



City of Austin, Texas Fire Chief

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The City of Austin is located in central Texas Hill Country and has a population of more than 740,000 residents. It was chartered in 1839 as the capital of the Republic of Texas, and remained the state capital when Texas was admitted to the Union in 1846. It is the 16th largest city in the United States, and is the cultural and economic center of the Austin-Round Rock Metropolitan Area with a population of more than 1.5 million.



In 2006, Austin was selected as the #2 Best Big City in “Best Places to Live” by Money Magazine and the “Greenest City in America” by MSN. Residents of Austin are typically known as “Austinites” and their official slogan is “The Live Music Capital of the World”. Recently however, Austinites have adopted the unofficial slogan of “Keep Austin Weird”. This refers to the eclectic and progressive lifestyle of many Austin residents.

The city was founded as the Village of Waterloo in 1830, and was later renamed Austin in honor of Stephen F. Austin who is known as the Father of Texas. The Texas State Capitol was completed in 1888 and was advertised as the 7th largest building in the world at that time. Today, the building remains a significant part of the Austin skyline and is, in fact, taller than the US Capitol. Since its incorporation as a city, Austin has doubled in size every 20 years.

Austin has a humid subtropical climate, characterized by hot summers and mild winters. Though people often think of Texas as being dry, this is not the case in Austin, which is known for being green and for getting plenty of rain throughout the year. Temperatures in the summer months average 90 degrees (June until September). There are only 24 days when the minimum temperature falls below freezing. The city averages 300 days of sunshine each year and about 33.78 inches of rainfall. It rarely snows in Austin.

Politically speaking, Austin is an anomaly. While Texas as a whole is hailed as a largely conservative state, Austin has the second highest liberal voting population in the entire country for a city of its approximate size. Additionally, volunteering is extremely popular and Austin is renowned as the second-most charitable city in the nation.



Austinites are very engaged and active in local politics and are extremely vocal about their likes and dislikes. They have high expectations for their public officials and are not afraid to voice their displeasure to the top levels of city management and/or the media. They also expect deep involvement and high visibility at neighborhood meetings, school functions, parades, community events, and a variety of other engagements, no matter how large or small.

As a result of its highly educated populace and its universities (which bring in people from all over the world), Austin has developed a reputation as being a young and active cultural haven. Uniqueness is celebrated and encouraged. Partly due to the influence of The University of Texas at Austin and their school for Radio, Television, and Film, as well as an advantageous business climate and low-key celebrity culture, Austin has been the location for many motion pictures and television shows, including the current hit, “Friday Night Lights.” The city has taken advantage of this reputation and annually hosts the Austin Film Festival. The city’s nightlife and music scene are also a significant part of Austin’s culture. Many Austinites flock to the legendary Sixth Street to enjoy the nightlife and live music offerings, which are plentiful and varied on any given night of the week.

Austin has a thriving economy that is rich in technology (the city is often deemed “Silicon Hills”). The largest employers include the University of Texas, the State of Texas, SETON Healthcare Network, Dell, IBM, the city of Austin, and Freescale Semiconductor. Other high-tech companies with a presence in the city include: Apple Inc., Hewlett-Packard, Vignette, AMD, Sun Microsystems, Samsung, and Intel. Additionally, Austin is rich in small businesses and is served by a strong network of independent, locally owned firms and organizations such as the Austin Independent Business Alliance.

Austin Fire Department



The Austin Fire Department (AFD) has a rich history, dating back to the founding on September 25, 1857, by John Bremond, Sr., a prominent merchant and former New York fireman. In 1912, the fire department purchased its first motorized fire truck, ending the era of horse-drawn fire apparatus. In May 1916, the citizens of Austin voted to create an all-paid, career fire department and on June 1, 1916, 27 firemen, including Chief Clarence Woodward, ushered in a new era of firefighting in Austin, Texas.

Fast forward to the 21st century, where firefighting is but one component in a myriad of services the AFD provides. As first responders, approximately 65-70 percent of AFD's calls are for medical emergencies. Call volume is currently around 75,700. Other roles include rescues (all varying sorts and sizes), hazardous material response, arson investigations, emergency prevention, recruiting, communications, public education, and wellness. There are currently 44 fire stations strategically placed around the city—Austin is approximately 252 square miles with a population of 743,074.

The Austin Fire Department has also been selected by readers of the *Austin Chronicle* as the best city department multiple years in a row in their annual "Best of" awards. In 2007, AFD was chosen as Best Flood Rescuers by the *Chronicle's* critics, along with the Texas Parks & Wildlife Game Wardens. And, the Austin Fire Department consistently ranks as either the number one or number two city department in annual customer surveys conducted by the City of Austin.

AFD is proud to serve the community of Austin and always strives to keep the citizens' needs as its top priority..AFD's goal is to ensure they assist their fellow citizens as efficiently, effectively, and compassionately as possible.

AFD is comprised of several major sections and divisions: Operations (personnel at fire stations); Support Services; Aircraft Firefighting and Rescue; Communications; Maintenance Shops; Medical Operations; Emergency Prevention (includes prevention engineers, inspectors, and investigators); Professional Standards; Community Outreach (Recruiting and Public Education); Safety; Special Operations; and Education Services. You can learn more about each one of these sections by reviewing the Austin Fire Department's Annual Report for FY2006-2007 at <http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/fire/downloads/annual07.pdf>.

AFD is also a leader in the industry in such areas as planning and research, including fire tactics research; the LBJ High School Fire Academy; cadet education and training; wellness/fitness; safety; and arson arrests.

