



POLICE CHIEF

City of South Pasadena, CA

Recruitment Services Provided By



The Opportunity

The City of South Pasadena offers an exceptional opportunity for a forward-thinking law enforcement leader to serve in one of Southern California's most distinctive communities. As the next Police Chief, you will guide a progressive department that blends a proud history of community policing with a reputation for innovation. With a supportive City Council, engaged residents, and a deeply rooted civic identity, the Chief will play a central role in shaping public safety strategies that honor South Pasadena's small-town character while addressing the complex realities of a dynamic metropolitan region. This is a chance to lead a talented and dedicated team, strengthen trusted community partnerships, and set the standard for modern policing in California.



About South Pasadena

The City of South Pasadena, incorporated in 1888, is a charming and historic community nestled in the West San Gabriel Valley region of Los Angeles County. Encompassing just 3.4 square miles and home to approximately 26,000 residents, South Pasadena is widely recognized for its strong sense of community, tree-lined streets, and distinctive small-town character while in the heart of a major metropolitan area.

Ideally situated along the 110 Freeway and served by the Metro L (Gold) Line, the City offers convenient access to downtown Los Angeles, Pasadena, and a host of cultural, recreational, and employment destinations throughout Southern California. The South Pasadena Station connects residents and visitors alike to a growing regional transit network, making car-free commutes increasingly viable.

South Pasadena's commercial corridors feature a vibrant mix of locally owned businesses, boutiques, and restaurants, contributing to the city's unique charm and economic vitality. Mission Street, the city's historic downtown, is a designated cultural district and a hub for community events, weekend farmers markets, and outdoor dining experiences. The city actively supports historic preservation efforts and maintains a balance between thoughtful development and the protection of its architectural heritage.

The community is also known for its top-ranked public schools operated by the South Pasadena Unified School District. The district's academic reputation attracts families from across the region, with students routinely performing among the highest in the state. In addition, South Pasadena's neighborhoods feature an array of well-maintained parks, including the Arroyo Seco natural area, and offer year-round outdoor recreation opportunities.

With a strong civic identity, active community engagement, and proximity to major economic and cultural centers, South Pasadena offers an exceptional quality of life for those seeking a welcoming, inclusive, and connected place to call home.





The City Government

South Pasadena is a General Law city operating under the Council-Manager form of government. The City Council consists of five members elected by district to serve overlapping four-year terms. Each year, the Council selects one of its members to serve as Mayor on a rotating basis. The City Council also appoints the City Manager and City Attorney. Other elected officials include the City Clerk and City Treasurer.

Despite its modest size, South Pasadena is a full-service city that provides Police, Fire, Library, Public Works, and Community Services directly to the community. The City prides itself on responsive governance, community engagement, and preserving its distinctive character while addressing modern municipal challenges. For FY 2024-2025, the City's total adopted budget across all funds is approximately \$58 million, with a General Fund budget of approximately \$34 million.

Learn more about the City of South Pasadena [here](#).

The South Pasadena Police Department

The South Pasadena Police Department dates back to 1888 and has evolved to a progressive policing agency by using the latest technology, crime prevention/reduction strategies, social media platforms and regional law enforcement partnerships to provide exceptional law enforcement service to the community.

The department is staffed with 37 sworn officers, along with 18 full-time and 6 part-time professional staff, organized into four major divisions: Field Services, Detective Bureau, Support Services, and Administration. The Chief's command staff includes a Deputy Chief and two Lieutenants. The police department provides public safety services with a FY25-26 budget of \$13.2 million.

The agency is known for enhancing its capabilities through regional partnerships, such as air operations through the Foothill Air Support Team (FAST) – a ten-city collaborative effort, and for leaning into new technologies. This is evidenced by being the first city in the nation to transition to an all-electric police fleet.

\$13.2M
Operating Budget

55 FTE
Employees



The Position

The Police Chief serves as the City's top law enforcement official and a trusted member of the executive leadership team. Reporting to the City Manager, the Chief provides vision, integrity, and strategic leadership to a department with a long history of delivering public safety through the philosophy of community policing. South Pasadena's Police Department operates under a well-established Neighborhood Oriented Policing Plan, partnering with residents and businesses to reduce crime, build trust, and improve quality of life. The Chief plays a pivotal role in shaping the Department's culture, advancing transparency and accountability, and ensuring the safety and wellbeing of all who live, work, and visit the community. Key areas of responsibility include:

- **Department Leadership & Oversight:** Direct all operations of the Police Department, including patrol, investigations, traffic enforcement, training, communications, records, and administrative functions. Set clear expectations and uphold professional standards across the organization.
- **Strategic Planning & Modern Policing Practices:** Establish policies, programs, and priorities to address current and emerging public safety needs. Promote innovation and leverage technology to improve effectiveness, responsiveness, and transparency.

