

# Sterling Fire Department

## FIRE CHIEF

<b>Job Title:</b> Fire Chief	<b>Hours per week:</b> 40	<b>FLSA Status:</b> Exempt
<b>Reports To:</b> Board of Selectmen	<b>Department:</b> Fire	<b>Grade:</b> 11
<b>Created Date:</b> 04/2001	<b>Revised Date:</b> 09/2007	<b>Approved Date:</b>
<b>Created By:</b> Bruce Baker	<b>Revised By:</b> David Hurlbut	<b>Approved By:</b>

### Statement of Duties

Administrative, supervisory and technical work in planning, directing and managing the operations of the Fire Department, Ambulance, and Emergency Management Agency. Has full authority and responsibility for administration of the Fire Department and for the development, implementation and evaluation of services. Work is performed in concert with the principles and practices of fire and emergency service management and is affected in part by local government, state laws and regulations, and national (NFPA<sup>1</sup>) standards. All other related work as required.

### Supervision

Appointed by and responsible to the Board of Selectmen.

Works under the authority of M.G.L. Chapter 48, Section 42 of Massachusetts Strong Chief Law.

Commands emergency operations, directs Fire Department and EMS activities, and performs highly responsible duties, requiring independent judgment and initiative in the planning, organizing and delivering of Fire Department services.

Supervises services that protect life, property and the environment, including fire prevention and suppression, rescue services, emergency medical service, hazardous materials incident control, disaster response and related emergencies.

Appoints fire department members and directs their supervision, development, and training.

### Job Environment

Most work is performed under typical office conditions. Some work is performed in the field conducting inspections and performing other fire prevention tasks. Some work is performed under typical emergency conditions, consisting primarily of operations at fires, accidents, medical emergencies, and hazard emergencies. Some work is performed under poor weather conditions and during nighttime. Emergency work may involve considerable personal discomfort and danger, including exposure to fire, toxic substances and other hazards.

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<sup>1</sup> National Fire Protection Association.

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Firefighting and rescue tasks often involve extreme physical exertion such as lifting heavy objects or persons while wearing full protective clothing and SCBA. High noise levels often make communication difficult. Work is often performed in darkened conditions.

The Fire Chief is frequently required to work outside normal business hours and is regularly contacted at home by pager and phone to respond to emergency calls and investigate potentially dangerous situations.

Operates personal computers and standard office equipment.

Makes frequent contacts, requiring persuasiveness and discretion with various town departments, state and local officials, other fire departments, building and business owners, contractors, the media, insurance companies and the general public. Has regular contact with Fire Department members regarding work assignments and supervisory issues. Has regular contact with victims of emergencies by providing immediate assistance and helping them cope with the effects of the emergency. Contact is in person, by telephone, E-Mail, and by radio.

Errors in judgment, performance of duties, and use of equipment could reduce Department effectiveness, seriously endanger life and property, cause monetary loss, lead to delayed and insufficient response of required resources to emergencies, and result in direct financial and legal repercussions for the Town.

Has access to extensive confidential information, such as personnel records, criminal investigations and records, lawsuits and personal information about citizens. Also develops confidential files in relation to the provision of fire and emergency services.

## **Essential Functions**

*The essential functions or duties listed below are intended only as illustrations of the various types of work that may be performed. The omission of specific statements of duties does not exclude them from the position if the work is similar, related or a logical assignment to the position.*

Directs, supervises and coordinates municipal fire, rescue, emergency medical care, hazardous materials incident response, disaster response and related emergency services provided by the Fire Department and ensures the effective and efficient provision of emergency and non-emergency services.

Identifies needs and formulates long and short range plans to meet them.

Prepares an annual statement of Fire Department goals and objectives.

Directs activities at emergency incidents and actively participates in emergency operations as necessary. Works closely with hospitals, health care providers, nursing home administration, and ambulance services from a variety of jurisdictions.

Formulates and implements operational guidelines and policies and ensures compliance by Fire Department members.

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Oversees budget management, including budget preparation, capital planning, presentation and monitoring expenditures. Oversees the purchase of goods and services for the Department, including capital equipment and apparatus. Maintains financial records.

Responsible for personnel administration, including appointment, supervision, training and performance evaluation. Resolves personnel issues related to performance, injuries, and health and safety concerns. Determines and implements disciplinary action when necessary.

Reviews fire protection plans for major construction projects in town. Administers enforcement of the fire prevention code (527 CMR) and state building code (780 CMR) as it applies to fire department responsibilities for fire protection.

Confers frequently with other fire departments in prevention, training and emergency responses and initiates requests for mutual aid when required and provides for the response of mutual aid to local and state jurisdictions.

Initiates and conducts investigations into fire origin and cause, in conjunction with local and state fire investigation officials.

Attends Town Meetings, meetings with town departments and officials, meetings of local organizations, professional fire service meetings and seminars to exchange information and keep up with current developments.

