



Washington

ASSISTANT CHIEF OF OPERATIONS

\$129,000 - \$139,000

Plus Excellent Benefits

Apply by

April 3, 2022

(First Review, Open Until Filled)

PROTHMAN



WHY APPLY



Located just a 20-minute ferry ride from West Seattle, Vashon and Maury Islands consist of two connected beautiful rural Islands with a small unincorporated town in the Puget Sound. Miles of

lightly traveled, pine-edged country roads make bicycling, walking, and jogging popular activities for residents and visitors alike. Whether you are petting an alpaca, slowing for deer crossing the road, or watching eagles soar, Vashon is a wonderful place to be. With a significant role in the community, this is an excellent and exciting opportunity for a progressive and innovative fire service professional to lead Vashon Fire into the future by bringing their knowledge, skill, and talent to raise the District to its next levels of excellence.

THE COMMUNITY

Vashon Island is a patchwork of pastoral and natural settings. The Island is approximately 13 miles long by 8 miles at the widest point and covers 37 square miles with 52 miles of shoreline. A great deal of the Island is 5- and 10-acre parcels that maintain the rural feel. In the summer you can visit one of the many farms, rent a kayak, take sailing lessons, or explore Vashon's beaches. Visiting the historic Point Robinson Lighthouse for a beach walk gives residents and visitors extraordinary views of Mt. Rainier and Seattle. Lisabeula Beach on the west side is ideal for watching the sunset over the water, observing whales, osprey, or eagles, and KVI Beach is perfect for a picnic or a daytime nap. Complimenting a large network of County parks, Vashon and Maury Islands have their own parks district that administers a number of waterfront and inland parks, providing a variety of activities ranging from hiking to beachcombing to horseback riding. The only way on and off the Island is by a beautiful ferry boat ride with views of other islands as well as the Cascade and Olympic Mountains. The auto/passenger ferries load from the Fauntleroy ferry dock in West Seattle and from the Point Defiance ferry dock in Tacoma, each taking just 15 to 20 minutes to get to Vashon Island along with the Southworth dock in Kitsap County that takes 10 minutes. A 35-minute crossing by a passenger-only ferry from downtown Seattle is also available Monday through Friday.

The District is part of unincorporated King County. A small-town center provides all the immediate needs for residents including grocery stores, banks and credit unions, a Post Office, pharmacy, an excellent movie theater, two hardware stores, and several outstanding restaurants. Vashon and Maury Islands offer their own farmer's market on Saturdays from April through mid-October in the heart of the town and plenty of shopping opportunities at unique stores and galleries year-round. Known for its large and diverse art communities, such talents are important to the island and range from folk art to an operatic company that regularly puts on productions. As an island, waterborne activities are also a major part of the island's identity.

The Vashon community consists of working and retired professionals and families from the Seattle area and around the country. The close access to the SeaTac International Airport, multiple colleges, and universities means a higher degree of education and a higher income average. The Island enjoys low crime, and many retirees are actively engaged in social causes: quality low-income housing and feeding the hungry; protection of water, soil, and retaining green areas; engaging youth and others in fighting substance abuse and supporting access to mental health resources. The community exhibits strong support for its public schools that are consistently ranked among the state's best. The state-of-the-art high school has an approximate 97% graduation rate, with 95% of students going on to higher education.



THE DISTRICT

Established in 1942, Vashon Island Fire & Rescue (VIFR) provides first-tier emergency response to incidents involving fire, emergency medical services, motor vehicle and boating accidents, hazardous materials and rescue, and fulfills other requests for service as well. Governed by a five-member Board of Fire Commissioners, VIFR operates on a 2022 budget of \$5.3 million and employs 21 FTEs, six PTEs, and approximately 30 volunteer first responders. The Administrative staff includes the Fire Chief, the currently vacant Assistant Chief of Operations position, three full-time office staff, and a mechanic and facilities manager.

VIFR primarily operates out of the District's centrally-located main station, which is staffed around the clock. Two other stations provide access to apparatus for volunteers responding from home and/or other portions of the island. Together the stations house four aid cars, three first due engines, a reserve engine, four tenders, a support truck, a small Zodiac boat, an ATV/Gator, and other vehicles. The District also has a training center and a comprehensive vehicle and facilities maintenance shop. The District protects nearly 12,000 people and responds to roughly 1,700 calls annually where 75% are EMS-based incidents with the remaining 25% being fire and non-fire-based incidents. Patient transports via ferry to local hospitals have created a significant impact on the District over the last two years due to the pandemic and the loss of the West Seattle Bridge.