- **Community Policing & Engagement:** Strengthen trust with the community through active involvement, open communication, and collaborative problem-solving. Serve as a visible leader who builds partnerships with residents, businesses, and civic organizations.
- **Organizational Effectiveness:** Recruit, develop, and mentor a diverse and high-performing team. Foster a supportive environment where employees are empowered to grow, held accountable, and recognized for their contributions.
- **Regional & Interagency Collaboration:** Work closely with state and federal agencies, regional partners, and other City departments to coordinate enforcement efforts and advance shared public safety goals.
- **Budgeting & Fiscal Responsibility:** Direct preparation and management of the Department's budget, ensuring responsible use of resources aligned with City priorities and long-term sustainability.
- **Ethics & Accountability:** Model professionalism, integrity, and political acumen. Maintain credibility with elected officials, community members, and staff while setting the tone for a culture of fairness, respect, and accountability.





The Ideal Candidate

The ideal candidate for the position of Police Chief for the City of South Pasadena will possess certain traits and experiences that will lead to success:

- Continually dissatisfied with the status quo, the ideal candidate is always looking for new ways to further professionalize the department, improve service delivery, and build the next generation of leaders.
- Fluent in 21st century policing principles and continually aware of emerging trends and issues.
- A strong leader, committed to leading by example and delivering excellent customer service.
- Willingness to invest in the mentorship and professional development of employees.
- An understanding of change management and building employee buy-in.
- Flexibility, adaptability, and a willingness to implement new ideas – even at a calculated risk.

Qualifications

A combination of education and experience that demonstrates the necessary knowledge, skills, and abilities will be considered qualifying for this position. The following is a typical way to qualify:

Education: A Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration, Business Administration, Criminal Justice Administration, or a related field from an accredited college or university. Possession of a P.O.S.T. Management Certificate is required. Graduation from P.O.S.T. Command College or the FBI National Academy and/or a Master's Degree from an accredited college or university is highly desirable.

Experience: A minimum of ten years of experience in contemporary law enforcement with progressively responsible positions in a variety of police functions including supervision and management duties.





Salary & Benefits

The City of South Pasadena provides a competitive compensation and benefits package. The salary for this role is **+/- \$235,000**, with specific placement within the range dependent on qualifications and experience. Key elements of the City's benefits program include:

Merit Pay: Up to 2% above the salary step in the pay schedule.

CalPERS Retirement: 2.0% @ 50 for Classic PERS member employees and 2.7% @ 57 for PEPRA PERS members.

Deferred Compensation: The City contributes 1% of base salary to a deferred compensation plan.

Insurance:

- **Medical, Dental, and Vision:** The City offers comprehensive medical, dental, and vision plans through CalPERS for the employee and their family. The City pays a significant portion of the premiums.
- **Long-Term Disability:** After six months of service, the City provides Long-Term Disability Insurance.
- **Term Life:** City provided term life insurance of \$50,000.
- **Accidental Death & Dismemberment**

Leave:

- **Vacation:** Accrual rate based on years of service. Credit for previous years of service may be considered.
- **Holidays:** 11 recognized holidays per year, plus two floating holidays
- **Management Leave:** 90 hours per year, with ability to cash out up to 60 hours annually
- **Sick Leave:** 96 hours per year

Application & Selection Process

Interested candidates are encouraged to apply no later than **October 27, 2025**, by submitting a cover letter and résumé online at:

www.mosaicpublic.com/careers

This recruitment will be handled with strict confidentiality. References will not be contacted until mutual interest has been established.

CONFIDENTIAL INQUIRIES ARE WELCOMED TO:

Chief Greg Nelson (ret.) | greg@mosaicpublic.com | (916) 550-4100

Chief Bryan Noblett (ret.) | bryan@mosaicpublic.com | (916) 550-4100

The City of South Pasadena is an equal opportunity employer.

