SOUTH COUNTY FIRE, WASHINGTON
HUMAN RESOURCES DIRECTOR

MGT

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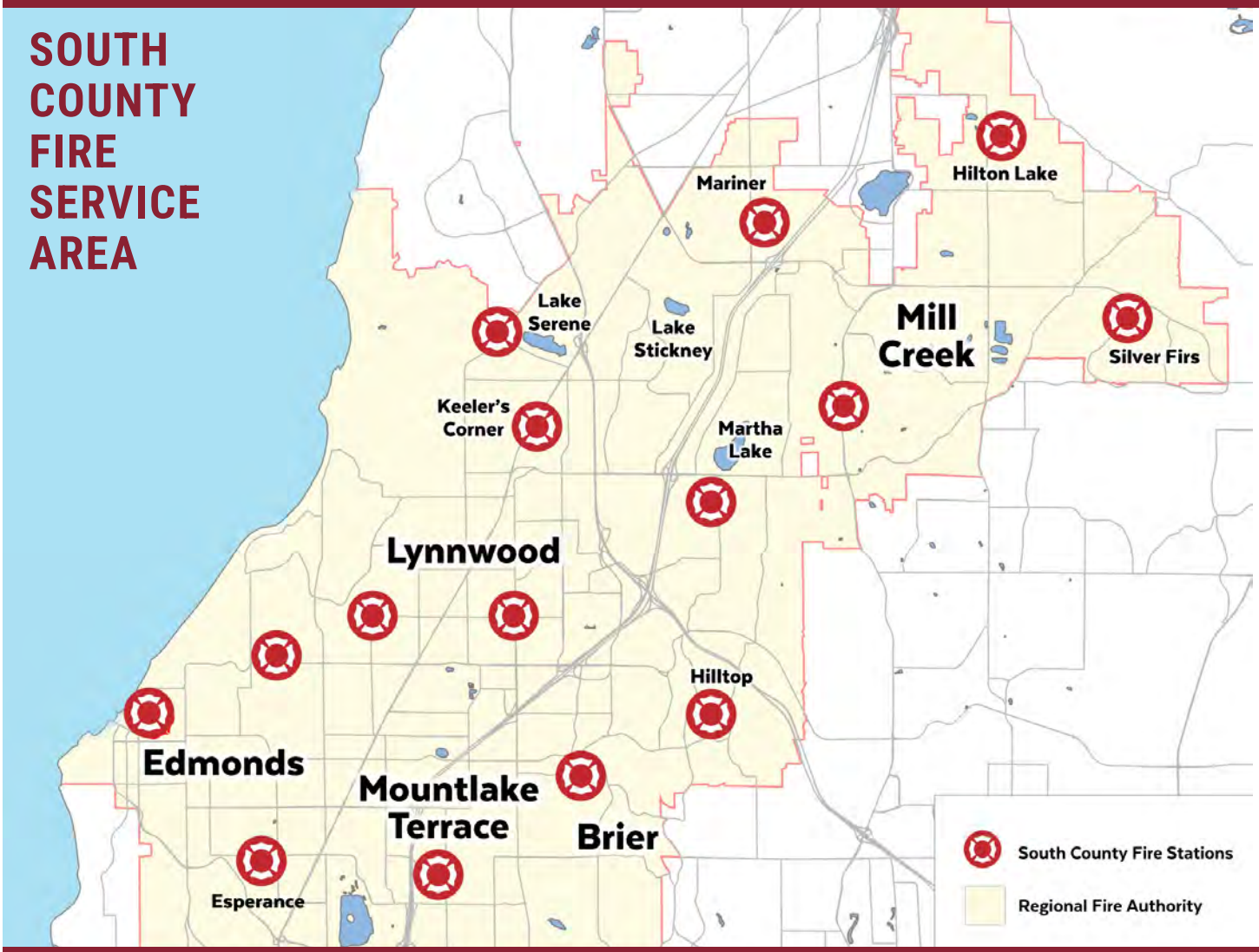
A strategic opportunity to lead the people systems, workforce strategy, and employee relations functions that support a high-performing public safety organization.

ABOUT SOUTH COUNTY FIRE

South County Fire is a regional fire authority established in 2017 by voters in unincorporated southwest Snohomish County and the City of Lynnwood. Since then, Mill Creek, Brier, Mountlake Terrace, and Edmonds have approved annexation into the regional fire authority. Today, South County Fire serves nearly 300,000 residents across 57 square miles of southwest Snohomish County and is the largest provider of fire and emergency medical services in Snohomish County and one of the largest in Washington State.



