



# WILSON, NORTH CAROLINA

Invites Your Interest in the Position of

# CHIEF OF POLICE





## Position Closes March 15, 2026

The innovative and growing City of Wilson, NC, is seeking a collaborative and forward-thinking **Chief of Police** to lead a department at an important moment of organizational change and community growth. The next **Chief** must be a visible, engaged leader who prioritizes communication, trust-building, and morale while creating a culture where employees feel heard, supported, and valued. Staff are looking for a **Chief** who has an inclusive and transparent leadership style that empowers supervisors, promotes accountability, and strengthens communication across all levels of the organization.

The ideal candidate combines strong people skills with solid, hands-on policing experience—someone who understands the importance of supporting experienced officers while mentoring and developing a younger workforce that may view policing differently than past generations. The department sees significant potential in its newest hires and is looking for a leader who listens actively, understands a changing workforce, remains open to new ideas, and provides clear, consistent direction.

Equally important is a commitment to community policing and relationship-building. The next **Chief** will maintain strong connections with residents, the community, and regional partners while ensuring the department remains responsive to a growing, increasingly diverse community. Above all, the next **Chief** will bring integrity, transparency, and a willingness to listen—recognizing that the department has strong potential, new staff with significant promise, employees who want to be led, and a genuine openness to new ideas.



*Wilson Police Department officers engage with local youth during community events year-round, reflecting the department's ongoing commitment to community policing, relationship-building, and maintaining strong connections with residents in a growing and diverse community.*

## 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, 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 budget](#) totals \$274,003,270 and maintains the City's current tax rate of \$0.525 cents per \$100 of taxable valuation. Learn more about the City of Wilson [here](#).

Reporting to the Assistant City Manager, the **Chief of Police** oversees a [FY2026 budget of approximately \\$18,353,460 million](#) and leads a senior staff that includes two majors and six captains, as well as a department of 143 employees. A primary responsibility of the next **Chief of Police** will be to increase staffing levels and strengthen recruitment and retention efforts to address current vacancies, workload challenges, and burnout. The department must compete more effectively in a regional market where surrounding agencies may offer comparable or higher pay with less work. The **Chief** will play a central role in workforce planning, advocating for competitive pay and incentives, and ensuring staffing strategies align with anticipated growth, new industry development, and major initiatives such as the upcoming baseball stadium. Additionally, the **Chief** will evaluate operational practices, policies, and leadership approaches to ensure fairness, transparency, and clarity while helping the organization move forward in a unified direction.



*Clockwise from top left: Members of the Wilson Police Department's Forensics Unit, K-9 Unit, and Special Response Team showcase the department's specialized capabilities during training and operations. Together, these units play a critical role in enhancing public safety, supporting complex investigations, and ensuring a coordinated, effective response to incidents across the community.*

## Key Position Priorities:

- Build a strong organizational culture and aligned leadership structure through improved internal communication, clear chain-of-command expectations, supervisory support, consistent accountability, and defined leadership.
- Stabilize staffing and improve retention by addressing manpower shortages, creatively evaluating vacancies, and implementing staffing strategies that keep pace with growth so officers are not asked to do more with less.
- Enhance operational readiness and officer support by assessing fleet, equipment, technology, and resource needs to ensure officers have safe and effective tools—while preparing for continued growth and evolving service demands.
- Manage the department's budget with strong fiscal oversight by planning for current and future needs, advocating for sustainable funding, and addressing salary compression and compensation challenges through a clear, long-term strategy.

Learn more about the City of Wilson's Police Department [here](#).

## Qualifications:

The City of Wilson seeks a law enforcement leader with at least 20 years of progressively responsible policing experience in a municipality with a population comparable to Wilson (approximately 48,000 residents) or no more than 30% smaller. Must have 4-7 years of cross-functional and progressively responsible experience, including administrative and command-level work. A BA/BS degree and equivalent years of experience are **required**.

