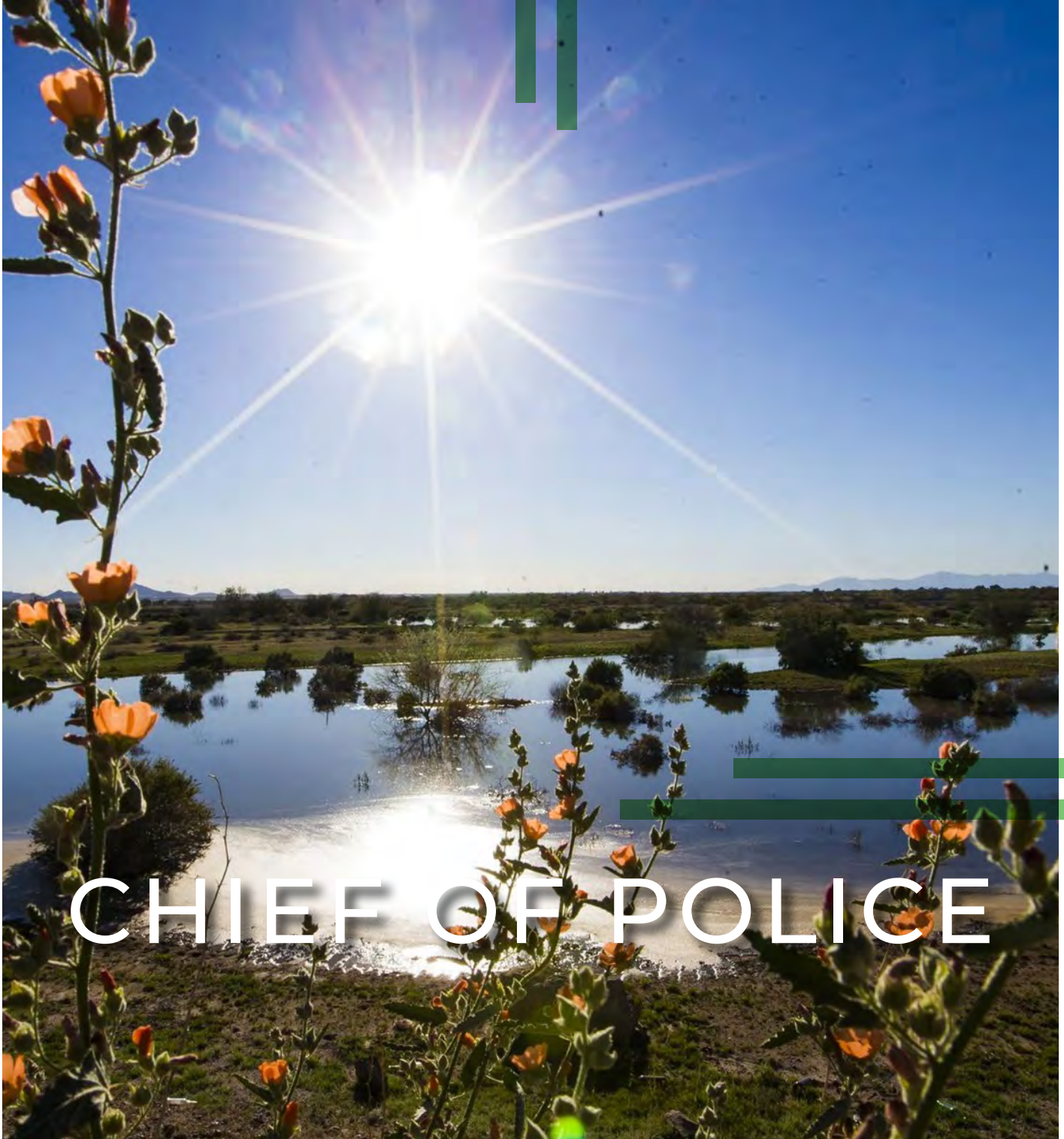


A NATIONAL SEARCH
is underway for a new Chief of Police



Gila River Indian Community
Sacaton, AZ



CHIEF OF POLICE

SACATON, AZ



THE 01. OPPORTUNITY



A national search is underway to attract an exceptionally well-qualified candidate to serve as Chief of Police for the Gila River Indian Community (The Community).

