

A NATIONAL SEARCH
is underway for a new
Police Commissioner

Buffalo, NY



POLICE COMMISSIONER



BUFFALO, NY

THE 01 OPPORTUNITY



A national search is underway to attract a highly qualified, community-focused, and reform-minded police executive to lead the Buffalo Police Department (BPD) into its next chapter.

Located along the eastern shore of Lake Erie and minutes from Niagara Falls, Buffalo is one of New York State's most dynamic and diverse urban centers. The next Police Commissioner will have the opportunity to lead a large metropolitan police agency at a pivotal moment. They will advance modernization efforts, strengthen community trust, and build on the City's substantial progress in public safety reform.

Buffalo has made notable strides in transparency, accountability, and organizational transformation. The Buffalo Police Department (BPD) continues to evolve through data-driven strategies, expanded community engagement, and a commitment to equity in policing.

The next Commissioner will be expected to sustain this momentum while guiding the Department through operational improvements, strategic planning, and workforce development.

This position requires an experienced and collaborative leader with a strong record of success in major-city or like sized agency.



THE 02. COMMUNITY

Buffalo, New York—affectionately known as “The City of Good Neighbors”—is a community defined by resilience, diversity, and a strong sense of pride.

Set on the eastern shore of Lake Erie and minutes from Niagara Falls, Buffalo serves as the cultural and economic heart of Western New York. With 277,000 residents and a metropolitan area of nearly 950,000, Buffalo’s story is one of transformation—from an industrial powerhouse to a modern, innovative, and inclusive city.

Over the past two decades, Buffalo has undergone a remarkable renaissance. Once shaped by steel, grain, and manufacturing, the city has reinvented itself through significant investments in downtown redevelopment, the Canalside waterfront, and neighborhood revitalization. Historic factories and warehouses have been repurposed into lofts, galleries, and tech hubs, demonstrating Buffalo’s ability to honor its past while embracing a forward-looking vision.

Buffalo’s people are its greatest strength. Generations of immigrants and migrants have shaped the city’s identity, creating a culturally rich and deeply interconnected community. Each neighborhood reflects a part of this story—from the German and Polish settlers of the East Side to the Irish laborers who built the Erie Canal and anchored South Buffalo.

Today, Buffalo continues to welcome new residents from across the globe. The West Side is especially known for its vibrant Latino heritage as well as more recent arrivals from Yemen, Afghanistan, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Syria, Burma (Myanmar), Bangladesh, West India, and Venezuela. These communities have made significant contributions to Buffalo's schools, businesses, and cultural vibrancy.

Buffalo's signature celebrations—Dyngus Day, the Buffalo St. Patrick's Day Parade, Juneteenth, and numerous cultural festivals—highlight the enduring influence of its diverse populations. Together, these traditions reinforce Buffalo's spirit of unity, heritage, and connection.

Architecturally, Buffalo is a showcase of American design excellence. The city features iconic works by Frank Lloyd Wright, Louis Sullivan, and Frederick Law Olmsted, whose historic park system remains one of the city's defining assets. With proximity to Lake Erie and the Niagara River, residents enjoy year-round recreation, from boating and biking to skating and skiing.

Buffalo's cultural energy can be felt in every corner of the city. Its arts scene, anchored by the Buffalo AKG Art Museum and the Burchfield Penney Art Center, blends world-class collections with a deep appreciation for regional creativity. Colorful murals, community art spaces, and public installations transform neighborhoods like Allentown and Hertel Avenue into open-air galleries, showcasing the city's commitment to expression and innovation.

Buffalo's culinary identity is just as vibrant. While beloved classics like Buffalo wings remain iconic, the city's food landscape has evolved into a celebration of global flavors shaped by generations of immigrants. Burmese curries, Polish pierogi, and Latin-inspired dishes stand proudly alongside hometown favorites such as sponge candy and charbroiled hot dogs. Meanwhile, a new wave of chefs, restaurateurs, and craft brewers continues to push boundaries, solidifying Buffalo's status as an unexpected culinary destination.

