



## FIRE RESCUE SERVICES DIRECTOR (FIRE CHIEF)

### THE COMMUNITY

Polk County, Florida is rapidly becoming one of the country's most exciting places to call home. Today, Polk County has nearly 635,000 residents. Growth projections show that nearly 800,000 people will live in Polk by 2020, with population estimates at 1 million by 2040. Nearly 63 percent of our residents live in unincorporated Polk County.



Polk *is* the crossroads of opportunity for Florida. All major highways crisscross through Polk, including the important I-4 corridor that links St. Petersburg, Tampa Bay, Lakeland, Disney and Universal, Orlando, DeLand and Daytona Beach. Major retailers, such as Amazon and Wal-Mart, and leading transporters, such as UPS, FedEx and CSX, are investing millions in building warehousing and distribution centers in Polk County to serve the residents of the nation's third largest state, Florida. Polk County is also home to Publix Super Markets, the largest and fastest-growing employee-owned supermarket chain in the United States.

While Polk County is urbanizing, due to the development along the Interstate 4 corridor, natural beauty in its environmental lands still provides a special place that reflects "old Florida." Agriculture is still our number one industry. Polk County is the state's largest citrus provider, and sprawling cattle ranches dot our landscape. And, some of the best fresh water fishing in the country is in waterways that divide Polk and Osceola Counties.

Several world-class colleges and universities are located in Polk County. These include:

- Polk State College, with its newly-opened Center for Public Safety educational facility
- Florida Southern College, home of the world's largest collection of Frank Lloyd Wright designed buildings
- Southeastern University, the county's largest private university, with more than 4,500 students enrolled
- Florida Polytechnic University, the state's newest and only STEM-based university
- Webber International, Warner University and other career-based colleges offering professional degrees.

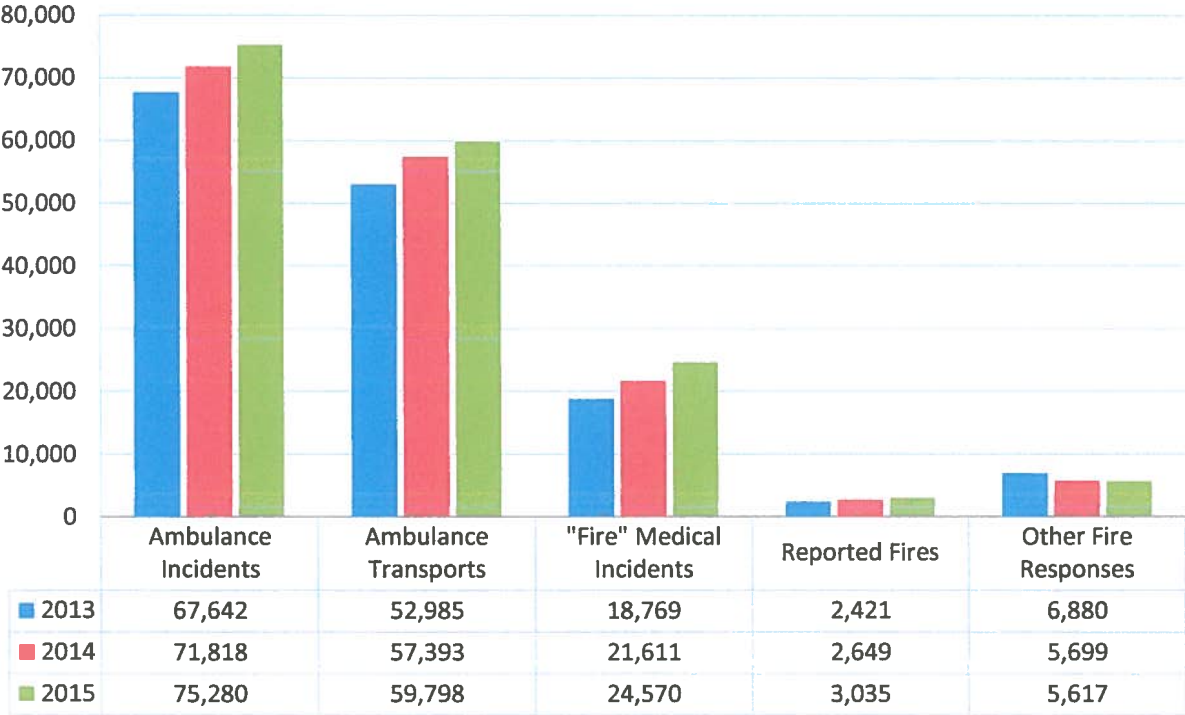
Polk County is Florida’s fourth largest, covering more than 2,000 square miles; a challenge to all of our divisions providing services to our residents. That’s larger than the state of Rhode Island. Lakeland, with more than 100,000 people in northwest Polk, is the largest of our 17 municipalities. Winter Haven, our second largest city, is home to LEGOLAND, a theme park that brings hundreds of thousands of visitors each year. Bartow, the county seat, also has district headquarters to the Florida Department of Transportation and court services for Polk, Hardee and Highlands counties. More than 10,000 people travel to work in Bartow every day.

