



Ottawa, Kansas is seeking a highly experienced, innovative and effective leader to serve as its new Fire Chief



THE COMMUNITY:



Ottawa is a welcoming community, with traditional values and a common-sense approach to problem solving. The city serves as the county seat of Franklin County, located in the east-central portion of Kansas, approximately 25 miles south of Lawrence and about 50 miles southwest of Kansas City. Ottawa is located at the juncture of Interstate 35 and Hwy 59. The city is generally rural in nature, with much of the economy associated with agriculture, services, and retail sales. Ottawa is the largest full-service small town in Kansas. It's a great place to live, work and raise a family. This friendly community offers highly rated public schools, an extensive park system, trails, pedestrian/bike networks, quality medical services, and a positive "can-do" spirit that is always open to new ideas. The city's proximity to Kansas City and the University of Kansas in Lawrence, presents a potential for accelerated growth in the future. In 2020, the U.S. Census estimated the population to be 12,625. The recent expansion of semiconductor manufacturing and the computer chip and battery plants in neighboring counties, presents untold possibilities for future growth. The corporate limits of the city encompass a land area of approximately 10.4 square miles. Ottawa is the home of Ottawa University, a private Baptist institution with a student enrollment estimated at more than 850. Ottawa is home to AdventHealth-Ottawa, a full-service hospital with 24-hour emergency care.





Ottawa is a chartered municipal government within the State of Kansas, operating under a city commission-manager form of government. The five Commissioners are elected at-large for either four-year or two-year terms. The Fire Chief is hired by the City Manager. Ottawa is typical of many cities and towns across the United States in that it operates its own municipal court, a public works department, community development, parks and recreation, utilities and several internal functions including finance and human resources. Ottawa operates its own police and fire departments.

Emergency 911/dispatch services are provided by Franklin County Emergency Communications. The city operates the Ottawa Municipal airport, a general airport facility with a Fixed Base Operator who is contracted by the city. Ottawa employs 168 full-time equivalent positions.

THE DEPARTMENT:



The Ottawa Fire Department (OFD) is a combination fire department comprised of 21 career personnel and 6 volunteers. The Fire Chief has overall responsibility for managing the department's day-to-day operations and providing administrative oversight. The Fire Chief is assisted by an Assistant Chief, who has primary responsibilities as the Fire Marshal in charge of fire plans review, inspections, and permitting. The Operations Division includes 19-line personnel who are assigned to the city's two fire stations. These stations serve the city along with providing assistance to neighboring areas in Franklin County through its mutual aid agreements. The Ottawa Fire Department responds jointly with Franklin County EMS, the countywide ALS and emergency transport provider.

The department's training activities, logistics, administrative services, prevention and volunteer coordination are under the supervision of the Fire Chief and Assistant Chief. Ottawa is the only fire department in Franklin County which is staffed primarily by career personnel.

In 2022, the Department responded to 2,052 calls, of which 76 percent were EMS related. There were 29 Structure Fires and 29 Outside Fires (including vehicle fires, brush and grass fires, fires in sheds, dumpster fires and fires involving farm equipment). The combined fire loss for all fires during this 12-month period was \$427,741. The average fire loss for structure fires was \$8,245.

The Department is well equipped, its primary first response engines are one and seven years old respectively. The Department operates an aerial ladder that is 16 years old and has an array of drones, watercraft and various support vehicles.

POSITION OVERVIEW:

The Fire Chief works under the direction of the City Manager, with responsibility for both the administrative oversight of department activities along with command-and-control duties at major incidents. The Fire Chief works closely with Franklin County officials, including their EMS Manager, the Sheriff, Emergency Management, the 911 Dispatch Manager and area Volunteer Fire Departments. The Fire Chief is a high-profile public official, with frequent interactions with area officials, the University, hospital personnel, local business leaders and citizen groups. The ideal candidate must have excellent communications skills, be well organized, is interpersonal and well versed in, fireground tactics, supervision, life-safety issues, building codes, governmental budgeting, organizational planning and possess exceptional leadership qualities. The Ottawa Fire Department is a small combination department and the Fire Chief plays an integral role in all aspects of departmental operations. In this role the Fire Chief must be able to interact regularly with department staff, oversee assignments and manage the day-to-day business functions involved in operating a full-service Fire and EMS delivery system. The Chief plays an active role in training efforts, reviewing performance outcomes, establishing department goals, overseeing recordkeeping and assuring that equipment and supplies are managed properly.

The Fire Chief is a key member of the city's leadership team, working daily with other city departments, particularly the Chief of Police, the Chief Building Official, Public Works, and Human Resources, while maintaining a close and effective working relationship with the City Manager.



EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE:

- Bachelor's degree required in Fire Department Administration or related field; Master's preferred.
- Minimum of ten years of progressively responsible firefighting and supervisory experience.
- Advanced certifications in EMT-A or Paramedic preferred.
- Must maintain a valid Kansas Class B driver's license.
- Combination of education, training, and experience will be considered.

KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS & ABILITIES:

- Thorough knowledge of principles and practices of modern firefighting techniques and Fire Department administration.
- Thorough knowledge of fire investigation techniques, state and local fire and building codes, hazardous materials, and personnel management.
- Knowledge of the geographies of the City of Ottawa.
- Budget management and planning skills.
- Strong written and verbal communication skills, and the ability to express ideas clearly and concisely.
- Ability to establish and maintain effective relationships with other employees, City officials, business entities, and the general public.
- Ability to effectively organize and prioritize work as well as concentrate on multiple tasks simultaneously.
- Ability to work under general supervision and make responsible decisions.
- Ability to use good judgment and think quickly and rationally in difficult or stressful situations.
- Must meet the requirements of the City's physical examination for firefighters.
- Must be able to lift 100 or more pounds.
- Regular attendance is a necessary and essential function.

EXAMPLES OF DUTIES:

- Supervises Fire Department service activities through the issuance of directives and orders to subordinate supervisory and professional staff.

- Coordinates, plans, directs, implements and evaluates all City Fire Department services; such as, fire suppression and emergency medical services which are controlled, participated in, or contracted by the City.
- Maintains contacts with national, State and local organizations concerned with Fire Department services.
- Supervises the gathering of empirical and statistical information in preparation of fiscal budgetary requests. Coordinates and prepares Department budget. Assigns priorities to Fire Department activities in accordance with needs and established budget parameters.
- Consults periodically with, and provides written status reports to, the City Manager, concerning departmental problems and progress.
- Communicates the details of existing Fire Department service programs to the community through the news media and public appearances.
- Conducts staff meetings with subordinate staff members to discuss problems, interpret policy and procedures and plan operations.
- Performs related work as required.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS:

The City of Ottawa is committed to a starting salary that will be market competitive, depending on the experience and qualifications of the selected individual. The Fire Chief position has a range in salary between \$111,072 to \$155,500, depending on qualifications and experience. The City's benefits include health, dental, vision, and life insurance, flexible and health savings accounts, a wellness program, nine paid holidays, and generous sick and personal leave. A city vehicle and cell phone allowance are provided.

The organization participates in the Kansas Police and Fireman's Retirement System, to which employees contribute 7.15% of gross earnings and the city contributes 23.10% through 12/31/2024. The city also offers one voluntary deferred compensation plan, Mission Square in which employer contributions are made on behalf of the employee.

APPLICATION & SELECTION PROCESS:

Please apply online via job link below:
2024 (3PM Central)

APPLICATION DEADLINE: **February 3,**

<https://cityofottawa.applytojob.com/apply/m9klXMo4jR/Fire-Chief>

For more information on this position, contact:
Michelle Stegman, SHRM-CP, PHR

Human Resources Director

mstegman@ottawaks.gov

Phone: 785-229-3635

The City of Ottawa, Kansas is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists will be subject to a comprehensive background check.

Selection Process:

Ottawa will use a multi-phased process in screening potential candidates. The first phase will be a thorough review of the submitted application and resume, ensuring that the minimum selection criteria regarding education, work experience and supervisory roles are clearly referenced. As part of the application process all candidates will be asked to submit a supplemental composition (approximately 500 words), entitled; "Why I am a good fit to be Fire Chief in Ottawa Kansas". The narrative will be reviewed on the basis of its content, organization and writing skills. Candidates will be expected to elaborate on specific work experience and accomplishments that can correlate to a high likelihood for success and relevance in Ottawa. Combined, the application and written narrative will be used as the basis to invite candidates (up to six) to an oral interview process. The oral interviews will be set up in an assessment center format, with a series of three panels that will review each of the candidates. Candidates will be asked to prepare mock presentations on topical issues facing Ottawa and a series of follow-up question-and-answer exchanges, with each of the panels. After conducting background checks, the selected candidate will either be offered the position or be invited to a secondary interview. The initial interviews will be held in Ottawa on Tuesday, March 26, 2024. The selected candidate can anticipate a starting date in April of 2024. Candidates are encouraged to review the recent "Comprehensive Fire Department Study" for Ottawa Kansas that is available through the city's web page. Fire Study Link: https://9968d8e5-4e15-4d33-91fb-e26c5b613d17.usrfiles.com/ugd/9968d8_ae338d1006e844a3b39f1f99bc069845.pdf