Vashon Island Fire & Rescue's ALS responses/needs are addressed by two King County Medic One paramedics provided by King County. Given the nature of mutual aid to the Island, the challenge of dealing with off-Island transports of critical patients and maintaining the capacity to respond to a subsequent ALS by both organizations is ever-pressing.



THE POSITION

Working under the direction of the Fire Chief the Assistant Chief of Operations will plan, organize, and manage the Fire District's Emergency Operations and administrate and/or supervise all District first responders either directly or by delegation. Further, the Assistant Chief shall be specifically charged with and responsible for the operational readiness and training needs and requirements of the organization. In coordination and collaboration with the Fire Chief, the Assistant Chief will coordinate services and operations of the District which includes disaster preparedness, reports, and other work consistent with the goals, objectives, timelines, and budget. The new Assistant Chief will be expected to respond to emergencies when available to provide support, guidance, and mentoring as incident command or take an active role in mitigation when the situation or resources demand the same.



Major responsibilities include:

- Organization and performance of the training, operational readiness, and operations of all first responders.
- Participating and engaging with the administrative team as a senior advisor to foster the sustainable development and implementation of services.
- Being able and willing to assume the Fire Chief's responsibility when they are not available.
- Mentoring and growing the existing officer corps as well as establishing a succession plan so as to move the organization into the future with confidence and clarity.
- Implementing and managing policies, procedures, and programs that benefit the District and contribute to the safety and welfare of the community.
- Connecting with and assisting community partners including a robust Disaster Preparedness coalition.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Community Involvement: Vashon Island is a close-knit, ‘small town’ community. The current Administration has worked hard to grow trust and respect by fostering positive public relations, demonstrating transparency, and maintaining a strong working relationship within the community. There is also a well-renowned Disaster Preparedness Coalition that partners with the Fire District. The Assistant Chief will need to support, participate in, and contribute to all these efforts. The Assistant Chief will be challenged in the effort to balance the unique needs of the District with a modern, progressive approach to future growth and demands for service to benefit all citizens of the District.

Development of Mid-Level Leadership: The last Assistant Chief recently retired after some 35 years with the District. The current staffing model consists of four platoons; at a minimum, a career captain and two career firefighter/EMTs, scheduled Part-Time, and self-scheduling volunteers. The part-time staff and volunteers augment the career staff. The captain directs every shift, assisting with the daily duties/chores, training, and supervising fire and EMS operations. The whole of the officers’ corps will need hands-on mentoring by the new Assistant Chief. A collaborative and engaging approach will prove to be effective with clear goals, objectives, and accountability.

A Strong Combination Fire District: The vision for the Fire District includes being a strong combination Fire District. It is recognized that the Island cannot afford an all-career District and existing career staff cannot manage the current call volume without the help of a solid volunteer staff. The new Assistant Chief will work to foster the growth of the volunteer corps with an emphasis on recruiting on-Island volunteers. Additionally, the new Assistant Chief will continue to set clear, definable roles for both career and volunteer responders to establish mutual support, teamwork, and respect.

Station Relocation/Replacement: The new Assistant Chief will be working closely with the Chief and District staff on the relocation and replacement of two antiquated fire stations in the near future.



Daily Interaction: The new Assistant Chief will be interacting with the Training Chief, Captains, and the crew on a daily basis. The ideal candidate will have a background working in a training division or a history of evaluating the same. The Assistant Chief will see the training program as a foundation for agency success at emergency scenes and for ensuring responder safety. The Assistant Chief will also take an active role in mentoring the District’s Captains. To be successful, this person will bring excellent delegation skills, and provide clear direction and the authority to complete the work.

