

Palominas Fire District



Fire Chief

Recruitment

**A unique opportunity in historic
Cochise County Arizona**

Starting Salary \$110,000 Annually

Plus Benefits

Application Deadline

Thursday October 1st, 2026, 5:00 p.m.

Application Materials may be Downloaded at

www.palominasfire.com

Rural, Responsive and Proud





The Palominas Fire District seeks an innovative, collaborative and visionary leader to serve as its next Fire Chief.

Reporting to the 5-member Fire District Board of Directors, the next Fire Chief will be a steady and principled leader who fosters a culture of professionalism, accountability and trust. The successful candidate will demonstrate the ability to navigate organizational issues, address challenges thoughtfully and consistently, and maintain focus on the District's mission during periods of change.

More than an operational leader, the Fire Chief serves as a trusted advisor, strategic thinker and community partner. The successful candidate will help shape the organization's future while upholding the highest standards in emergency response, community risk reduction, employee development and public trust

Key Priorities

- Promote a culture of professionalism, accountability and operational excellence through visible and effective leadership
- Support workforce development, recruitment, retention and succession planning efforts across all ranks
- Enhance community risk reduction, prevention and public education initiatives
- Plan for future service demands, capital needs and emerging public safety challenges

The next Fire Chief will inherit a department with a proud history of service and a strong commitment to protecting life and property. The District seeks a leader who is equally at home commanding emergency incidents, developing future leaders, engaging the community, advancing long-term strategic goals and engaging with elected officials: someone who understands that a healthy organizational culture is as essential to lasting success as operational excellence.



About the Fire District

Located in southeast Arizona, Palominas Fire District covers about 87 square miles and serves a population of about 6,000 residents. We are just south of the City of Sierra Vista. The southern border of the Fire District is the Mexico border. With a recent ISO rating of Class 5. The area is mostly rural with some newer subdivisions. The Fire District responds to about 650 calls for service annually



Our daily staffing goal is 4 on-duty career firefighters assigned to 2 fire stations. All career firefighters are either EMT's or Paramedics. Staffing also includes a Fire Chief and full-time Office Administrator.

A third fire station houses water tenders which are usually operated by a cadre of volunteer water tender operators.

The District enjoys a 4-acre training center with classroom and 3-story training tower with a live fire burn room.

Our fleet consists of 3 type 1 engines, 2 type 6 brush trucks and 3 water tenders.

Our FY2026-27 Operating Budget is \$1.7M

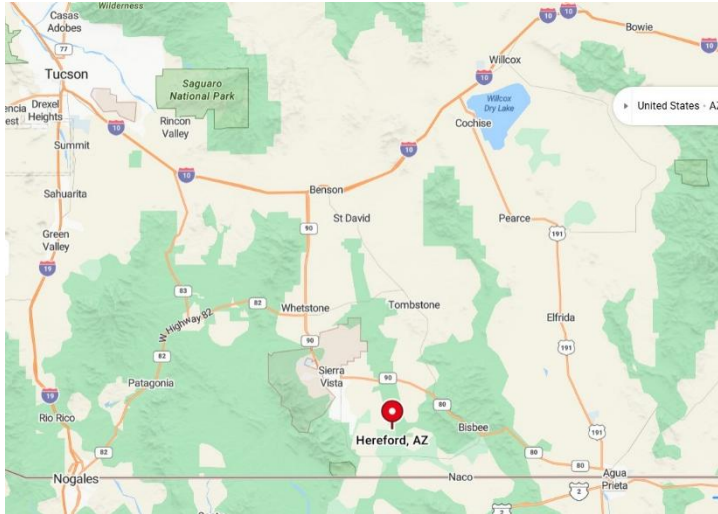
Automatic Aid is provided by Fry Fire District. We're part of the countywide mutual aid plan, as well as working cooperatively with US Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management fire units, which are located just north of our District.

Ambulance transport services are provided by Fry Fire District or Bisbee Fire Department, depending on location.



About the Area

Palominas Fire District covers both Hereford and Palominas areas in southeast Arizona in historic Cochise County. We're about 70 miles southeast of Tucson, and just south of the City of Sierra Vista.



The Fire District elevation is a bit over 4,000 feet- so we don't experience the extreme heat often associated with Arizona. Palominas/Hereford is located at the base of the Huachuca Mountains, which offer numerous hiking trails. Within the area is historic Fort Huachuca- home of the Buffalo Soldiers, Kartchner Caverns State Park, Cochise Stronghold, Coronado National Memorial, historic Bisbee and of course... Tombstone.

Numerous housing options are available both within the Fire District and within the City of Sierra Vista. Within the District, housing ranges from manufactured homes [many on acreage] to million-dollar homes... and everything in between.

Hereford/Palominas has both a grade-school and middle school. High school students and community college students attend classes in Sierra Vista.



Minimum Qualifications

- Associates Degree in Public Administration, Business Administration, Fire Science or any other related field from a regionally accredited college or university; consideration may be given to a candidate who possesses a combination of other significant related education and/or experience as approved by the Fire Board
- Fifteen (15) years of fire service experience, including at least 5-years in Fire/EMS management, preferably at the Chief Officer level; experience in a fire district setting is desired
- Arizona Firefighter 1 & 2 certification or NFPA 1001 equivalent
- Current Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Paramedic (CEP) certification, either Arizona or National Registry, or ability to obtain within 6-months
- Valid Arizona Driver's License, or ability to obtain within 30-days of employment
- Completion of Incident Command Courses and demonstrated proficiency in application of the content
- Completion of Occupational Safety course and demonstrated proficiency in application of the content
- Completion of Instructor Methodology course and demonstrated proficiency in the content
- Completion of a minimum six college credit hours in supervision/management and demonstrated proficiency in the content
- Prior experience in preparation and administration of budgets
- Ability to read and write the English language
- Ability to meet the requirements of the District's insurance carrier
- Within six months of appointment, residency within a 45-minutes radius of District boundaries; residency within District boundaries preferred



A full list of knowledge, skills and abilities; Physical Demands and Work Environment are included in the Job Description.

Salary and Benefits

- Expected Starting Salary \$110,000 annually
- Paid time off- 80 hours annually
- Earned paid sick leave
- Health Insurance
- Dental Insurance
- Vision Insurance
- Workers' Compensation
- Uniform Allowance
- Arizona PSPRS Retirement
- Education/Training Assistance
- 10 Paid Holidays
- District provided vehicle

Selection Process

The testing/interview process is tentatively scheduled for October 21st through October 23rd. Candidates are tentatively scheduled to be notified October 7th.

The anticipated start date for the new Fire Chief is January 1st.



To Apply

- Download and review the Job Description
- Download and review the Application Instructions
- Download and complete the Application Checklist
- Download and complete the Supplemental Questionnaire
- Download and complete the Palominas Employment Application
- Complete a Resume

To be considered, each of the following materials must be received by :

5:00 p.m. Arizona time on Thursday October 1st, 2026

- Application Checklist
- Completed Supplemental Questions
- Completed Palominas Employment Application
- Completed Resume

Materials may be submitted electronically to:

s.abel@palominasfire.com

If documents are submitted electronically, please either have them in PDF format or MSWord.

Materials may be mailed or hand delivered to:

Interim Fire Chief Steve Abel

Palominas Fire District

10202 S Hwy 92

Hereford, AZ 85615

Questions may be directed to

Interim Fire Chief Steve Abel

s.abel@palominasfire.com

520-508-3592