As the city grows, Buffalo remains committed to progress that benefits every community. Leaders, educators, business owners, and residents work together to ensure that revitalization is inclusive and equitable. Initiatives to expand youth opportunity, enhance public safety, and promote sustainable development reflect a shared understanding: Buffalo's future is strongest when its prosperity is broad, balanced, and accessible to all.

Short commutes, affordable living, and thriving arts and culinary scenes make Buffalo one of the most livable mid-sized cities in the nation. Buffalo's leaders, residents, and institutions share a commitment to ensuring that revitalization is inclusive and equitable. From youth investment to sustainable development and public safety, the city continues to build pathways for shared prosperity.



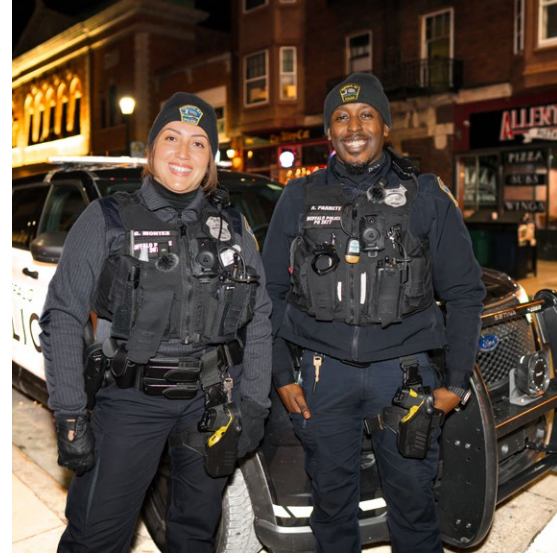


THE 03. GOVERNMENT

The City of Buffalo operates under a strong Mayor–Common Council form of government.

As the City’s Chief Executive Officer, the Mayor provides leadership, appoints department heads, prepares the annual budget, and oversees day-to-day operations. The Buffalo Common Council, composed of nine district representatives, serves as the City’s legislative body, responsible for enacting ordinances, and responding to the needs of residents across Buffalo’s diverse neighborhoods.

The Commissioner of Police is appointed by and reports to the Mayor with confirmation by the Common Council. The Commissioner serves as a key member of the Mayor’s leadership team, collaborating closely with City Hall, the council, and community partners to advance Buffalo’s public safety mission.



THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.

The Buffalo Police Department (BPD) is the 2nd largest city police department in New York State and the cornerstone of its public safety operations within the City.

The department responds to approximately 200,000 calls for service annually and operates 24 hours a day. With an annual budget of approximately \$106 million, BPD is authorized for 812 sworn personnel and 250 civilian professional staff who collectively work in the Office of the Commissioner or one of two bureaus, each led by a Deputy Commissioner who report to the Police Commissioner.

The Office of the Commissioner provides executive oversight over key investigative, accountability, and intelligence functions, including:

- Detective Division
- Internal Affairs Division
- Crisis Intervention Team
- Intelligence Unit
- Special Investigations
- Video & Social Media Community

These divisions support major investigations, professional standards, operational transparency, and strategic analysis essential to modern policing.

The Deputy Commissioner of Operations

The Deputy Commissioner of Operations oversees all uniformed and field operations, including

- Patrol Operations and District Commands
- School Resource Officers
- K-9 Units, Honor Guard, Truck Squad, Accident Investigation/Unit
- Crisis Management, SWAT and Underwater Rescue and Recovery

These assignments provide the Department's core emergency response, community presence, and daily public safety services.

The Deputy Commissioner of Administration and Communication

The Deputy Commissioner of Administration and Communications leads the support, training, and administrative functions essential to the Department's effectiveness, including:

- Officer Wellness Unit
- Property & Evidence
- Chaplain Unit
- Police Academy & Training
- Planning & Analysis
- Accreditation
- Communication / 911 Dispatch
- Administration & Finance



THE IDEAL CANDIDATE 05.

