

# DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF

MARION COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1

*Salem, Oregon*



## Why Apply?



Marion County Fire District 1 offers a rare opportunity for a driven, community-centered leader to serve as the #2 executive in a complex and evolving combination fire district. MCFD1 protects a uniquely diverse risk environment—urban, suburban, rural, rail, river, wildland, and critical infrastructure—while maintaining deep community roots and a proud tradition of service. With a supportive board, strong labor relationships, new executive leadership in training and EMS, and increasing regional collaboration with the cities of Salem and Keizer, the District is positioned for meaningful progress. This role is ideal for a Deputy Fire Chief who is hungry to lead, committed to people, and ready to help shape the future of a growing organization.



# THE COMMUNITY

Marion County Fire District No. 1 (MCFD No. 1) serves a growing community of over 60,000 located along Interstate 5 about 45 miles south of Portland, Oregon in the heart of the Willamette Valley. This region is known for its agricultural beauty, quaint small towns, distinct four seasons, and easy access to year-round outdoor recreation from the Cascade Mountains to Pacific Coast beaches.

Marion County is Oregon’s largest producing agricultural county and is home to over 2,400 farms, 95% of which are family-owned. This area is also part of Oregon wine country, a region known for its world-class wineries and vineyards offering outdoor dining and tasting experiences. Since the District’s inception, much of the once sparsely populated farmland in its service area has been divided into sprawling housing complexes and commercial development. The communities protected by the District's 8 fire stations include Brooks, Chemeketa, Clear Lake, Four Corners, Lake Labish, Macleay, Middle Grove, and Pratum.

Adjacent to the District is the city of Salem—the county seat and state capital. With a population of 180,000, Salem is the third-largest city in Oregon and home to offices for 69 state agencies. It is also one of the valley's oldest cities and known for its picturesque state capitol, historic downtown, family-friendly atmosphere, and small-town feel.

The District protects the major transportation routes of Interstate 5, Highway 22, and Highway 99E as well as densely populated residential areas that include multi-family apartments and retirement communities. The service area also includes rural residential and agricultural developments, as well as heavy commercial and industrial risk. Currently there are 15,796 structures of value within the fire district (9,639 residential, 2,542 farm, 673 commercial, and 162 apartment). The region is served primarily by two commercial airports: Portland International Airport 56 miles to the north and Eugene Airport 73 miles to the south.

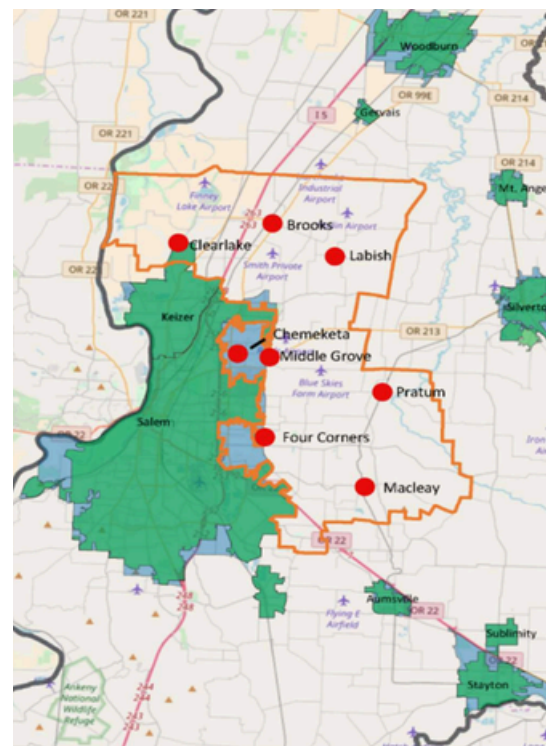


# MARION COUNTY FIRE DISTRICT NO. 1

Marion County Fire District No. 1 is a full-service fire and EMS agency serving a growing population of over 60,000 across 88 square miles with a call volume of over 11,000, including 7,700 EMS calls. MCFD No. 1 is Oregon's largest combination fire district with staffing of 78 FTEs working a 48/96 schedule and a volunteer force of 45.

Operating out of 8 stations, the District serves the communities of Four Corners, Middle Grove, Pratum, Macleay, Brooks, Clear Lake, Lake Labish, and Chemeketa. Services include fire suppression, Emergency Medical Services/Advanced Life Support ambulance transport, rescue/extrication, fire prevention/community risk reduction, public fire safety education, and community outreach. Over 85% of District calls for service are for medical emergencies. The District's EMS response includes 40 paramedics and 54 EMTs that staff the transporting ALS ambulances and fire engines.

