South Dakota State University

Executive Recruitment Brochure
Brookings, South Dakota

Now Hiring

Chief of University Police Department

A premier opportunity to lead a full-service university police department at South Dakota's land-grant institution.

SDState is one of six universities in the South Dakota public higher education system governed by a single Board of Regents. The Board, appointed by the Governor, provides leadership and policy direction for the system. The Chief of Police reports directly to the Assistant Vice President of Safety and Security.

11,901

FALL 2026 ENROLLMENT

47 / 69
states countries

STUDENT REACH

R1 by 2031

STRATEGIC ASPIRATION

24/7 | 365

UPD SERVICE MODEL

Nearly 30 Staff

ENFORCEMENT, EVIDENCE & DISPATCH

IACLEA
Accredited

SINCE 2017

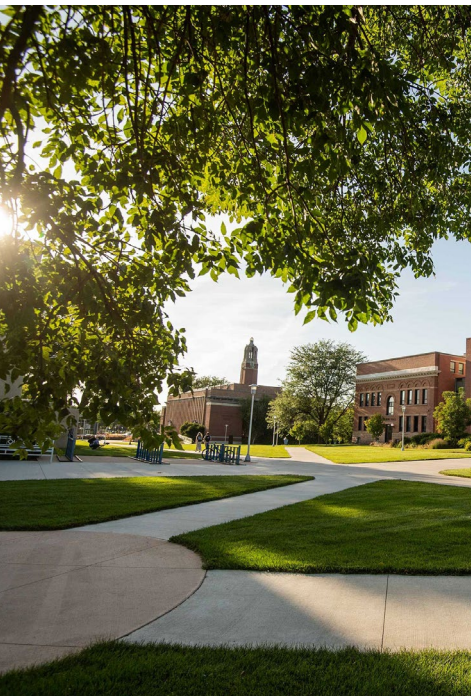
Publicly available information compiled August 2026

The University & City of Brookings

South Dakota State University is the state's largest, most comprehensive higher education institution. Established in Brookings in 1881, SDState is South Dakota's Morrill Act land grant university and a vibrant center of education, research, innovation and engagement.

SDSTATE AT A GLANCE

Academics	92 undergraduate majors, 38 specializations, 107 minors, 41 master's degree programs, 19 Ph.D. programs and two professional doctorates.
Campus	Main campus in Brookings includes 163 buildings and 400-plus acres in the central campus.
Workforce	Approximately 2,002 FTE employees and more than $94 million in annual research expenditures.



The University is committed to access to the benefits of education for all and the creation of new knowledge. SDState was established in Brookings, South Dakota in 1881, South Dakota State University today is a vibrant institution. SDState is a Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education High Research Activity institution. SDState is an NCAA Division I institution and competes in the Summit League for all sports except football (Missouri Valley Football Conference), wrestling (Pac 12), and women's equestrian (National Collegiate Equestrian Association). With exceptional alumni, community, and Foundation support for student scholarships and all aspects of university life, SDState is a major participant in Brookings, a friendly and economically healthy community of nearly 24,000. Brookings has outstanding schools, strong local economic research and development efforts, lovely parks, museums and well-attended cultural activities. The university fosters close working relationships with local school districts and offers a kindergarten on campus. Located a one hour's drive north of Sioux Falls, the state's largest city, SDState and Brookings offer an exceptionally high quality of life in an engaged, active campus community. It is also notable that the state of South Dakota has no personal income tax. Learn more about Brookings by visiting here.

Mission, Vision & Values

MISSION

South Dakota State University offers a rich academic experience through inspired, student-centered education, creative activities and research, innovation, and engagement that enhances the quality of life in South Dakota, the region, the nation and the world.

VISION

South Dakota State University will be a premier land grant university recognized for high value, innovation and bold impact.

VALUES

People-Centered:
Create a culture where all thrive and are supported on personal and professional paths toward lifelong learning, growth and opportunity.

Creativity:
Expand knowledge, develop human understanding and enrich quality of life through innovative teaching and transformative research.

Integrity:
Act with organizational and personal integrity through honesty, professionalism, transparency, accountability and respect.

Opportunity for All:
Build a supportive, collaborative and cohesive environment focused on access and opportunity for all.

Excellence:
Pursue continuous improvement, assessment and accountability; embrace bold action and adapt to a changing world.

South Dakota State University

The next Chief will be joining a university in motion

- Campus and city relationships are visible and personal
- The Chief will regularly interact with students, parents, faculty, staff, local agencies and community leaders
- The city's identity is closely tied to the university's success and public reputation

The University Police Department

South Dakota State University Police Department is a professional, full-service law enforcement agency serving the campus community around the clock.