SOUTH COUNTY FIRE AT A GLANCE -

5 cities + unincorporated southwest Snohomish County

Communities served: Lynnwood, Mill Creek, Brier, Mountlake Terrace and Edmonds

84% - of 911 calls are EMS

39,019 - Emergency calls dispatched in 2025

355+ - Uniformed firefighters

15 - Neighborhood fire stations staffed 24/7

57-square-mile service area

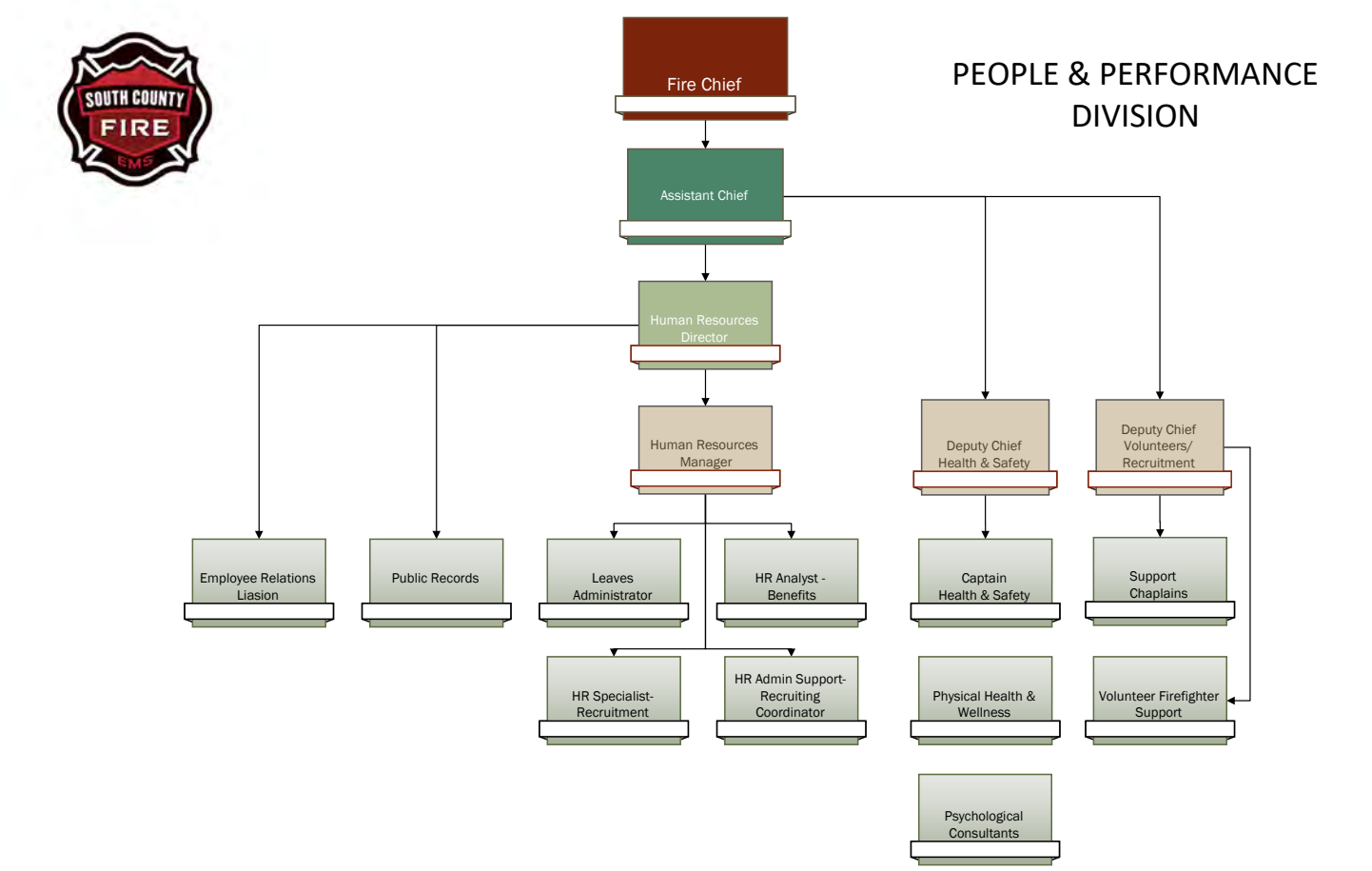
Nearly 300,000 residents served

South County Fire provides prompt, professional, and compassionate emergency response through 15 neighborhood fire stations staffed around the clock. The organization employs more than 355 uniformed firefighters and was dispatched to 39,019 emergency calls in 2025. Approximately 84 percent of 911 calls are for emergency medical services, and all firefighters are certified as either emergency medical technicians or paramedics. Beyond fire suppression and EMS, the organization provides fire prevention, hazardous materials response, marine response, technical rescue, training, and community risk-reduction services.