IDEAL CANDIDATE

Education and Experience:

The ideal candidate will have a substantial and successful operational background in the fire service industry. A bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university in fire science or fire administration is preferred; a master’s degree in public administration or business administration is desirable. The ideal candidate will possess a minimum of seven (7) to ten (10) years of experience in a comparable agency with experience in a senior management role, such as an operations chief, battalion chief, training officer, shift officer, or station officer. The ideal candidate will have experience in a combination Fire District. Competitive candidates will have an ongoing record of training and professional development. Candidates must be able to obtain a Washington State Emergency Medical Technician certificate within one year of appointment and have a Washington Driver’s License by time of hire. Candidates must understand the unique challenges that accompany life on Vashon Island. It is highly desirable for the successful candidate to live on Vashon. Candidates will be required to establish residency within 30 miles of one of the three boats/ferry docks that service Vashon Island.

Necessary Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- The ability to value community involvement and be comfortable participating in community events.
- A comprehensive knowledge of all facets of the fire service and EMS, including experience and training in fireground operations, rescue, and emergency medical incidents.
- A desire to embrace the unique characteristics of a combination fire department in a small community that functions in an environment that lacks ready access to mutual aid.
- The selected candidate is expected to make a long-term commitment to the organization, establish a strong connection with the community and workforce and believe in transparency in the management of the district business and affairs.
- Experience in a combination District and a history of progressive and proactive program development.
- A demonstrated ability to formulate, implement and manage training, readiness, and actual emergency operations.
- Strong written and oral communication skills that will be used to clearly and concisely communicate the policies and procedures established by the Board to District staff and citizens. Demonstrated interpersonal relationship skills and approachability.
- Skill as a good listener. The ability to be accessible and understand the importance of maintaining close and consistent communication with staff.
- Experience interacting regularly with, and as part of an administrative leadership team. An understanding of the role of the Chief Executive Officer, and the ability to balance one's position as senior advisor to the Chief regarding the growth and success of the agency while being the head coach for the staff and an advocate/liaison to the community.
- Experience working with the ever-changing dynamics of a combination agency. The ability to build cohesive groups and address the safety and other needs of various responders.
- Strong leadership skills in guiding and mentoring volunteer and career team members.
- The ability to lead by example, set the standard for the District members, and have a strong and confident presence.
- A track record for delivering results, building accountability for staff, and creating a positive working environment characterized by teamwork and innovation.

- Demonstrated skill in strategic thinking and planning with the ability to communicate to all stakeholders and assist in leading the District with passion, intelligence, energy, and inspiration.
- The ability to see the labor group as a partner in decision-making processes and experience with all facets of collective bargaining; MOU's, LOA's, successor collective bargaining agreements, and situations that require a duty to bargain.
- Business and political acumen to interact with the Fire Chief and Board of Commissioners and be a partner with the same.
- The ability to gain alignment of the staff with the Chief's vision for the fire district, and be comfortable sharing the 'why' behind decisions.
- Demonstrated emotional intelligence, and the ability to guide the District's Captains as they work as a team in managing the day-to-day operations of the department.
- The ability to establish clear expectations of performance and accountability, doing so in a firm, fair, and consistent manner.
- The ability to see diversity as a strength in the workforce and embrace a welcoming and inclusive environment where individual members can reach their full potential.
- The skill to inspire great performance through actions and attitude, and appropriately advocate when needed for resources and training.
- The ideal candidate will be focused on building a team environment; supporting each other, problem solving and innovating.
- The ability to embrace a culture that welcomes input from stakeholders when making decisions about their work and the ability to be humble and make necessary adjustments.



COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

- **\$129,000 - \$139,000** DOQ
- Medical, Dental, and Vision
- Short- and Long-Term Disability
- Group Life Insurance
- Employment Assistance Program
- Eleven holidays, two personal days
- Vacation and Executive Leave
- 457 Deferred Compensation
- LEOFF II Retirement

For more information,
please visit:
www.vifr.org



Vashon Island Fire & Rescue is an Equal Opportunity Employer. All qualified candidates are strongly encouraged to apply by **April 3, 2022** (first review, open until filled). Applications, supplemental questions, resumes and cover letters will only be accepted electronically. To **apply online**, go to www.prothman.com and click on "**Open Recruitments**", select "**Vashon Island Fire and Rescue, WA – Assistant Chief of Operations**", and click "**Apply Online**", or click [here](#). Resumes, cover letters and supplemental questions can be uploaded once you have logged in.