



ABOUT ASTORIA

Astoria is a picturesque city of approximately 10,200 residents known for its rich history, beautiful architecture, and stunning natural surroundings. With over 215 years of history, Astoria is intrinsically linked to the Columbia River and the Pacific Ocean shaping the community's formation with trade, maritime activities, and natural resources.

The city's historic downtown and waterfront are filled with shops and galleries selling everything from antiques to local art as well as restaurants serving locally and globally inspired delicacies. Astoria is a success story in historic preservation with examples of buildings, community spaces and Victorian style homes thoughtfully restored by individuals and community groups.

Astorians and visitors enjoy year-round events and festivals such as the Astoria Sunday Market, Astoria Crab, Seafood & Wine Festival, Clatsop County Fair & Expo, Fisher Poets Gathering, Great Columbia

Crossing 10K Run/Walk, Astoria Regatta Festival, Scandinavian Midsummer Festival, Astoria Pride Festival, Astoria International Film Festival and Festival of Dark Arts to name a few.

Astoria is home to a variety of employers, with industries ranging from healthcare, education, craft breweries, maritime industry, manufacturing, fishing and tourism. One of the largest employers in the area is Columbia Memorial Hospital, which provides healthcare services to the community and employs a large number of healthcare



professionals. Other major employers in the area include the Astoria School District, Fort George Brewery, and the Port of Astoria. The U.S. Coast Guard maintains a strong presence in the community, operating out of their Astoria air station since 1964.

Astoria offers diverse educational and workforce training opportunities for students of all ages. The Astoria School District serves K-12 students in several public schools, including Astoria High School, Astoria Middle School, Astor Elementary School, and Lewis and Clark Elementary School. Clatsop Community College offers degree and professional certifications in a variety of fields including a strong Fire Science program. For students interested in pursuing technical or vocational training, Astoria is home to the Marine and Environmental Research and Training (MERTS) campus and the Tongue Point Job Corps. Skills and educational attainment include maritime activities, fabrication, seamanship and trades.

ASTORIA GOVERNMENT

The City of Astoria operates under a Council-Manager form of government, with four council members and a mayor elected to four-year terms.

The City is comprised of approximately 150 employees serving residents across eight departments, including police, fire, community development, parks and recreation, library, finance, human resources, and public works. The city is committed to being a welcoming and inclusive community and providing high-quality and responsive service while improving quality of life, supporting a healthy economy, and preserving Astoria's unique character.

Astoria serves as the county seat and is the regional hub of Clatsop County.

THE DEPARTMENT

The Fire Chief is a member of the City's Executive Team managing a department of 12 full-time employees including direct oversight of two Deputy Fire Chiefs,

DEPARTMENT STATS

FY 2026-2027 BUDGET
\$3,320,009

ANNUAL CALL VOLUME
1,800

one Administrative Assistant, three Lieutenants, three Engineers, three Firefighters, and ten volunteer Firefighters.

Under the direction of the City Manager, the Fire Chief is responsible for leading and managing all aspects of fire service operations associated with:

- » Emergency Response
- » Fire Prevention & Inspection
- » Emergency Management
- » Public Safety Education
- » Community Engagement
- » Volunteer Program
- » Fire Intern Program
- » Training and Safety Programs

The department provides a full range of emergency services, including fire suppression, emergency medical response, rescue operations, hazardous materials response, and fire prevention and public education.

When available, the department also deploys personnel to support statewide wildland conflagration efforts during Oregon's fire season. Astoria's location along the Columbia River also requires specialized training and readiness for maritime emergency response.

Annually, the Astoria Fire Department responds to approximately 1,800 calls for service. Demand has increased over the years as Astoria has grown into a popular destination community in the Pacific Northwest. The department serves an area of more than six square miles, with additional response responsibilities through mutual-aid agreements with neighboring jurisdictions. Advanced Life Support services for Astoria and the broader region are provided by Medix Ambulance.

The department remains committed to delivering reliable, high-quality service to residents, visitors, and businesses. Its personnel—career staff, volunteers, and fire interns—work together to provide the community with the highest standard of protection and care.



IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate will be a hands-on, approachable leader who thrives in a collaborative, small city environment. The role of Fire Chief demands a proactive leader with a proven track record in fire service management, who embodies a commitment to public service and public safety.

The right fit for this leadership opportunity will be someone who is:

A WORKING MANAGER

The position requires someone who can lead by example and remain actively engaged in the daily operations of the department. This includes staying connected to frontline personnel, understanding operational challenges firsthand, and participating in key activities to support readiness and effectiveness. The new Chief should balance strategic leadership with hands-on involvement, ensuring decisions are informed by real-world conditions and aligned with the needs of both the organization and the community.

PROFESSIONAL

Astoria's Fire Department has a proud history as one of the oldest organized fire services in Oregon.

The department seeks a leader who can uphold this legacy by maintaining its strong reputation for excellence, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and preserving its status as the premier fire service in the region. This includes regularly evaluating, updating, and implementing best practices to ensure the highest standards in the fire service profession are maintained.