Public Safety Role	Comprehensive policing services including crime prevention, patrol, protection of life and property, emergency response, criminal investigation, education, training, and security and special event safety planning.
Facilities	Located east of Dana J. Dykhouse Stadium with offices, interview rooms, meeting space, evideance room, and a patrol garage.
Student-Facing Services	Safety escorts, victim services, ride-alongs, presentations and student patrols.
Campus Context	More than 163 campus buildings, athletic venues, laboratories and major events.

Department Highlights

- Maintains a close working relationship with the City of Brookings, supported by a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that establishes the framework for law enforcement authority, coordination, and service within Brookings.
- Reporting structure: SDState Board of Regents, President, Vice President and General Counsel, AVP of Safety and Security, Chief of University Police.
- State-trained, certified officers holding full law enforcement authority.
- Comprehensive patrol, investigations, deterrence, emergency response and enhanced campus security including for large-scale public events.
- 24/7 Communications Center; nearly 30 staff across enforcement, evidence and dispatching.
- IACLEA accredited since 2017.
- Progressive community policing and campus engagement promoting South Dakota's premier land grant university.
- The Police Department is an integral part of the university community, working closely with students, faculty, staff, university leadership, and the broader Brookings community to strengthen trust, enhance safety, and support the university's mission.

The Position

The Chief of South Dakota State University Police is a key university leader that works in collaboration to create the conditions in which students, faculty and staff can learn, work, research and thrive. The Chief of University Police will work under the direction of the Asistant Vice President of Safety and Security and will oversee comprehensive policing services including crime prevention, patrol, protection of life and propriety, law enforcement emergency responsiveness, criminal investigations, education and training along with safety planning for special events.

There is currently an open recruitment for the Assistant Vice President of Safety and Security who provides strategic, operational, and administrative leadership for Emergency & Risk Management, Environmental Health and Safety, and the University Police Department. **Candidates may view that recruitment here.**

LEAD	DIRECT	SERVE	OVERSEE
UPD staff, its safety operations, planning, strategic direction, community engagement and administration.	Department culture, accountability and professional standards.	As an integral member of the university leadership and campus team.	Fiscal sustainability, staffing, training, policy, infrastructure and police emergency readiness.

Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership

Provides leadership and strategic direction for the University Police Department, establishing organizational priorities, aligning resources with university needs, and ensuring the department delivers effective, progressive, and community-centered public safety services.

Department Oversight

Directs the department's people, operations, resources, and finances to ensure effective delivery of comprehensive public safety services while maintaining organizational performance, accountability, compliance, and fiscal responsibility.

Partnership and Liaison

Serves as the University's senior law enforcement representative, developing and maintaining trusted relationships and coordinating public safety efforts across the University, government, criminal justice system, community, and regional public safety organizations.

Compliance and Policy

Ensures University Police operations, policies, agreements, and professional practices comply with applicable laws, regulations, University requirements, accreditation standards, and recognized public safety practices.

Risk and Incident Analysis

Provides oversight of law enforcement related organizational risk, critical incidents, internal accountability, and emergency preparedness by identifying vulnerabilities, analyzing significant events, and ensuring the department is prepared to respond effectively to high-risk situations.

Required Qualifications

- ☑ Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in political science, criminal justice, police science, behavioral science, business or public administration, or a related field.
- ☑ 10+ years of progressively responsible sworn law enforcement experience and a minimum of 5 years of supervising law enforcement and 3 years of supervising executive or lieutenant level positions.
- ☑ Demonstrated knowledge and experience in university public safety, including crime prevention, community policing, problem solving and contemporary police service delivery.
- ☑ Valid driver's license and current South Dakota Law Enforcement Certification, or ability to obtain certification within 12 months of hire.

Desired Qualifications

- ✓ Master's degree in political science, criminal justice, police science, behavioral science, business or public administration, or a related field.
- ✓ 15+ years of leadership and management experience in policing.
- ✓ Familiarity and/or experience with IACLEA accreditation and Clery Act requirements

Additional Professional Knowledge

The successful candidate should bring broad knowledge of comprehensive public safety operations, program administration, organizational management, investigations, patrol, traffic control, records, crime prevention, recent court decisions, public relations, applicable laws and regulations, government budgeting, personnel management, supervision, training and performance evaluation.