South County Fire is guided by the purpose statement, “Enhance the lives of our community,” and five core values: Integrity, Humility, Compassion, Family, and Trust. The organization emphasizes teamwork, respect, diversity, inclusion, and compassionate service to the community. Its Human Resources Division supports South County Fire’s greatest asset—its people—by helping attract and retain outstanding fire service professionals, supporting a respectful workplace, providing confidential assistance to employees and their families, ensuring compliance with employment laws and policies, and promoting employee safety and well-being.

South County Fire is governed by a board of seven elected commissioners: five commissioners elected from districts of roughly equal population and two commissioners elected at-large. Commissioners are responsible for defining the agency's long-term vision and for adopting the budget and policies to be implemented by administrative staff. The adopted 2026 budget is approximately $130,000,000 for the organization.

South County Fire sworn employees are represented by IAFF Local 1828 and IAFF Local 1828S (Deputy Chief’s Union).



THE OPPORTUNITY

South County Fire is seeking an accomplished Human Resources leader to direct, coordinate, and maximize the strategic use of Human Resources across the organization. Working closely with the Assistant Chief of People & Performance, the Human Resources Director will help shape workforce strategy, labor relations, organizational culture, employee engagement, retention, regulatory compliance, and long-term organizational planning.

The Director serves as a strategic partner to the Fire Chief and Executive Leadership Team and provides expertise to the Board of Commissioners on personnel matters, human resource strategy, legal compliance, risk mitigation, and workforce trends. This role also represents the human resources function at Board meetings and may attend evening, weekend, or holiday meetings or functions as required.

The Human Resources Director will:

- Develop and implement long-range human resources strategies aligned with organizational goals.
- Serve as a trusted advisor to executive leadership on workforce, culture, and organizational effectiveness.
- Lead human resources policies, programs, and systems that support a diverse, engaged, and high-performing workforce.
- Build productive relationships with labor leaders and provide strategic guidance on labor matters and collective bargaining.
- Lead succession planning, talent development, performance management, and workforce planning strategies.
- Champion employee engagement, retention, wellness, communication, and recognition initiatives.
- Ensure compliance with employment laws, public-sector regulations, collective bargaining agreements, and Public Records Act requirements.
- Oversee employee investigations, human resources service delivery, departmental budget, reporting, and performance metrics.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

South County Fire is seeking a strategic, collaborative, and highly credible human resources professional who can operate effectively at both the executive and operational levels. The successful candidate will bring sound judgment, strong labor and employee relations expertise, a commitment to confidentiality and fairness, and the ability to translate workforce data and organizational needs into practical strategies.

Strategic Leadership

A forward-looking human resources leader who anticipates short- and long-term workforce issues, develops solutions, evaluates human resources service delivery, and advances organizational effectiveness and risk-management practices.

Labor & Employee Relations

A relationship builder with the ability to work collaboratively with multiple represented bargaining units, interpret contracts, support collective bargaining, address performance issues, ensure consistent and lawful application of policies and agreements.

Organizational Development & Culture

A leader who can strengthen succession planning, talent development, performance management, employee engagement, retention, wellness, and an inclusive and respectful workplace culture aligned with public-sector and fire service standards.