STRATEGIC

The ideal candidate must be a forward-thinking leader who can anticipate challenges, assess emerging risks, and guide the department through long-term planning. This includes developing clear strategic priorities, aligning resources with community needs, and ensuring the organization is prepared for evolving demands in fire prevention, training, emergency response, and all-hazards resilience. This requires using data, trends, and community engagement to guide decisions and outcomes.

FISCALLY-MINDED

The next Fire Chief must be a responsible steward of public resources, ensuring that financial decisions support both operational effectiveness and long-term sustainability. This includes

managing budgets with transparency, prioritizing investments that deliver measurable value, and seeking innovative ways to maximize resources while maintaining high service standards for the community.

COLLABORATIVE

Astoria's next Fire Chief must foster a cooperative and inclusive environment, building strong relationships with the community, other city departments, the union, and with partner agencies. This includes encouraging open communication, supporting teamwork across all levels, and engaging with key stakeholders to enhance coordinated response, promote regional training standards, shared resources, and collective problem-solving.

COMMUNITY-MINDED

A leader who can demonstrate a strong commitment to serving and engaging the community. This includes building trust through visibility, transparency, accessibility, and active outreach, as well as fostering partnerships with residents, businesses, and local organizations.



CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES & PRIORITIES

The new Fire Chief will take on a number of challenges in the short and long term, working alongside city leadership as well as a talented and committed department. Primary areas of focus will include:

FIRE APPARATUS AND EQUIPMENT

Astoria has a proven track record of leveraging grants and other outside funding sources to replace and replenish critical equipment and supplies. Annually, available grants are reviewed to ensure the department leverages possible funding opportunities to enhance firefighting equipment and operational readiness. While grants remain an important resource, it is equally vital for the department to plan ahead and set aside funding for future fire engine replacements—core apparatus that form the backbone of Astoria’s emergency response capability. Maintaining a proactive financial plan for the fire department’s critical fleet will ensure the department can continue delivering reliable service to the community.

EMERGENCY OPERATIONS PLAN

Astoria, along with partners in Clatsop County, is in the process of updating its Emergency Operations Plan. This plan is a foundational document that will provide the guiding principles for all identified natural or manmade disasters that could impact the community. Astoria is within the Cascadia Subduction Zone and is susceptible to the effects of a major tsunami event. The completion of the plan

will inform our emergency response and help educate our community in disaster resilience.

VOLUNTEER AND FIRE INTERN PROGRAMS

The Astoria Fire Department has a long tradition of incorporating Volunteers and Fire Interns into emergency response. Over the years, volunteer participation has declined—not just in Astoria, but across the region. Additionally, enrollment of Fire Interns is not as robust in the recent past. Volunteers and Fire Interns continue to play a vital role in supporting the department’s mission, yet increasing training requirements and time commitments have significantly affected participation levels. These programs would benefit from renewed focus, support,

and strategic development to strengthen the pipeline of qualified candidates and increase the number of individuals willing to serve the Astoria Fire Department.

NEW PUBLIC SAFETY BUILDING

The current Public Safety Building was built almost 50 years ago, and is reaching its projected design-life. In addition, the current facility is located within a tsunami inundation zone that could potentially disrupt critical emergency response if an event like this occurred. A preliminary plan identified potential sites for relocation along with the Astoria Police Department as well as Public Work Operations. A strategic and financial plan is required to guide the necessary steps to reinvest or relocate this critical public building in seven to 10 years.



EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

Required:

- Associate's degree in Fire Science, Fire Administration, Emergency Management, Business, Public Administration, or related field as well as 10 years of progressively responsible fire operations experience, including a minimum of 3-5 years at the chief officer level.
- NFPA Fire Officer II
- Emergency Medical Technician
- Completion of the NIMS 100, 200, 300, 400, 700, and 800 training within first six months of employment.
- Valid driver's license and safe driving record.

Preferred:

- Bachelor's degree in Fire Science, Fire Administration, Emergency Management, Business, Public Administration, or related field.
- Experience in combination career and volunteer department.
- Experience in a unionized labor environment.

A combination of education and relevant experience that demonstrates the candidate's ability to perform the duties of this position may be considered.

COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The salary range for this position is \$118,833 to \$144,443, dependent upon experience and qualifications. The City of Astoria offers a very benefit package that includes:

Stability/Longevity Pay

2% premium after 5 years of service.

Oregon Public Employees Retirement System

6% Employee Contribution

30.72 - 31.79% Employer Contribution

Additional Voluntary Retirement Program

Supplemental 457(b) plan

Medical/Dental/Vision Insurance

90% City paid

Long-Term Disability, Basic & Statutory Life Insurance

Paid Holidays, Vacation, Sick and Personal Leave

Free Employee & Family Astoria Aquatic Center Pass

Department Vehicle Provided

Relocation Assistance

TO APPLY

Please submit your cover letter, resume and supplement questions to hr@astoria.gov no later than **July 17, 2026**.

For more information on the position, please contact:

Ashley Deits

Human Resources Director

971-988-9024