The following qualifications are *preferred*:

- A master's degree.
- Graduation from an executive development law enforcement program (ex. FBI National Academy, AOMP, PERF Senior Management Institute for Police (SMIP)).
- Experience with CALEA accreditation.
- Experience managing special events—such as stadium events or street events.

**Transfers:** In-state candidates may transfer their law enforcement officer certification to another agency in NC, provided they have less than a 12-month break in service at the time of appointment. In-state candidates with less than a three-year break in NC service may receive partial credit toward basic law enforcement training. Out-of-state candidates serving, or have served, as a local or state law enforcement officer must have successfully completed a basic law enforcement training course accredited by the state from which they are transferring and cannot have a break in full-time service exceeding three years at the time of appointment. Individuals with federal law enforcement officer certification who have not had a break in service exceeding three years at the time of appointment may receive partial credit toward NC basic law enforcement training. NC does recognize and give partial credit for military police training if the candidate has completed a formal military basic training program and been awarded a military police occupational specialty rating and has served as a military police officer for not less than two of the five years preceding the date of appointment.

## The Successful Candidate:

- Demonstrates a strong commitment to line officers by understanding the realities they face every day, ensuring their perspectives remain central to leadership decisions, and having the “backs of the officers” through trust, fairness, and visible support when challenges arise;
- Is relatable and approachable, communicates transparently, and listens actively, leading with emotional intelligence so employees, City leadership, and the community feel informed, heard, and connected to decision-making;
- Stays current with emerging law enforcement trends and technology while listening closely to line-level staff as the end-users of leadership decisions and clearly explaining the “why” behind them;
- Maintains a visible and accessible leadership presence, staying connected to patrol operations and avoiding a purely administrative approach through consistent interaction and “Managing by Walking Around;”
- Brings significant tactical and operational experience, including time in high call-volume environments, establishing credibility with line officers and demonstrating a genuine understanding of daily operational realities;
- Builds a positive and unified culture by developing leaders, reinforcing core values, and aligning executive leadership around shared priorities and organizational direction;
- Exercises moral courage and integrity by making difficult decisions when necessary, acting as the department’s “big problem solver,” and providing calm, steady leadership—serving as a “calm in the storm” while confronting complex issues;
- Promotes fairness and equity in organizational systems and practices, including evaluation standards and community outreach expectations, ensuring performance measures are clear, consistent, and supportive of work-life balance;
- Values education, training, and professional development while thinking strategically about growth, succession planning, and long-term organizational success—taking time to learn the “Wilson way” before implementing meaningful change; and
- Demonstrates a strong commitment to community policing and relationship-building, supporting successful initiatives such as the PAL program and maintaining strong community trust.



*The Wilson Police Department’s PAL football and cheerleading camp gives local kids a chance to stay active, learn teamwork, and build confidence while getting to know the officers in their community. The department also offers baseball, softball, and soccer camps throughout the summer, continuing its hands-on approach to supporting local youth.*

## About the Community:

The City of Wilson was incorporated in 1849 and is located on the eastern seaboard along Interstate 95 in NC. It is the largest municipality in Wilson County and serves as the county seat. The city, once known as the World's Greatest Tobacco Market, covers nearly 33 square miles of land and is just 40 miles from the state's capital, Raleigh. Today, Wilson enjoys a diverse economy, including a healthy mix of more than 1800 private businesses in biotech, agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, commercial, and service industries. Wilson is home to several major companies, including Bridgestone Americas, Collins UTC Aerospace Systems, Truist Bank, Merck, Novartis, Fresenius Kabi, BD Medical, Purdue Pharmaceuticals, Sandoz Pharmaceuticals, Alliance One Tobacco, United Technologies, Duke-LifePoint Healthcare, and Linamar, with recent announcements of Fed-Ex, Johnson & Johnson and Schott Pharma.