Governance, Compliance & Public Accountability

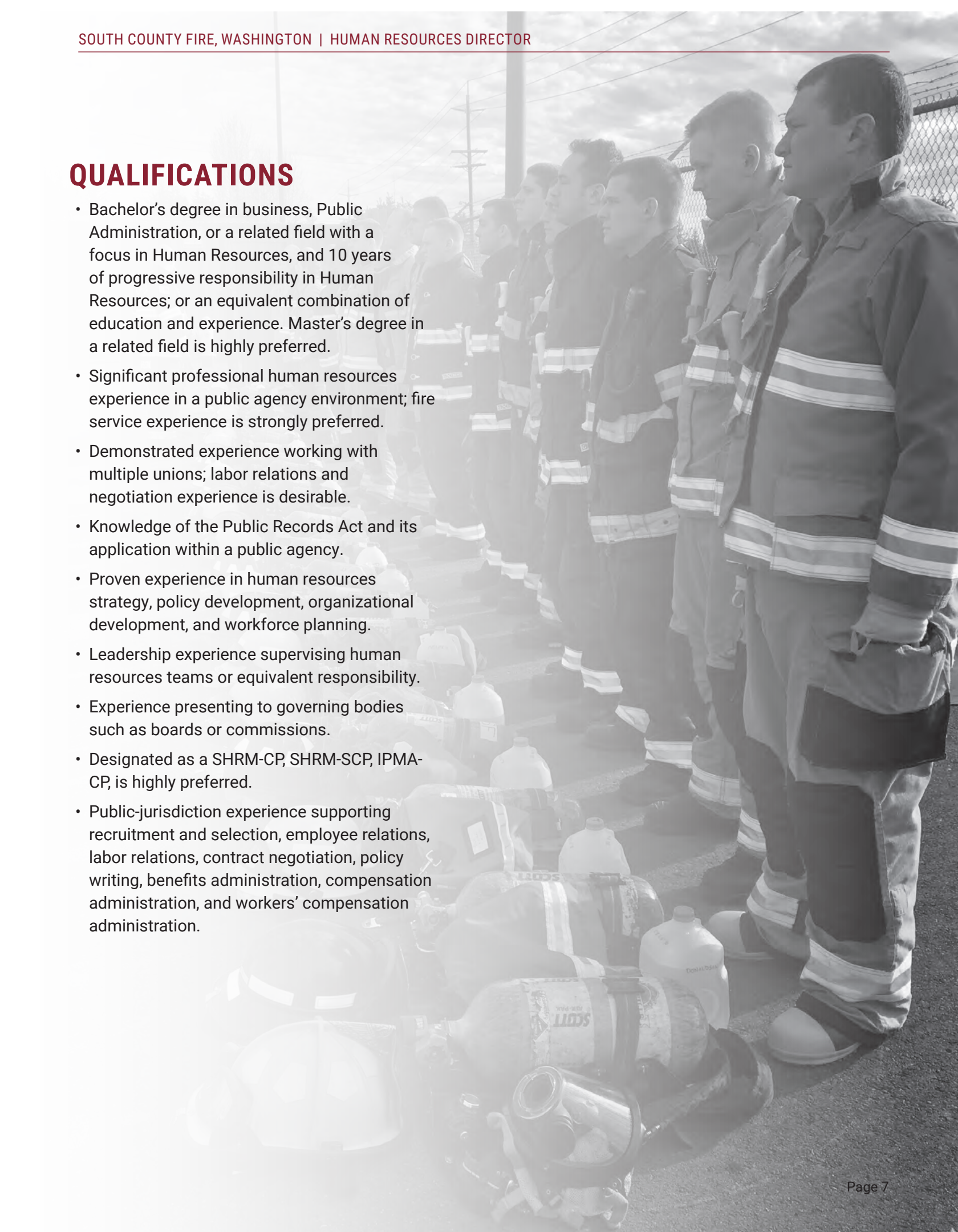
A trusted advisor who is comfortable presenting to a governing body, working with legal counsel, managing sensitive investigations and personnel matters, overseeing public records responsibilities, and maintaining high standards of transparency, legal compliance, and risk mitigation.

People Leadership & Operational Excellence

An effective team leader who coaches and develops staff, manages competing priorities, improves processes, uses workforce metrics to inform decisions, and ensures timely, high-quality human resources services throughout the organization.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's degree in business, Public Administration, or a related field with a focus in Human Resources, and 10 years of progressive responsibility in Human Resources; or an equivalent combination of education and experience. Master's degree in a related field is highly preferred.
- Significant professional human resources experience in a public agency environment; fire service experience is strongly preferred.
- Demonstrated experience working with multiple unions; labor relations and negotiation experience is desirable.
- Knowledge of the Public Records Act and its application within a public agency.
- Proven experience in human resources strategy, policy development, organizational development, and workforce planning.
- Leadership experience supervising human resources teams or equivalent responsibility.
- Experience presenting to governing bodies such as boards or commissions.
- Designated as a SHRM-CP, SHRM-SCP, IPMA-CP, is highly preferred.
- Public-jurisdiction experience supporting recruitment and selection, employee relations, labor relations, contract negotiation, policy writing, benefits administration, compensation administration, and workers' compensation administration.



COMPENSATION, BENEFITS & HOW TO APPLY

The hiring range is $190,879 – $238,998 + depending on qualifications and experience.

BENEFITS INCLUDE:

- Vacation Accrual – 8 hours per month (increases with tenure)
- Sick Leave Accrual – 8 hours per month
- 12 Paid Holidays
- Medical, Vision, and Pharmacy Coverage (All premiums paid by employer)
- Healthcare Reimbursement Account (VEBA HRA) - $2,000 for Employee or $4,000 for Employee + Dependents (Paid by employer)
- Dental Coverage (paid by employer)
- WCIF Life Insurance - $48,000 policy (Paid by employer)
- Provident Life AD&D Life Insurance - $175,000 policy (Paid by employer)
- WA State Department of Retirement Systems – PERS 2 or PERS 3
- Employee Assistance Plan (Paid by employer)
- Deferred Compensation Program - employer automatic contribution of 5.75%

HOW TO APPLY

Interested candidates should apply online by October 16, 2026. Qualified candidates may apply online at GovHRJobs.com with a resume and cover letter. For more information or questions, please feel free to contact Sarah McKee, MGT Senior Consultant at 847-380-3240 ext. 120.

South County Fire is an Equal Opportunity Employer. No applicant or employee will be discriminated against based on race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy, sexual orientation, or gender identity), national origin, age, disability, or any other protected status. South County Fire is committed to the full inclusion of all qualified individuals and will provide reasonable accommodation upon request for people with disabilities.