The District began as the Four Corners Fire Department in 1939 and merged with Brooks Rural Fire District in 1968, creating the Marion County Fire District No. 1. As a Special District with full taxing authority, the organization is managed by a five-person publicly elected Board of Directors that oversees the Fire Chief and an operating budget of over \$31 million.





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# THE DEPUTY FIRE CHIEF

Reporting to the Fire Chief, the Deputy Fire Chief exercises independent judgment and applies advanced administrative and operational expertise to support the planning, organization, and direction of Fire District operations. This position assists in ensuring the efficient and effective delivery of district services and directs all District activities in the absence of the Fire Chief.

## OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES:

### **Organizational & Cultural Evolution**

The District is navigating change on multiple fronts, including executive transitions and evolving regional relationships. Past leadership gaps have created sensitivity around visibility, accountability, and follow-through. The Deputy Fire Chief must bring consistency, presence, and clarity—tightening standards, reinforcing expectations, and rebuilding trust while respecting institutional history.

### **Regional Integration & Future Growth**

MCFD1 is moving toward deeper regional collaboration, including new auto-aid with Salem and Keizer, joint training, shared SOPs, radio interoperability, EMS coordination, and standardized deployment models. While consolidation may be several years away, strategic groundwork is underway. The Deputy Fire Chief must help guide these efforts, secure levy support toward 2029, and ensure operational readiness for long-term growth.

### **Labor Relations & Personnel Management**

Strong labor relationships exist, but expectations are clear: accountability matters, discipline should be fair and timely, and leadership must not over-rely on legal counsel. The Deputy Fire Chief will play a central role in union collaboration, CBA involvement, hiring, discipline, and personnel management.



## THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

- **Community-Focused Leader** – Makes a tangible, positive difference in the lives of residents, volunteers, and career staff.
- **Operational Leader with Backbone** – Stands firm on decisions, provides a clear “why,” and holds people accountable.
- **Trusted Connector** – Builds credibility with line personnel, volunteers, union leadership, and executive peers through visibility, listening, and follow-through.
- **Buffer & Partner to the Fire Chief** – Effectively manages operations, softens friction, and tightens organizational alignment while confidently pushing back when appropriate.
- **People-Centered Coach** – Leads by example, mentors officers, supports health and wellness, and refuses to tolerate bad behavior or cultural erosion.
- **Politically & Regionally Savvy** – Navigates relationships with Salem, Keizer, and regional partners while supporting joint training, standardization, and interoperability.
- **Balanced Operator-Administrator** – Manages personnel, fleet, facilities, and HR-related matters even in the absence of support staff.
- **Change Leader** – Provides calm and steady leadership during organizational and cultural transitions, especially as an external hire.
- **Operationally Credible** – Brings career progression through the ranks, wildland experience, labor relations knowledge, and real-world command credibility.

# EDUCATION & EXPERIENCE

Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in Fire Science, Fire Management, or related field; and 10 years of progressively responsible fire service experience with at least 5 years as a command officer. Equivalent education and experience may be considered in lieu of, at the discretion of the Fire Chief.

## CERTIFICATIONS:

- NFPA or IFSAC Firefighter II
- NFPA or IFSAC Instructor I
- NFPA Fire Officer IV
- NFPA HazMat Incident Commander
- EMT Basic
- NIMS ICS-100, 200, 300, 400, 700, and 800

## PREFERRED:

- Current Oregon or National Registry Paramedic
- NFPA Instructor II, or equivalent
- Chief Fire Officer Designation/Certification
- Completion of Executive Fire Officer Program
- Master's degree from an accredited college or university in Fire Science, Fire Management, Public Administration, Business Management, or related field.

# COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

MCFD1 is offering an annual salary range of \$160,000 to \$180,000 for this position, dependent upon experience and qualifications, along with a comprehensive benefits package.

- Oregon PERS Employer Contribution
- Employer Contribution HRA VEBA
- Health, Vision, Dental Insurance
- Life Insurance and Long-Term Disability
- Flexible schedule

## TO APPLY

Apply Online: [gmphr.com](http://gmphr.com)

First Review: **July 19, 2026**

More Info: Gordie Olson, GMP Consultants  
[golson@gmphr.com](mailto:golson@gmphr.com) / (720) 518-7420



## RESOURCES

[FY 2025 Budget](#)

[Org\\_Chart](#)

[Willamette Valley](#)