This is a rare and compelling opportunity to lead a full-service tribal law enforcement agency with broad authority, significant scale, and a deep connection to the community it serves.

The Gila River Police Department (GRPD) is a 24/7 law enforcement agency entrusted with enforcing Tribal, State, and Federal laws across one of the largest and most dynamic jurisdictions in Indian Country. The Chief of Police will serve as the department's senior executive leader, responsible for guiding a professional organization committed to integrity, respect, cultural tradition, and excellence in public safety.



02. COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT

The Gila River Indian Community is a federally recognized sovereign tribe whose Reservation was established in 1859 and formally recognized by Congress in 1939.

The Community is home to members of the Akimel O'odham (Pima) and Pee-Posh (Maricopa) tribes, whose cultural heritage, traditions, and sovereignty remain central to Community governance.

GRIC operates under its own Constitution and Bylaws and is governed by a Governor and Lieutenant Governor, elected at large, and a Tribal Council representing seven districts. The Tribal Council serves as the legislative authority, establishing policy, enacting laws, and approving budgets that guide Community operations.

The Governor serves as the chief executive officer of the Community, overseeing implementation of Tribal Council policy through professional administration. The Community provides a full range of governmental services, including public safety, courts, social services, public works, education, healthcare, and economic development.

Public safety functions operate within a complex jurisdictional framework that includes Tribal, State, and Federal authority, requiring strong leadership, legal understanding, and collaborative partnerships.



THE 03. COMMUNITY

The Gila River Indian Community (GRIC) is located in central Arizona and encompasses more than 583 square miles across Pinal and Maricopa Counties, directly adjacent to the Phoenix metropolitan area.

It shares borders with Phoenix, Chandler, Laveen, and Maricopa, positioning the Community at the intersection of sovereign tribal land and one of the nation's fastest-growing urban regions.

GRIC is among the largest tribal communities in the United States, grounded in the traditions and cultural heritage of the Akimel O'odham and Pee-Posh peoples. While maintaining its sovereignty and cultural identity, this community has built a diverse and modern economic base that supports both its citizens and the broader region.

Gaming and hospitality operations are a central component of the tribe's economy. The GRIC owns and operates Gila River Resorts & Casinos, including destination properties along the Interstate 10 corridor and near Loop 202. These facilities include hotels, conference and event space, dining, entertainment venues, and resort amenities. The Wild Horse Pass area has emerged as a regional destination, featuring resort accommodations, golf courses, and large-scale event facilities.

The GRIC also supports a range of recreational and commercial enterprises. Firebird Motorsports Park hosts major racing events and gatherings, while golf courses, parks, and community centers provide year-round recreational opportunities. Beyond tourism, investments in agriculture, retail, commercial development, and light industry are significant. Strategic development along major transportation corridors have expanded the employment base and diversified economic activity.

In addition to its enterprises, the GRIC delivers comprehensive governmental services to its members. Tribal government offices are headquartered in Sacaton and oversee public safety, healthcare, housing, education, and social services. Schools and youth programs emphasize both academic achievement and cultural preservation, reinforcing language, history, and identity across generations.

Collectively, the Gila River Indian Community stands as both a sovereign nation and a significant economic and civic presence within the southern Phoenix region. Its economic enterprises support essential services and long-term planning, while its governance structure reflects a sustained commitment to cultural continuity and community well-being.





GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY

It is the goal of the elected leadership of the Community to provide for the protection of the Community.

04. PHOENIX METROPOLITAN AREA

The Gila River Indian Community is adjacent to one of the nation's fastest-growing metropolitan areas, the greater Phoenix region.

This proximity provides convenient access to a broad spectrum of housing options, nationally recognized healthcare systems, leading educational institutions, and an extensive array of outdoor recreation, professional sports, arts, and entertainment opportunities throughout the region. The area is anchored by major interstate corridors and Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, which provides efficient access to regional, national, and international destinations.

For an executive leader, the Gila River Indian Community's location offers a compelling balance of serving within a sovereign tribal government while benefiting from the economic vitality, educational resources, healthcare access, and lifestyle amenities of a major metropolitan region. It is a setting that supports both meaningful professional impact and long-term quality of life.

THE POLICE DEPARTMENT 05.

