



Rio Arriba County

JOB DESCRIPTION VACANCY

COUNTY FIRE CHIEF

DEPARTMENT:	FIRE & EMS SERVICES
PRIMARY LOCATION:	ESPANOLA / TIERRA AMARILLA
SALARY CLASSIFICATION:	M-18 PER-SCHEDULE
SALARY:	\$66,105 TO \$76,505 ANNUAL
POSITION STATUS:	FULL TIME
FLSA CLASSIFICATION:	EXEMPT
CLOSING DATE:	OPEN UNTIL FILLED
POSTING DATE:	MAY 15, 2026

The following duties ARE NOT intended to serve as a comprehensive list of all duties performed by employees in this classification; rather, they are intended to provide a summary of the major duties and responsibilities. Incumbent(s) may not be required to perform all duties listed and may be required to perform additional, position-specific duties. This is not an all-inclusive list of all responsibilities, duties, and skills required of personnel in this classification. Duties, responsibilities, and activities may change at any time with or without notice.

Primary Summary:

Under the direct supervision of the County Manager and or designee, the County Fire Chief coordinates, plans, and oversees daily operations related to fire protection, mitigation, and emergency planning and response for the County.

Duties and Responsibilities:

- Oversee, plan, coordinate, and evaluate the effectiveness of the Rio Arriba County Fire Services Department and will formulate programs, policy recommendations, and projects to alleviate deficiencies;
- Coordinates and supervises the day-to-day activities of all the support staff assigned to the Department, including volunteers;
- Will oversee grants and will assist department-assigned staff and volunteers with all fiscal management and budgetary responsibilities;
- Responsible for all Rio Arriba County Volunteer Fire Departments; coordinates with the fire departments all activities, including training; takes command and control of county fire fighters and equipment during incidents;
- Ensure the communication, implementation, and training of Rio Arriba County's Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) in coordination with the Sheriff's Department, Planning and Zoning Department, Risk Management Coordinator, and County Management and colleagues at the local, municipal, tribal, state, and federal levels;



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- Develops and approves firefighting and emergency medical training programs and provides these programs to the volunteer fire departments;
- Works with other County Supervisors and employees to implement fire prevention programs, reduce fire hazards, and promote safe work habits;
- Assists the County fire departments in preparing each department's budget for submission to the County Commission for approval. Monitors expenses, assists the RAC County Manager and the County Board of Commissioners in prioritizing and planning expenditures of the Fire Tax;
- Prepares reports and presentations to the Rio Arriba County Manager, the Board of County Commissioners, and to the public as needed;
- Assists County volunteer fire departments in preparing grant applications;
- Assists County volunteer fire departments in preparing specifications for fire apparatus and equipment, as well as oversees all purchases requested by the fire departments;
- Attends planning meetings, county commission meetings, and other participation on boards or committees as needed;
- Negotiates mutual aid agreements with other Federal, State, County, or municipal entities;
- Participates with the County Management Team in strategic planning for the County and other administrative and professional duties as assigned;
- Supervises all fire prevention activities;
- Assists the County's Planning and Zoning Department office as needed in reviewing subdivision plans to ensure County regulations relating to new developments, to ensure Fire and EMS access are adhered to;
- Works with all county offices in civil preparedness and acts as a liaison with State and Federal agencies as necessary or assigned;
- Works with County fire departments and volunteers to update bylaws, developing a code of conduct, disciplinary procedures, safety programs, and all other activities that assist, protect, and promote the volunteer fire departments;
- Periodically conducts inspections of fire department facilities, personnel, and equipment, reviews reports of activities for compliance with State Fire Marshal requirements;
- Quantifies and coordinates with the Public Works Department to document County losses during extreme weather events and natural disasters;
- Coordinates with FEMA and the NM Department of Homeland Security and Emergency Management;
- Establishes a fleet and equipment management program that ensures systematic inspections, maintenance, and repair, which keeps equipment in a state of readiness;
- Evaluates and organizes radio and phone communication systems for the fire departments in coordination and conjunction with local fire departments;