Confers with Deputy Chiefs, Company Officers and Firefighters and Emergency Medical Technicians on department needs and reviews work of members in matters relating to the efficient discharge of functions and responsibilities.

Serves as the Town's designated 9-1-1 emergency communications coordinator and supervises emergency communications as it applies to fire and emergency medical service.

Serves as Emergency Management Director responsible for the provision and coordination of disaster services (*see separate job description*)

Serves as Right-to-Know Coordinator, Emergency Planning Commission Chairman, Municipal Coordinator, and other boards and Committees.

Performs other similar or related work as required or as the situation dictates.

### **Recommended Minimum Qualifications**

#### **Education and Experience**

Minimum of Associates Degree in Fire Science with a Bachelors degree in Fire Science or Business Management preferred. Eight years progressively responsible experience in a municipal fire department, three of which have been in a supervisory capacity as fire officer; experience in personnel supervision and organizational management; or an equivalent combination of education and experience.

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## Special Requirements

Massachusetts Motor Vehicle Operator's License (CDL preferred)  
Completion of Firefighter I and II training  
Firefighter I/II certification by Massachusetts Fire Training Council highly desirable  
Completion of Chief Fire Officer Program  
EMT-D (or higher) certification within 18 months of appointment  
First Responder and CPR certification at time of appointment  
Satisfactory completion of medical examination

## Knowledge, Ability and Skill

**Knowledge:** Thorough knowledge of the principles and practices of firefighting, rescue, emergency medical care, hazardous materials accident control and related emergency services. Thorough knowledge of fire service management and administration and of business management and personnel administration. Comprehensive knowledge of state fire laws and regulations, relevant building regulations, and fire protection standards.

Thorough knowledge of firefighter safety and survival practices, including occupational hazards and safety precautions used in the operation of apparatus and equipment. Thorough knowledge of leadership and supervisory practices as they apply to fire department operations.

**Ability:** Ability to interact in a positive and effective manner with employees, town officials and the general public. Ability to lead and supervise personnel. Ability to communicate clearly and correctly in writing and orally, and to speak on behalf of the Town in crisis situations. Ability to manage budgets and other business functions. Ability to direct large-scale emergency operations. Ability to initiate action, and to identify and evaluate needs and to develop programs that meet them. Ability to perform continuously at a high level of effectiveness independently without supervision. Ability to direct large-scale emergency operations. Ability to perform prolonged physical labor under hazardous, stressful and adverse emergency conditions. Ability to handle multiple tasks simultaneously and to judge priority based on immediate importance. Ability to identify with problems and needs of the victims of emergencies and address them in a timely and effective manner. Ability to perform mathematical calculations and to interpret the results. Ability to organize tasks in a manner that achieves maximum results. Ability to operate personal computers using the internet, word processing, spreadsheet and fire and EMS service computer programs.

**Skill:** Excellent employee relations and public relations skills. Skill in motivating and leading people. Skills in decision-making utilizing independent judgement and common sense. Organizational skills and skills in budget and business management. Demonstrated skill in firefighting, rescue, emergency medical care and other emergency procedures.

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## PHYSICAL AND MENTAL REQUIREMENTS

Minimal physical effort generally required for work performed in the office. Moderate to heavy physical effort occasionally required for prolonged periods of time required in connection with fire, rescue, emergency medical and related emergency services. Physical demands may require occasionally lifting of objects up to 80<sup>2</sup> pounds or more and dragging objects up to 125<sup>3</sup> pounds or more. Physical agility is required to access all areas of a fire or emergency scene. Incidents frequently involve a great deal of standing, walking, crouching, crawling, ladder climbing, sitting and talking or hearing. Use of the hand is required to finger, handle or feel objects, tools or controls. Use of hands and arms is required for reaching.

Also required is bending, climbing and working in lit and unlit areas. Must be able to hear normal sounds, distinguish sound as voice patterns and communicate orally. Specific vision requirements include close vision and the ability to adjust and focus.

Performance of duties and use of equipment is often conducted in hazardous conditions, and the Fire Chief must be watchful at all times for potential safety hazards to himself and other fire personnel. Must be able to work in confined areas with little or no visibility while wearing protective clothing and SCBA weighing 50 pounds or more and breathing compressed air. Must be able to work at elevated heights from ladders and structures. Must be able to remain calm under pressure.

*This job description does not constitute an employment agreement between the employer and the employee, and is subject to change by the employer, as the needs of the employer and requirements of the job change.*  
**EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY POLICY**

*The policy of the town of Sterling is to provide equal employment opportunity to all candidates for employment or appointment and administer working conditions, benefits, privileges of employment, training, advancement, upgrading, promotion, transfers and terminations of employment for all employees without regard to race, color, veteran status, religion, national origin, sex or age, physical and/or mental handicap or sexual preference.*

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<sup>2</sup> Pike Pole event of the Massachusetts Fire Fighter Physical Abilities Test.

<sup>3</sup> Rescue event of the Massachusetts Fire Fighters Physical Abilities Test.