



Wilson, North Carolina



Invites Your Interest in the Position of
Fire Chief





The innovative and growing [City of Wilson, NC](#), seeks a forward-thinking fire safety and prevention leader to lead its ISO 1 and accredited Fire Department as its next **Fire Chief**. This opportunity is for a professional with substantial experience serving as an incident commander who demonstrates strong leadership and decision-making abilities in high-pressure emergency situations.

With a community-focused mindset, Wilson's next Fire Chief works well within diverse cultures and environments; promotes accountability across ranks, including self; and encourages professional growth through mentorship and empowerment. The ideal candidate brings a positive leadership style and has experience administering uniform and progressive discipline in a fair and consistent manner. A solid understanding of emergency management, incident command, and public administration is essential, along with a forward-thinking approach to technology and evolving fire service needs. Knowledge of ISO standards and accreditation processes is essential.

About the Organization, Department, and Position:

The City of Wilson, which operates under a Council/Manager form of Government, is led by a Mayor and seven council members. Wilson is well-managed and has several high-performing and award-winning departments, including accredited Police, Fire, and Parks and Recreation Departments, and the Downtown Development division. Wilson Energy, which serves 35,000 customers in a five-county region, is a Reliable Public Power Provider and is consistently recognized for first-in-class reliability.

The City's recently completed [Wilson Growing Together: The 2043 Comprehensive Plan](#) guides future development and growth within Wilson and addresses many key issues, including growing intentionally, connecting people and places, fostering vibrant neighborhoods, promoting economic prosperity, conserving green places, creating active and thriving communities, plan implementation, and community engagement. The City's [FY2026 proposed budget](#) totals \$274,003,270 and maintains the City's current tax rate of \$0.525 cents per \$100 of taxable valuation.

Wilson Fire/Rescue Services (WF/RS) has five strategically located stations and provides 24/7 service through a system of engine and ladder companies. WF/RS is committed to continuous improvement, strategic planning, and fostering a culture of professionalism, accountability, and service. In 2024, WF/RS responded to 5,492 calls for service in 2024, utilizing a traditional deployment model consisting of five engines, one tower ladder, one safety and training captain, and a shift battalion chief.

WF/RS is known for its strong emphasis on training and preparedness, partnering with Wilson Community College to deliver comprehensive fire, rescue, and EMS education. WF/RS also plays a key role in emergency management and regional disaster response. Learn more about WF/RS by [visiting its website](#).



Reporting to the Assistant City Manager, the **Fire Chief** oversees a [FY2026 budget](#) of approximately \$11.6M and leads 101 full-time employees, including four direct reports (2 Deputy Chiefs; 1 Compliance Administrator and 1 Administrative Assistant). The **Fire Chief** oversees all fire service functions, including inspections, training, operations, budgeting, and policy implementation, while also representing the department at the city and county levels, engaging with the Council and stakeholders, and leading strategic development. The next **Fire Chief** will manage personnel, with a focus on recruitment and retention, while also providing mentorship and leadership development to the Senior Staff. This person will supervise the construction of two new fire stations in a growing district that includes an industrial park and a new baseball stadium. A strong working relationship with the Police Department is essential.

Key Position Priorities:

- Maintain operational excellence by preserving the department's ISO 1 rating, accreditation status, community risk reduction focus, and apparatus/equipment replacement schedules.
- Recruit, retain, and develop high-quality personnel by using thoughtful hiring practices, investing in officer development, and fostering employee engagement, while navigating generational differences and continuing the current Chief's open-door policy to ensure every employee feels heard and valued.
- Has a strong understanding of modern fire service issues, with clear decision-making skills, the ability to anticipate future challenges, and experience managing growth, including new station construction and budgeting.
- Ensure the department keeps pace with city growth by aligning strategic plans with service demands, maintaining the Standard of Coverage, and addressing emerging community risks effectively.
- Participate actively as a member of the City's leadership team and the NC Metro Chiefs organization.

Qualifications:

The City of Wilson seeks a fire safety leader with a minimum of 20 years of progressive fire safety experience who must have 5 years of cross-functional and progressively responsible experience, including fire suppression, prevention, EMS, and administrative work at the rank of Battalion Chief, Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief, or Fire Chief. A BA/BS degree, and ~~or~~ equivalent years of experience, **is required**.

The following qualifications are *preferred*:

- A master's degree.
- Graduation from the Executive Fire Officer Program.
- Designation of Chief Fire Officer through the Center for Public Safety.
- Experience managing special events—such as stadium events or street events.





The Successful Candidate:

- is a present, engaged leader who is visible in the department and community, communicates clearly, understands the political environment of city government, and leads by example—not from behind a desk;
- has a proven track record of effective leadership, marked by strong communication skills, adaptability, honesty, and a collaborative approach that values input from all ranks;
- is a transformational and servant leader who leads with humility, integrity, and a deep commitment to both the department and the broader community;
- is approachable, genuine, and demonstrates the ability to connect with people at all levels — meeting individuals where they are while maintaining a strong and confident command presence in times of crisis;
- builds relationships within the department and the community; supports downtown events and special initiatives, including a [downtown ballpark](#) opening in 2026, which will bring many community benefits;
- supports and guides the department's continued growth by building on current progress, not reversing it; casting a clear, proactive vision; and visionary planning for potential infrastructure needs that are identified;
- leads with presence, humility, and inclusivity—showing up, engaging with staff and community, and building a team culture grounded in trust, respect, and shared ownership of “our fire department”;
- promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion across all levels of leadership, and remains open-minded, approachable, and committed to employee engagement, growth and development;
- focuses on the department's most pressing issues while not being sidetracked by minor concerns;
- embraces Wilson as a long-term professional home, not a career stepping stone, and is motivated by service — not self-promotion; and,
- demonstrates a commitment to fostering a strong, family-like culture within the department.



Salary and Benefits:

The expected hiring range for the position is \$150,000 - \$175,000. The full salary range for this position is \$140,486.58-\$246,456.21. Starting salary will depend on experience and qualifications. The city's comprehensive benefits package can be viewed [here](#) on the website.

To apply, please visit

<https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/developmentalassociates> and click on the **Fire Chief – City of Wilson, NC** title.

- All applications must be submitted online via the Developmental Associates application portal (link above) – NOT the city's employment application portal or any other external website.
- Resumes and cover letters must be uploaded with the application.
- Applicants should apply by **July 25, 2025**.
- Successful semi-finalists will be invited to participate in interviews and skill evaluation on **August 21-22, 2025**. Candidates are encouraged to reserve these dates for meetings should they be invited to participate.
- Interviews with the leadership team will follow quickly at a subsequent time in person.
- Direct inquiries to hiring@developmentalassociates.com

The City of Wilson, NC, is an Equal Opportunity Employer. Developmental Associates, LLC manages the recruitment and selection process for this position. To learn more about our selection process, visit <https://developmentalassociates.com/client-openings/> and scroll down to "Important Information for Applicants."



Wilson Fire/Rescue Services mission:

We are dedicated to life safety by providing emergency services and community risk reduction to serve our community and to assist other agencies.



Benefits

Wilson's comprehensive benefits include but are not limited to:

- Health, dental and vision coverage
- Paid time off
- Shared leave
- Tuition assistance
- 401(k) Retirement plan with 5% employer contribution
- Employee Health and Wellness Center

For full Benefits information visit:

https://www.wilsonnc.org/residents/all-departments/human-resources/policy-manual/-folder-83#docan779_945_1070