The Austin Fire Department has a collective bargaining agreement with the Austin Firefighters' Association/Local 975. A new agreement is negotiated every three years.

In addition to fire suppression, AFD is the city's first responder in medical emergencies, meaning firefighters arrive on the scene and begin patient assessment and stabilization, usually before the arrival of the ambulance. All firefighters are certified as Emergency Medical Technicians-B. Austin/Travis County Emergency Medical Services is a separate City department with paramedics who perform advanced life support and do patient transport.

AFD facilities currently include 43 active fire stations plus an Aircraft Firefighting/Rescue station at Austin-Bergstrom International Airport, and seven office sites. There are more than 1,000 firefighters in the department as well as approximately 60 civilians (non-civil service) employees, functioning in professional, administrative, and support roles.

Budget/Basic Facts (FY 06-07 unless otherwise noted):

Operating budget	\$116 million (FY 07-08)
Square miles served	252
Population served	743,074
Number of total incident	75,748
Number of medical emergencies	55,054
Percentage of emergency incident calls in which AFD responds in 8 minutes or less	82%
Average unit response time	4.71 minutes
Personnel	Uniformed civil service: 1,079 Civilian: 67
Fire stations	43
Airport fire and rescue station	1
Fire engines	40
Ladder trucks	10
Rescue units	3
Airport fire and rescue units	10
Quints	3
Boats	5
Brush trucks/tankers	13
Miscellaneous equipment	115
Reserves	25

Mission Statement

The "Mission Goes Beyond the Name" at the Austin Fire Department (AFD), a multi-role safety organization. Known as a leader in the fire service, AFD protects lives and property through extensive fire prevention and safety education efforts, in addition to a quick and effective response to emergencies.

Mission

The preservation of life and property is the central mission of the Austin Fire Department.

Vision

The Austin Fire Department is accountable to our community for the highest quality safety services, including emergency response, emergency prevention and community education.



Organizational Chart

The City of Austin has a council-manager form of government. The City Council includes seven Council Members, including the Mayor. Council Members are elected at-large for staggered three-year terms. The Council Members' offices are in Austin City Hall.

As Fire Chief for the City of Austin, Texas, this individual will report to the Assistant City Manager and provide overall leadership to a fire department of roughly 1100 members; a multi-faceted organization that provides all fire prevention and fire protection to the city.

Five assistant chiefs are appointed from within the department by the fire chief; the fire chief is appointed by the City Manager and approved by the City Council.

The ideal candidate will:

- Exercise strong, decisive leadership and be able to employ diplomatic relations between city management, the fire department and the Austin Association of Professional Fire Fighters.
- Have strong interpersonal skills, be an effective listener, be responsive to employee input, and provide timely feedback.
- Be active and visible in the community as both a City Official and as a resident, personally taking part in civic and community activities and events.
- Be a **dynamic and charismatic** public speaker comfortable with community groups, media, and other audiences.
- Have achieved the rank and responsibilities of Fire Chief, Assistant Chief, Deputy Chief or comparable rank (only one rank lower than Fire Chief) with at least five years experience at that position in a Department comparable in complexity and size to Austin.
- Expertise and experience in providing the most effective protection and services for citizens in a large complex metropolitan fire department comparable in complexity and size to the Austin Fire Department.
- Knowledge and experience in the latest fire service technology, fire ground and emergency medical service procedure, fire prevention, public education, and related areas of importance.
- Have an in-depth understanding of, and significant experience and exposure to, modern techniques, methods, and practices relating to fire suppression, hazardous materials, fire prevention and inspection, emergency medical services, training, communications, administration, public education, and related progressive fire service programs and services.
- Have direct experience and a thorough understanding of modern EMS/ALS delivery systems.
- Have implemented and administered a result driven Fire Department diversity plan producing quantifiable results.
- Have demonstrated an ability to implement successful succession planning and leadership development processes.
- Have experience in a metropolitan or large central city environment with a successful record of working with peers, and negotiating or administering mutual and automatic aid agreements.
- Have experience in preparing and working with multi-year financial plans and a performance-based program budget.
- Have a successful record in working with citizens, and public interest and neighborhood groups in a community of multi-racial, multi-cultural, socio-economic diversity, as well as possess strong public relations skills to enhance public understanding and support of the fire service.
- Have personal experience in addressing public inquiries, suggestions, and complaints in a positive, responsive manner.
- Have sufficient experience, self-confidence, and maturity to deal with divergent personalities diplomatically and effectively, while not being intimidated or deterred from offering professional counsel and leadership.
- Have experience personally preparing and presenting oral and written reports and presentations for a variety of audiences, including presentations before the City Council.
- Successful experience in a council-manager form of government is highly desirable.
- Be knowledgeable about fire accreditation process and procedures.



Qualifications

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Interested candidates must possess a Bachelor's degree in Fire Science or a related field, plus five (5) years experience at the executive level of deputy chief, assistant chief, or equivalent rank immediately below the Fire Chief in fire management in a large city and/or county government structure. Prefer successful completion of the National Fire Academy Executive Fire Officer Program.

Eligibility for certification by the Texas Commission on Fire Protection Personnel Standards and Education at the intermediate level or its equivalent as determined by that commission and must have served as a fully paid firefighter for at least five years.



Salary

The City of Austin is offering a competitive salary commensurate with experience, a comprehensive benefits package, and relocation assistance may be offered to the successful out-of-town candidate.

How to Apply

To learn more about this position, please forward a transmittal letter of interest and a resume to:

Arcus Public
8170 Adams Drive
Suite 200
Hummelstown, PA 17036
877.570.8040
Fax: 717.583.5103

E-mail:
AustinFireChief@arcus.net