The county’s fastest growing region is northeast Polk. Here, new residents are finding housing more affordable than in nearby Orlando, and vacationers like the proximity to Disney, Universal Studios and all that Orlando has to offer.

Learn more by visiting two of the county’s websites, [polk-county.net](http://polk-county.net) and [visitcentralflorida.org](http://visitcentralflorida.org).

**FIRE RESCUE DIVISION**

Polk County’s first responders are among the nation’s busiest.



Ambulance services cover 100 percent of the county’s population and fire coverage is for about 63.7 percent. Fire protection services all of unincorporated Polk County and five smaller

municipalities. Coordination between county and municipal agencies is governed by a series of interlocal agreements to help provide the highest level of service to our residents.

Polk County Fire Rescue is the only ALS ground transport service permitted in the county.

Polk is divided into four Battalions, each staffed with a Fire Battalion Chief. Three of the Battalions are also staffed with a Battalion Medical Chief; the fourth is cross-trained in EMS and performs both roles.

### **Fast Facts**

- 528 full-time and about 50 part-time employees
- 2016 budget = \$63,433,072
  - \$23,122,155 for EMS
  - \$40,310,917 for Fire
- 45 stations
- 66 first response vehicles
  - 32 ALS Transport Ambulances
  - 32 Engines
  - 2 Ladders

### **THE POSITION AND THE CANDIDATE**

The Fire Chief reports to the Deputy County Manager of Public Safety and performs a variety of administrative duties involving the development and implementation of strategic plans, coordination and direction of operations, providing leadership in fire suppression/protection, emergency medical services, budgeting, personnel development and training.

The Deputy County Manager and County Manager seek a visionary leader committed to team building, proactive problem solving and customer service with a proven track record of success while optimizing resources.

The Chief must embrace transformational leadership principles that will inspire, develop and lead the team to the highest performance levels. He/She will be an engaging leader, involved in daily operations, and committed to making frequent field and station visits to interact with team members. The Chief must possess moral standards that are irreproachable which will be the foundation of building trust with both fellow team members, the citizens we serve and stakeholders. The Fire Chief must have passion and commitment to fully develop and advance every foundation of the Fire Rescue Division's mission and services.

The successful candidate will be a graduate of a regionally accredited four-year college or university with major course work in fire science and administration, public administration, or a public safety-related field.

He/She will have at least 15 years of experience in all phases of fire protection/suppression, fire prevention work and Emergency Medical Services (EMS). This must include eight years of increasingly responsible command and supervisory experience in an organized fire rescue department. Leadership experience should include six years of administrative responsibility at the command or executive level in a department of comparable size and scope to Polk County.

The new Fire Chief must possess, or attain within one year from date of employment, a valid Certificate of Compliance, Out of State Firefighter Certification of Compliance or Special Certification of Compliance that has been issued according to the rules of the Florida Department of Financial Services, Division of State Fire Marshal, Chapter 69A-37 Firefighters Standards and Training. He/She must also meet the non-user of tobacco provisions contained in Florida State Statutes 633.412 (1) (f).

Finally, the successful candidate must possess and maintain a valid State of Florida or National Registry Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic Certification.

## **SPECIAL PREFERENCE**

Special preference will be given to candidates possessing the following highly desirable degrees and/or certifications:

- Master's Degree in Fire Science, Public Administration, Business Administration, or a related field
- Graduation from the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer program
- Designation by the Center for Public Safety Excellence as a Chief Fire Officer or Chief Emergency Medical Services Officer
- Graduation from similar fire or EMS executive leadership programs
- Certification or licensed as a State of Florida or National Registry paramedic

## **COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS**

Starting salary range is \$110,677 to \$122,574 annually. Reasonable relocation expenses will also be provided to the successful candidate.

Benefits include:

- Multiple Health Plans
- Dental and Vision Plans
- Short and long-term disability
- Florida State Retirement System
- Leave including 10 holidays, annual leave, sick leave and personal time off

## **HOW TO APPLY**

For additional information on this outstanding opportunity, please contact W. D. Higginbotham, Jr., Senior Vice President, The Mercer Group, Inc. at 727-214-8673, [WDHiggin@mercergroupinc.com](mailto:WDHiggin@mercergroupinc.com)

**A letter of interest and resume should be sent electronically by the close of business on April 29, 2016 to:**

**W. D. Higginbotham, Jr.  
Senior Vice President  
The Mercer Group, Inc.  
Seminole, FL 33777  
Email - [WDHiggin@mercergroupinc.com](mailto:WDHiggin@mercergroupinc.com)**

Resumes are subject to the provisions of Florida Public Records Statutes.

Polk County, Florida is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Polk County does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, age, marital status, national origin, political ideas or disability in employment or in the provision of services.