The next Commissioner of Police will be a visible, engaged, and trusted leader who guides the department through continued modernization, organizational development, and community partnership.

This individual will bring a steady command presence, strong character, and a genuine commitment to both the department and the community. Leading with integrity, fairness, and professionalism, the Commissioner will serve as a unifying force who listens openly, communicates clearly, and builds strong relationships across the city.

Buffalo is at a pivotal moment in its policing journey, balancing reform, accountability, and the realities of a unionized environment. The ideal candidate must bring skill, patience, and resolve to lead effectively in this setting—balancing strength, diplomacy, and transparency in all labor relations and operational matters.

The ideal candidate will build trust through open communication, accessibility, and genuine partnership with both officers and the community. They will recognize that public safety and community trust are shared responsibilities, requiring connection, empathy, and collaboration beyond enforcement.

The ideal candidate will focus on a strategic vision, operational excellence, and workforce stability—strengthening recruitment, retention, and training while prioritizing employee wellness and professional development. They will be an approachable accessible and accountable presence across Buffalo’s neighborhoods, fostering confidence and trust.

Above all, this leader will bring integrity, courage, and sound judgment to every decision—advancing modern, data-informed policing strategies that enhance safety, equity, and effectiveness. Through consistency and example, the next Police Commissioner will help build a safer, stronger, and more united Buffalo.



06. QUALIFYING CRITERIA

An equivalent combination of education and experience that provides the required knowledge, skills, and abilities will be considered.

A typical pathway includes at least fifteen (15) years of progressively responsible law enforcement experience in an urban environment, including a minimum of ten (10) years in field or command-level positions within a city of comparable size or a law enforcement agency with a similar number of sworn officers. A bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university—or equivalent experience deemed acceptable by the Mayor—is required.

The most competitive candidates will demonstrate a proven record of success in implementing community policing and crime reduction strategies, as well as in managing departmental budgets, staffing, and complex multi-divisional operations. A strong understanding of constitutional policing principles, civil rights law, and appropriate use of force is essential. Exceptional written, verbal, and interpersonal communication skills are also highly desirable, as is completion of advanced executive-level training such as the FBI National Academy, National Executive Institute, Police Executive Leadership Institute (PELI), and PERF's Senior Management Institute for Police (SMIP).

*Must possess or be eligible for New York State police certification and obtain such within a reasonable time period.



07. COMPENSATION & BENEFITS



The salary range for this at-will executive position is \$225,000 to \$250,000 per year. Placement within the range will be commensurate with the selected candidate's qualifications and experience. The City of Buffalo offers a comprehensive benefit package including health, dental, and vision coverage; retirement and deferred compensation plans; paid leave; and relocation assistance.



08. APPLICATION PROCEDURES



Electronic submissions will be accepted at apply@publicsectorsearch.com until December 31, 2025, and should include a compelling cover letter, a comprehensive resume, and a list of references. References will not be contacted until mutual interest has been established.

Public Sector Search & Consulting will conduct screening interviews as applications are received. Only the most qualified candidates will be invited to participate in the selection process, which is expected to begin in early January 2026. Once a selection is made, an offer will follow, contingent upon the successful completion of the City's hiring process, which includes a background investigation. It is anticipated that the selected candidate will join the City of Buffalo in late January or early February 2026 or on a mutually agreeable date.

This position will remain open until it is filled. Application review will begin immediately, and only the most highly qualified candidates will be invited to participate in the selection process.

APPLY WITH CONFIDENCE

Confidential inquiries and questions regarding this career opportunity should be directed to:

Public Sector Search & Consulting, Inc.

(916) 789-9990 (office)

www.publicsectorsearch.com

Mr. Gary Peterson, President/CEO Chief of Police (ret.)

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EQUAL OPPORTUNITY STATEMENT

The City of Buffalo is an Equal Opportunity Employer.



Raising the bar for Public Sector Search

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