

Cohasset, MA – Fire Chief



Position Statement

Summary

Cohasset, MA (8,300 pop.), is a strikingly beautiful and unique coastal community with a rich history, numerous historical sites, and spectacular vistas. The village center has the quintessential New England look and feel. Cohasset offers facilities for sailing, boating, and beach-going as well as areas of nature along the shore. The Town covers a nine-square-mile area and is a short drive from Boston. Cohasset has an FY22 budget of approximately \$50.46 million, AAA rating, and strong finances. Cohasset's local government is led by a five-member Select Board.

The Town of Cohasset is seeking an experienced, proactive, and dynamic fire/EMS service professional, with a proven record of leadership to serve as Fire Chief and Emergency Management Director. The next Fire Chief must be able to confer and collaborate with citizens, Cohasset officials, and neighboring town/regional officials on issues and the development of innovative solutions relating to fire and emergency-response issues. Such issues may relate to recruitment of firefighters, regional sharing of resources, public safety facilities, and mental health and drug treatment. Candidates must have a Bachelor's degree (Master's degree preferred) in fire science, fire administration or management and a minimum of 10 years of experience in the fire service with at least three years at the rank of Captain or above. The Fire Chief is supervised by the Town Manager.



Annual salary: \$140,000-\$160,000. The successful candidate will receive an attractive compensation package including health and retirement plans, commensurate with qualifications and experience. *Cohasset is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We value diversity and do not discriminate based on race, creed, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital or veteran status, sexual preference, or any other attribute.*

The Community

OVERVIEW: Located in Norfolk County, Cohasset is a coastal community 20 miles south of Boston. While the Town remains home to an active fishing fleet, it is primarily a residential community. The main highways include State routes 3A and 228, with connecting access to Route 3, the primary north-south highway on the South Shore. The MBTA provides easy access to Boston through a commuter rail station in Cohasset, which is complemented with the Town's first transit-oriented development, Old Colony Square. Cohasset plays host to more than a dozen charitable and for-profit road race events as well as an annual South Shore Arts Festival every June. The Town is currently developing a plan to enhance the Harbor area "to support the existing lobster fleet and marine-related businesses, enhance public access to the waterfront and the water, link economic development in the Harbor to the Village, and create a more vibrant Harbor," according to the Cohasset Municipal Harbor Plan.

GOVERNMENT: Cohasset has a Select Board-Town Manager form of government with open Town Meeting. The Select Board serves as the Town's Chief Executive body. The Board acts through the adoption of policy directives and guidelines which are implemented by the Town Manager, employees, and other officers. The Board appoints the Town Manager as the Chief Administrative Officer and Chief Financial Officer of the Town.

FINANCES: Cohasset's financial condition is strong. The Town has an FY22 general fund budget of approximately \$50.46 million and a Standard and Poor's rating of AAA with a stable outlook. S&P cited the Town's strong financial management, growing tax base, and strong budgetary performance. The rating review also underscored the Town's work on climate resiliency efforts and focus on cybersecurity as positive credit factors. The property tax base is 93% residential and nearly 7% commercial/industrial. Approximately 81.4% of the Town's revenue comes from the tax levy, with nearly 7% from state aid (not including enterprise and CPA funds). Cohasset's location near Boston provides ample employment opportunities for residents and the average household income is high compared to the State average.

Important Links:

- [Town of Cohasset](#)
- [Cohasset Fire Department](#)
- [Cohasset Emergency Management](#)
- [Cohasset Harbormaster](#)
- [Cohasset Police Department](#)
- [Cohasset FY22 Operating Budget](#)
- [Cohasset Master Plan](#)
- [Town Meeting Warrants](#)
- [Cohasset U.S. Census QuickFacts](#)



OPEN SPACE: Cohasset is a unique coastal community with lush forests, quiet coves, scenic vistas, open spaces, and a variety of recreational amenities. Cohasset has a rocky coastline and 6.12 miles of shoreline. There are abundant opportunities for outdoor activities, including at the Town's picturesque harbor, two beaches, the Whitney Woods Reservation, and Wompatuck State Park, which attract residents drawn to hiking, running, biking, swimming, and sailing. The Harbor is home to recreational fishing, some commercial fishing, the Cohasset Yacht Club, Cohasset Sailing Club, Cohasset Harbor Marina, Fisherman's Wharf, a Town landing, a Town Pier, a Town boat ramp, and Bassing Beach. There are approximately 2,900 acres of open space and recreational lands, which comprises approximately 46% of the Town's total land area. Due to the preponderance of both wetlands and rock ledge, development in Cohasset has historically been limited.