The Gila River Police Department is a full-service, accredited, 24/7 law enforcement agency committed to protecting life, property, and the sovereignty of the Gila River Indian Community.

GRPD enforces Tribal, State, and Federal laws across seven districts that span more than 583 square miles.

The department has a total budget of \$22.6 million supporting 120 sworn officer positions and 46 professional civilian staff positions who provide a wide range of services, including:

- Proactive patrol and crime prevention
- Criminal investigations
- Community engagement and outreach
- Directed enforcement and problem-solving strategies.

In June 2024, the Gila River Indian Community opened a new 49,000-square-foot headquarters, marking a major advancement in public safety infrastructure. The facility includes a state-of-the-art dispatch center, dedicated report writing and debriefing areas, victim-sensitive interview spaces, officer wellness areas, indoor training facilities, and enhanced evidence and logistics infrastructure.

The department currently has about 20 sworn vacancies. In addition, the department operates its own Communications Center.



THE GILA RIVER INDIAN COMMUNITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

It is the Mission of the Gila River Police Department to protect life, property, and sovereignty of all members of the Gila River Indian Community by responding to calls for service with integrity, proactively looking to prevent crime, and improving the quality of the life of those we serve.

06. THE POSITION

The Chief of Police serves as the senior law enforcement executive for the Gila River Police Department and provides overall leadership, strategic direction, and administrative oversight for the organization.

The Chief is responsible for policy development, budgeting, personnel management, training, professional standards, and operational effectiveness, while ensuring policing services align with Tribal law, Community values, and best practices in modern law enforcement.

This position requires a visible, engaged leader who works closely with the Governor, Tribal Council, Community administration, the court system, and regional partners. The Chief of Police will also interface with state and federal law enforcement officials on behalf of the Community.

The Chief of Police represents the department in intergovernmental partnerships and serves as a trusted advisor on public safety matters within a complex jurisdictional environment unique to Indian Country.





CORE VALUES

INTEGRITY • RESPECT • TRADITION
• PROFESSIONALISM

Integrity – We act with honesty and accountability in all that we do.

Respect – We treat all individuals with dignity and compassion.

Tradition – We honor the cultural heritage and sovereignty of our Community.

Professionalism – We maintain the highest standards of conduct and service.

07 THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

This position offers a distinctive opportunity to lead at the intersection of tradition and innovation, serving a sovereign tribal government located within one of the fastest-growing regions of the Southwest.

The next Chief of Police will guide the future of public safety for the Gila River Indian Community by strengthening internal stability, reinforcing community trust, and cultivating productive regional partnerships.

Leadership Presence and Organizational Credibility

The successful candidate will bring visible, steady leadership that inspires confidence throughout the organization and the Community. Credibility will be earned through consistency, transparency, and follow-through. This Chief will be present with officers, accessible to Community members, and engaged with Tribal leadership. Clear expectations, timely decisions, and fair application of standards will define their leadership approach. Officers at every level will understand the Chief's vision and trust that accountability and support are applied consistently and equitably.

Culture, Morale, and Workforce Stability

Reinforcing morale and organizational stability will be an early and ongoing priority. The ideal candidate has experience guiding agencies through leadership transition. They understand that meaningful change requires both empathy and structure, acknowledging prior challenges, and supporting officer wellness while holding staff at all levels accountable for adhering to policies and procedures. This leader recognizes that sustainable progress is built through cultural repair, disciplined leadership, and consistent reinforcement of expectations.