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- Prepares resolutions, ordinances, and correspondence as needed;
- Keeps abreast of legislation, developments, and advances in technology by attending technical conferences and seminars and through professional publications; conducts public relations campaigns to present changes in policies and laws to encourage fire prevention and protection practices; keeps County Management advised of changes or innovations in the fire prevention and protection field, status of programs and activities, and major problems that arise;
- Assists the County Management by representing the County at Local, State, Tribal or Federal governmental meetings, various conferences and makes public or private appearances for the purpose of negotiating or proposing solutions to mutual problems and discussing or interpreting issues involved in current problems; negotiates mutual aid agreements with other Federal, State, County and Municipal fire departments and recommends implementation to Management;
- Participate in E911 monthly meetings as directed by Management;
- Operates County-owned/leased motor vehicles;
- Oversees the issuance and compliance of county-issued burn permits
- Responds to fire and emergency calls as needed throughout the county
- May be required to conduct fire inspections to ensure compliance as needed or directed
- Completes other duties as assigned.

Minimum Qualifications:

- High School Diploma/GED, plus five (5) years' experience in emergency management, firefighting, EMS, fire prevention, and/or law enforcement with at least one (1) year of experience in a management position.
- Currently licensed or certified by the State of New Mexico as an Emergency Medical Technician, firefighter, paramedic, or sworn law enforcement officer preferred.
- Ability to develop and implement long-term plans and programs.
- Ability to exercise good judgment in analyzing situations and making decisions to interpret complex procedural material.
- Must possess knowledge of administrative and managerial accounting and budget concepts; governmental budgeting and personnel management.
- Must be familiar with and abide by county policies, rules, and regulations and standard operating procedures (SOP).
- Ability to demonstrate knowledge and skills related to learning/teaching concepts and to speak extemporaneously from notes and from prepared outlines in an easily understandable manner.
- Ability to interact with other departments within the County and other jurisdictions.
- Ability to develop and present public informational programs on emergency management topics.



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- Ability to follow oral and written instructions.
- Ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written English.
- Ability to present information to the Board of County Commissioners, other elected officials, and government representatives as necessary.
- Ability to interact effectively and professionally with other departments, co-workers, and supervisors.
- Successful completion of a thorough background investigation,
- Shall be able to maintain a valid New Mexico driver's license with a Class E endorsement or obtain one within one (1) month of hire.
- Fire Inspector
- Fire Plans Examiner
- Fire Investigator
- Fire Officer I or II
- Fire Instructor I or II
- New Mexico Emergency Medical Technician Basic (EMT-B) or Intermediate (EMT-I)

Certifications listed above, if not currently achieved, must be completed within the timeline set by the County Manager and or designee. Additional certifications may be required to be completed and received within a specified timeline.

Recommended Qualifications:

- An Associate's Degree in fire or emergency management, planning, business administration, or a related field, or at least 10 years of increasingly responsible work experience in the planning, development, oversight or administration of fire and emergency response services and/or administration of fire preparedness or response and supervisory experience within local, state, tribal or federal government; or equivalent in experience as describes above, with at least four (4) years of direct management/supervisory experience. Or an equivalent combination of education and experience.
- Any combination of education, training, and experience equal to ten (10) years, of which five (5) must be in management experience related to fire and or emergency management service provision, and at least three (3) years must be in a supervisory or managerial capacity. College education or state certifications in relevant areas may be substituted for general experience at the rate of nine (9) months for one (1) year of experience;
- Full-time paid experience as a firefighter, fire chief, fire crew chief, fire inspector, or other specialized position in fire protection and prevention.



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Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities:

