Minnesota driver's license or the ability to obtain one.

Ability to meet the department's physical standards.

Must be or be able to become Minnesota P.O.S.T. Board Certified.



KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND ABILITIES

- Thorough knowledge of modern law enforcement principles, procedures, techniques and equipment; considerable knowledge of applicable laws, ordinances and department rules and regulations.
- Skill in operating listed tools and equipment.
- Ability to train and supervise subordinate personnel; ability to perform work requiring good physical condition; ability to communicate effectively orally and in writing; ability to establish and maintain effective working relationships with subordinates, peers and supervisors; ability to exercise sound judgment in evaluating situations and in making decisions; ability to give verbal and written instructions; ability to develop and maintain effective working relationships with employees, supervisors, elected or appointed officials, other law enforcement representatives and the general public.



ABOUT THE POSITION

This position performs a variety of complex administrative, supervisory, managerial and professional work in planning, coordinating and directing the activities of the Police Department. The Police Chief also coordinates activities with a number of local, state, and federal agencies. The Police Chief works under the general supervision of the City Administrator.

DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- Plans, coordinates, supervises and evaluates departmental operations and a broad range of services to the community. Directs operations of four divisions, including Patrol, Investigations, Administration, Record Management and Informational Technologies.
- Develops policies and procedures for the Department to implement directives from the City Council or Administrator.
- Plans and implements Law Enforcement programs for the City to better carry out the policies and goals of City Administration and the City Council; reviews Departmental performance and effectiveness, formulates programs or policies to alleviate deficiencies.
- Coordinates the information gathered and work accomplished by various professional staff, supervisors, and managers; assigns officers to special investigations as the needs arise for their specific skills.
- Attends conferences and meetings to keep abreast of current trends in law enforcement; represents the Department in a variety of Local, County, State and other meetings.
- Prepares the annual budgets for the Department; directs the implementation of the department's budgets; plans for and reviews specifications for new or replaced equipment.
- Provides leadership and direction in the development of short- and long-range plans; gathers, interprets and prepares data for studies, reports and recommendations; coordinates department activities with other departments and agencies as needed.
- Analyzes problems, identifies alternative solutions, projects outcomes, and implements change to meet organizational needs. Assures that personnel are assigned to shifts or working units which provides for optimum effectiveness in terms of current situations and circumstances governing deployment.
- Evaluates evidence, witnesses and suspects in criminal cases to correlate all aspects and to assess for trends, similarities or associations with other cases.
- Directs the development and maintenance of systems, records and legal documents that provide for the proper evaluation, control and documentation of Police Department operations.
- Directs staff in the recruitment, evaluation, training and development of Department personnel. Works with management team in the negotiation of contracts and labor disputes. Develops and implements personnel and management policies through subordinate staff.
- Directs staff in the direction of Professional Standards and Internal Affairs units. Handles grievances, maintains Departmental discipline and the conduct and general behavior of assigned personnel to include counseling, reprimanding, and termination of staff.
- Interprets, forecasts, plans and implements governmental mandates. Directs staff in policy planning and adherence to rules and mandates associated with Professional Standards, DOJ, OSHA, FERC, FEMA, and other state and federal regulatory agencies.
- Prepares and submits periodic reports to the City Administrator regarding the Department's activities and prepares a variety of other reports as appropriate.
- Meets with elected or appointed officials, other law enforcement officials, community and business representatives and the public on matters pertaining to the department.
- Directs subordinate staff in the release of public information and data requests. Analyzes, interprets and provides direction on highly complex matters regarding data privacy and public information dissemination.
- Directs subordinate staff in the release of information to public and media outlets during incidents.
- Ensures that laws and ordinances are enforced and that the public peace and safety is maintained.



OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES

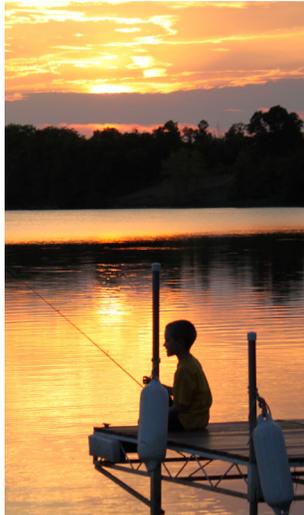
- Directs investigation of major crime scenes and Police Department response to extraordinary events.
- Provides guidance to city operations during high profile events and activities regarding crime, safety, and public health.
- Represents city on a number of collaborative groups involving health, education, housing and social wellness and support.
- Performs the duties of subordinate personnel as needed.
- Analyzes and recommends improvements to equipment and facilities as needed.
- Works closely with Department Heads throughout the organization of the City.
- Performs other duties and assumes additional responsibilities as directed by the City Administrator to ensure efficient department operations.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The new Chief will have the support of City leadership, officers, civilian staff and the community in his or her efforts to establish trust and credibility. There are opportunities to enhance community engagement, implement innovative approaches in Community Oriented Policing and technology, as well as continued focus on recruitment, retention, and succession planning to maintain the strength and stability of the department. Calls for service reflect more property crime than violent crime; as well as mental health, substance abuse, and domestic issues in the community. These issues will likely require new approaches, enhanced state and local partnerships, and both new and increased resources in the coming years. Grant writing and the ability to identify alternative funding sources will present opportunities for the Department and the new Chief.

Minnesota has legalized cannabis and the City is adapting to the anticipated need for local dispensaries, which may require a level of consultation with the Police Chief. The Department does not currently employ body cameras or vehicle cameras which may present as an opportunity depending upon any forthcoming mandate that may come, or otherwise. Balancing the community's expectations for service delivery and policing approaches, along with mindfulness of financial constraints in a generally conservative community will enhance the new Chief's opportunity for success.





COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The expected starting salary for this position is **\$135,500** to **\$162,600** depending on qualifications.

BENEFITS

- Vacation • Sick Leave • Paid Holidays
- Medical, Dental, Vision Insurance
- Health savings account (HSA)
- Flexible Limited Spending Account
- Flexible Spending Account
- 457(b) Deferred Compensation Plan
- PEHCSP – Post Employment Healthcare Savings Plan
- Basic Life and AD&D
- Voluntary Life and AD&D Insurance
- NCPERS Life Insurance
- Long-Term and Short-Term Disability
- Accident Insurance
- Critical Injury Insurance
- Group Hospital Insurance

HOW TO APPLY

Please submit a cover letter, resume, a list of five job related references (with email and phone numbers), as well as salary history to jeffhale@localgovhrs.com no later than **June 7, 2025**.

Questions please contact:

Jeff Hale, Mercer Group Associates
jeffhale@localgovhrs.com
706-371-6126



MERCER GROUP ASSOCIATES

The City of Fergus Falls, Minnesota is an Equal Opportunity Employer.