Position in Brief

The Cohasset Fire Chief is responsible for managing a department currently comprised of 26 full-time personnel, including the Fire Chief and Assistant Fire Chief. The department shares an Administrative Assistant position with the Police Department. All staff members are dedicated to providing for the safety and welfare of the citizens of and visitors to the Town of Cohasset by providing a vast range of emergency services, fire safety education, fire prevention programming, and emergency medical services. The Department provides dual role services, providing the typical firefighting functions along with EMS, operating a department-run emergency ALS ambulance service. The department's annual operating budget is approximately \$2.8 million. The Fire Department headquarters is located at 44 Elm Street.

Mission Statement

"The Cohasset Fire Department is committed to providing for the safety and welfare of the citizens of and visitors to the Town of Cohasset by providing a range of emergency services, fire safety education, fire prevention programming, and emergency medical services."

The Fire Chief must have superior leadership, organizational, and management skills, including experience managing professional unionized staff. The next Chief needs strong communication skills and the ability to advocate departmental needs to community leaders and work collaboratively within Cohasset's management team. The successful candidate will have enthusiasm for working with colleagues in Town leadership on emergency management, planning, and public safety discussions that serve the residents of Cohasset. The Fire Chief needs to work closely with, and as a partner to, both the Police Chief and the Town Manager.

Community outreach by the Fire Department includes CPR/AED classes to Town employees and the community, Student Awareness of Fire Education (SAFE) to the schools and nursery schools, and Senior Awareness of Fire Education (Senior SAFE) services, in partnership with the staff at Cohasset Elder Affairs and the Public Health Nurse.

Supervised by the Town Manager, the ideal candidate will be a seasoned fire service professional with a Bachelor's degree (Master's preferred) in Fire Science, Fire Administration/Management, or a related field; 10 years of progressively responsible fire service experience, with three years of experience in a supervisory capacity; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Although not required, graduates of the Massachusetts Chief Fire Officer Management Program or National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program are strongly encouraged to apply.



Challenges/Goals

- Evaluate the need for a second fire station/new public safety building.
- Explore the feasibility of leaving the Civil Service system.
- Continue to build on the efforts regarding increased awareness of cancer in the fire service and continue to implement procedures to reduce the risk of cancer to the Town's firefighting staff.
- Continue efforts to improve pre-fire planning for all buildings within the community.
- Move the department's paper fire prevention records to the electronic records management system.
- Continue to invest in employee training and development.



The Ideal Candidate

- Bachelor's degree in fire science, fire administration or management (Master's degree preferred).
- Minimum of 10 years in the fire service with 3 years at rank of Captain or above is required.
- Massachusetts Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic Certification.
- Ability to assume the duties of the Emergency Management Director.
- Possess exceptional leadership, management, and administrative skills.
- Ability to plan and develop long-range and short-range goals for the department in all areas of fire/EMS operations and capital needs.
- Ability to develop department personnel through professional development and leading by example.
- Skilled in team building with the ability to motivate others and maintain a positive work environment.
- Ability to foster and maintain a high level of professional and ethical conduct among all department members.
- Knowledgeable regarding labor and collective bargaining practices.
- Experience in the development and oversight of a department operating budget and 5-10 year capital budget plan as well as establishing policies, procedures, and general orders.
- Ability to think strategically regarding current and future public safety priorities.
- Experience in liaising with utility companies, including electric, cable and cell utility companies, during emergency management situations.
- Highly ethical, self-motivated, professional, innovative, accessible, fair, and responsive.
- Possess excellent written and oral communication skills.
- Ability to respond to all major emergencies involving the Fire Department and provide direction to the staff under the Chief's jurisdiction.
- Able and willing to perform the duties of a firefighter and EMT/Medic as needed.
- Conduct and investigate the causes of fires, in conjunction with local and state law enforcement officers.
- Ensure the enforcement of all state and local codes and laws relating to fire prevention.
- Able to manage/oversee the ambulance operation, including rules and regulations, training, recordkeeping, equipment maintenance, billing, and collection.
- Able to work effectively with local elected and appointed officials and community representatives.
- Collaborative; adaptable; and approachable.
- Holds self and staff accountable.
- Possess strong conflict resolution skills; ability to remain calm in a crisis.
- Possess and maintain a Massachusetts driver's license.



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How To Apply

Send cover letters and résumés via email, in a single PDF, by December 20, 2021, 3:00 p.m. EST to:

Apply@communityparadigm.com

Subject: Cohasset Fire Chief

Questions regarding the position should be directed to:

Bernard Lynch, Principal
Community Paradigm Associates
BLynch@communityparadigm.com
978-621-6733

The Town of Cohasset, Mass., is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We value diversity and do not discriminate based on race, creed, gender, national origin, age, disability, marital or veteran status, sexual preference, or any other attribute.