- Work experience in developing long-range fire protection plans and budgetary needs, firefighting procedures for new and unusual conditions, and courses of instruction in fire prevention and fire protection practices;
- Demonstrated experience in acquiring and managing legislative funding;
- Understanding of wildland fire mitigation and best practices in the western United States;
- Ability to work with a variety of professionals in the public safety field, often under stressful circumstances;
- Good driving record, must be insurable for liability purposes;
- Comprehensive knowledge of firefighting and fire prevention theory and techniques, operation of fixed and mobile firefighting equipment, and the ability to plan and direct fire protection and prevention programs and operations;
- Knowledge of civil defense and civil preparedness principles, practices, and techniques, and ability to carry out and direct emergency procedures;
- Comprehensive knowledge and demonstrated ability to apply accepted management principles, practices, methods, and techniques in the direction and control of assigned programs, to plan for future contingencies, and to determine the best possible course of action in solving management problems and increasing efficiency and effectiveness;
- A high degree of skill in written and verbal communication and in human relations techniques to encourage, persuade, and motivate Managers, Supervisors, employees, and the general public to observe fire prevention practices, rules, and regulations;
- Verbal and written communication in the Spanish language is a plus.
- General knowledge of fire codes or standards that apply to building construction and equipment activities to evaluate compliance;
- Skill in planning, organizing, and supervising the work of a small staff in the accomplishment of desired objectives;
- Ability to act independently and conscientiously using sound judgment
- Ability to maintain confidentiality
- Ability to handle multiple tasks and meet deadlines
- Ability to communicate effectively, both orally and in writing

Physical Demands:

- Employee performs work indoors and outdoors as the situation dictates.



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- Employee may be exposed to temperature extremes depending on weather conditions and fire hazard conditions.
- Employee will be on a flexible work schedule, including evenings and weekends as training schedules demand or emergencies arise.
- Employee may occasionally be exposed to intermittent high noise levels such as sirens, engines, and loud voices.
- Employee may be exposed to vibration of the body on an intermittent basis from vehicle rides and off-road travel.
- Employee may occasionally be exposed to the following hazards: driving hazards, rescue attempts and difficult terrain, possibility of hazardous material spills, and hazards inherent in firefighting or hazards common in law enforcement activities.
- Employee may occasionally be exposed to exhaust fumes, heat, smoke, water, dust, fire retardant chemicals, and toxic fumes.
- Employee works on uneven, natural ground surfaces, asphalt, cement, stairs, ladders, and scaffolding.
 - Employee works with a select team without direct supervision, and at times may work with a large group of people.

Work Environment/Conditions:

Employees will work inside and outside in all kinds of weather. An employee may be required to be commissioned/deputized by the Elected County Sheriff. On-site inspections involve exposure to operating equipment and machinery, dust, fumes and smoke, and high noise levels. The employee will be on a 24-hour emergency call.

Part of the work involves exposure to unusual and potentially dangerous conditions.

Protective gear is required. The employee will manage disasters and/or incidents countywide. Employee will be required to travel within the County and occasionally out of State. Protective clothing/devices are used: Fire protection gear, masks, gloves, and goggles.

The above statements are intended to describe the general nature and level of work being performed and are not intended to be construed as an exhaustive list of all duties, responsibilities, and skills required for this position. Evening, holiday, and weekend work outside of normal business hours may be required, as well as travel and attendance at meetings. Must be available for planned and emergency maintenance and to provide customer support 7x24x365 for enterprise computing and software environments, and in the event of County emergencies.



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The county position requires the following professional skills and abilities as key and necessary elements of performance. Employees are required to:

- Demonstrate regular and reliable attendance
 - Work well with others and participate fully in a team-oriented environment
 - Interface with other employees and customers in a courteous and respectful manner
 - Project positive support of their department and all county organizations at all times
 - Maintain and enhance the county's commitment to customer service excellence
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Working Conditions for individual positions in this classification will vary based on each department's utilization, essential functions, and the recruitment needs at the time a vacancy is posted. All requirements are subject to possible modification to reasonably accommodate individuals with disabilities.

Conditions of Employment:

Successful completion of a thorough background investigation. Must pass a pre-employment drug screening and MVD check. Employees must comply with the safety guidelines of the county and follow the HIPAA Guidelines Manual - Policies and Procedures. Must possess and maintain a current driving course certificate from Rio Arriba County or must pass and receive a defensive driving course certificate within (30) days of the date of hire as a condition of continued employment.

**Please send an email with your Letter of Interest, Resume,
and Job Application to:**

JobApplications@rio-arriba.org

P.O. Box 127 * Tierra Amarilla, New Mexico 87575 * Phone (575) 588-7254 * Fax (575) 588-7810

Espanola Annex * 1122 Industrial Park Road * Espanola, New Mexico 87532 * Phone (505) 753-2992 * Fax (505) 753-9397