The Ideal Candidate

SDState is looking for a leader who combines professional judgment, emotional intelligence and genuine interest in students and people. University policing is at its best when the Chief understands that public safety is inseparable from the educational mission. The role is about leadership, alignment, trust, student support and helping the university move toward its strategic future. The Police Chief is accountable for working with the Assistant Vice President of Safety and Security to set the strategic direction of the department. The Chief is responsible for leading staff and operations, building critical partnerships, ensuring legal and professional compliance, and managing organizational and public safety risk.

People-Centered

Approachable, visible and comfortable interacting with students, faculty, staff and officers.

Collaborative

Experienced in relationships across campus, city, county and state agencies.

Communicative

Clear, calm and credible with diverse audiences, including students and parents.

Strategic

Able to think beyond daily incidents and execute a long-term safety strategy that ensures the University's public safety strategy evolves alongside SDState's research ambitions, facilities, enrollment, events and broader institutional footprint.

Developer of People

Mentors and supervises employees, strengthens supervisors and builds future leaders.

Student-Focused

Understands that campus policing serves the educational experience as well as safety.

THE FIRST YEAR

- Listen and learn from students, employees, campus partners, leaders and the Brookings community.
- Assess department structure, staffing, technology, policies, training and culture.
- Build trust and strengthen supervisory depth across UPD.
- Align department priorities with SDState's strategic plan, policies, and evolving campus needs.

Compensation & Benefits

Salary Range:

The salary range for the Chief of University Police is $97,264 - $145,896, commensurate with qualifications and experience. SDState offers a wide range of excellent benefits including medical, dental, vision, and flexible benefits, retirement plans, compensation packages, paid holidays, and vacation leave. SDState offers a generous retirement plan that includes 8% matching, 10 hours of annual leave each month, 9.34 hours of sick leave each month, and 11 paid holidays. Employees also have access to internal and state-sponsored training as well as reduced tuition for state-supported courses at all State of South Dakota academic institutions. Relocation benefits are available per university's guidelines.

An Opportunity to Lead

Few law enforcement executives have the opportunity to influence both the safety of a community and the development of its future leaders.

Every day, more than 12,000 students come to South Dakota State University to learn, discover, compete, build relationships and prepare for their futures. Thousands of faculty and staff come to teach, conduct research and serve the people of South Dakota. The Chief of University Police helps create the conditions that make all of that possible.

SDState seeks a leader who understands that public safety is ultimately about people - earning trust, developing relationships, participating in the community, preparing for the unexpected and creating an organization whose people are committed to something larger than themselves: community safety.

To Apply

Application Deadline

This position is open until filled, with a full consideration **November 6, 2026.**

Application Process

Applications should include a letter of interest, which specifically addresses how the candidate meets the qualifications as outlined in the advertisement, resume, and a reference page with the contact information for three professional references. References will not be contacted without prior notification to the applicant.

Additionally, applicants need to complete a supplemental EEO questionnaire required by SDState that will be provided upon receipt of the application. Resumé, letter of interest, and completed EEO questionnaire must be submitted to the search firm assisting the university, Meliora Public Safety Consulting, LLC, to Jackie@meliorapsc.com Upon receipt, the EEO questionnaire will be provided for the applicant to complete and return.

Review of materials will begin immediately and continue until the appointment is made. Please reach out the Executive Recruiter, Deanna Cantrell at 480-231-8619 with any questions.

Any offer of employment is contingent on the university's verification of credentials and other information required by law and/or university policies, including but not limited to, successful completion of a criminal background check, psychological evaluation and polygraph test, and medical examination (includes drug and alcohol testing). Per SDCL 02:05:01:01 applicants must be a US citizen and be at least 21 years of age at the time of appointment. Travel is required to complete required training, job duties and court appearances.

South Dakota State University is a tobacco free environment. It is the policy of the University to maintain a drug-free environment and to thereby establish, promote, and maintain a safe and healthy working and learning environment for employees and students. This position is subject to South Dakota State University's Drug and Alcohol Testing Policy 4:14.

Equal Opportunity

South Dakota State University promotes access to and opportunities for all to receive the benefit of and participate in education, research, and service. SDState is an equal opportunity employer who prohibits unlawful discrimination of all legally protected classes in the offering of all educational programs and employment. Arrangements for accommodations required by disabilities can be made by emailing HR@sdstate.edu. Individuals with concerns regarding discrimination should contact: Equal Opportunity Officer/Title IX Coordinator, Human Resources, Morrill Hall 100, SDSU, Brookings, SD 57007. Phone: (605) 688-4128.

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