In addition to employment, Wilson has worked hard to be a community of choice. The city's investment in state-of-the-art recreational facilities creates outstanding leisure and recreational opportunities for residents. These facilities have attracted youth baseball and soccer teams to play in national and regional tournaments. A hallmark of Wilson is Greenlight, the City's state-of-the-art, fiber-to-the-premise system that provides customers with affordable data, voice, and video services. Since its inception in 2008, Greenlight has grown to provide services to more than 13,000 customers. Greenlight was the first service provider in the state to offer Gigabit Fiber-to-the-Home service, making Wilson "North Carolina's Gigabit City," boasting some of the fastest internet speeds in the United States.

Wilson's nearly 50,000 community members love the city's friendly neighborhood culture, annual festivals, and events that connect the community, and the abundance of parks, walking trails, and lakes to explore. They appreciate Wilson's landscape and mild climate. Known for the best Eastern N.C.-style pork barbecue, Wilson's many restaurants highlight abundant offerings and are known to draw long lines and repeat customers.



## The City of Wilson, North Carolina *A Community of Choice*

**Wilson is working hard to be a community of choice, offering advanced connectivity, vibrant events, and premier amenities such as...**



*The J. Burt Gillette Athletic Complex, which features state-of-the-art fields and amenities for baseball, softball, soccer, and other competitive sports. ([Wilson County Tourism](#))*



*Lake Wilson (above), which offers scenic trails and waterfront views for walking, fishing, and outdoor recreation, and Wilson Recreation Park (below), which features family-friendly amenities including a popular miniature train ride that delights visitors of all ages. ([Wilson County Tourism](#))*





Historic Downtown Wilson features excellent cuisine, craft beverages, unique treasures, custom furniture, handmade artisan goods, a vibrant art scene, a social district with lively entertainment, and a growing residential population. Wilson is also home to Barton College (top photo), a four-year, private, liberal arts college that provides nearly 1,200 undergraduate students and almost 80 graduate students with a strong academic focus and opportunities for leadership development. Wilson is also home to Wilson Community College, a two-year public institution that provides nearly 1,580 students with associate's and technical degrees and certifications.

Most notably, the Wilson City Council approved an estimated [\\$280 million development project](#) to be completed in Historic Downtown Wilson in Spring 2026. This project will feature a new downtown sports entertainment complex, which houses the Milwaukee Brewers Minor League baseball team, the Wilson Warbirds. A 100-room hotel, multi-family housing, and commercial development are also part of the plans for this significant development adjacent to the city's most renowned, award-winning, and unique destination, the [Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park](#).

More information about the City can be found on the [City's website](#).



Vollis Simpson Whirligig Park (left) highlights the city's creative spirit in a vibrant downtown setting, while a new \$280 million sports and entertainment complex—set for completion in Spring 2026 next to the park—will serve as home to the Wilson Warbirds, a Minor League affiliate of the Milwaukee Brewers. *(PDF Rendering by Barton Marlow)*

## Salary and Benefits:

The expected hiring range for the position is **\$175,000 - \$190,000**. 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. The Police Chief is required to establish residency within the city limits within a period of twelve (12) months from the date of employment.

To apply, please visit <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/developmentalassociates> and click on the **Chief of Police – 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 **March 15, 2026**.
- Successful semi-finalists will be invited to participate in interviews and skill evaluation on **April 9-10, 2026**. Candidates are encouraged to reserve these dates for meetings should they be invited to participate.
- Interviews with the Executive Team will follow quickly at a subsequent time in person.
- Direct inquiries to [hiring@developmentalassociates.com](mailto:hiring@developmentalassociates.com)

The City of Wilson, NC is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



*The Wilson Police Department Canine Unit recently tested the abilities of their canine partners and became certified through the United States Police Canine Association (USPCA). All canines and their handlers who participated received certifications and are ready to serve the City of Wilson!*



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/>, select "Client Openings," and scroll down to "Important Information for Applicants."