Sovereignty, Cultural Respect, and Community Trust

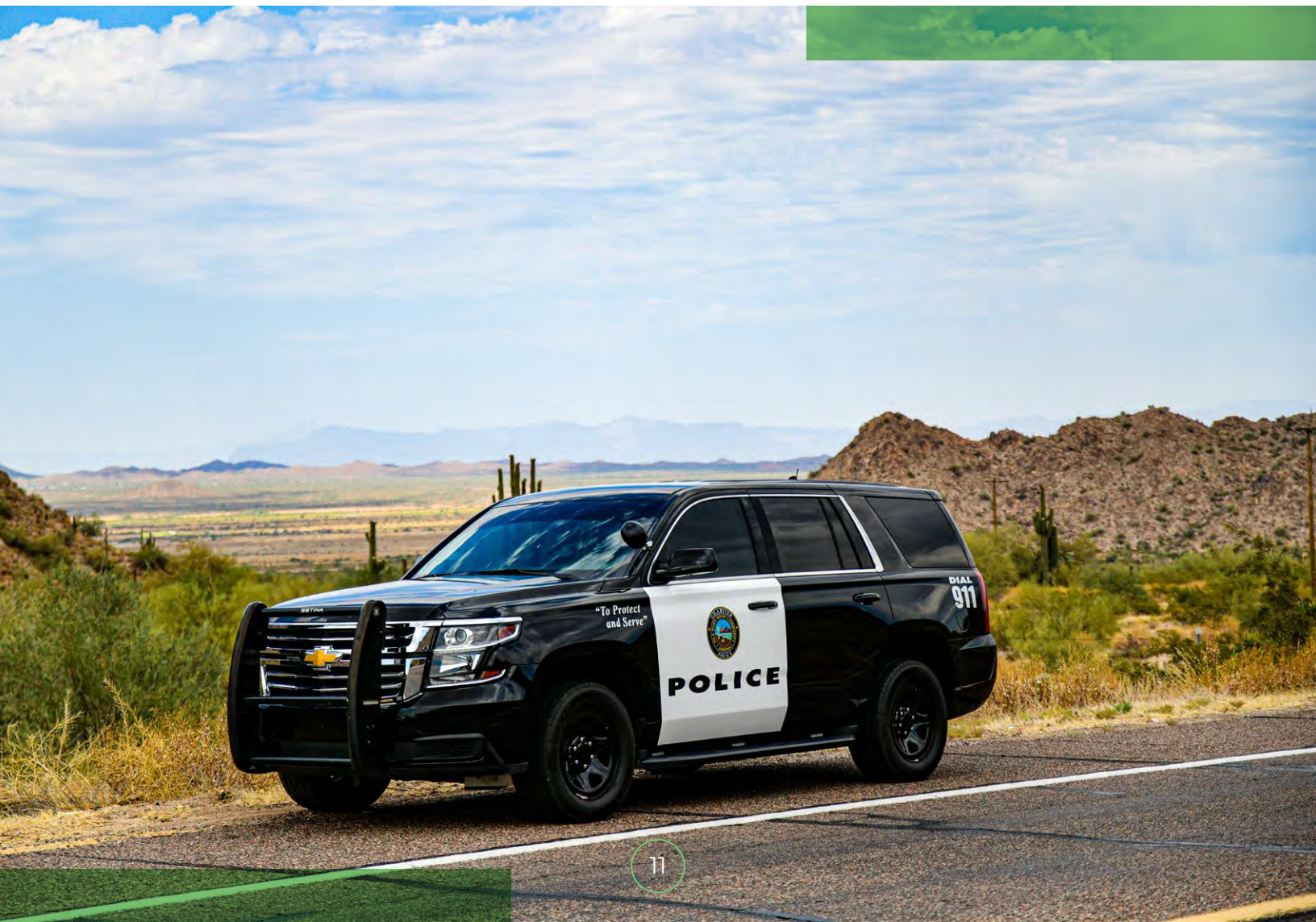
Service to the Gila River Indian Community requires a genuine respect for sovereignty, cultural identity, and self-determination. Whether Native or non-Native, the successful candidate demonstrates cultural humility, engages respectfully with elders and Community leaders, and builds trust through presence and authenticity. They embrace a guardian mindset rooted in dignity, service, and accountability, recognizing that trust in Indian Country policing is earned through sustained commitment and respectful engagement.

Operational Excellence and Strategic Leadership

The ideal candidate understands the complexities of modern law enforcement within a multifaceted jurisdictional environment and leads with a data-informed, trauma-aware perspective. They are committed to contemporary policing practices, including de-escalation, community engagement, evidence-based deployment, and contemporary recruiting methods and strategies. Experience managing major incidents, navigating political environments, and performing under public scrutiny is critical.

Character, Resilience, and Long-Term Commitment

Ultimately, the successful Chief of Police will be calm under pressure, candid in difficult moments, and professionally confident without rigidity. They will bring resilience, integrity, and a sustained commitment to the Community. Success in this role will not be measured by short-term optics, but by lasting stability, strengthened trust, and the steady growth of a professional organization aligned with the values and priorities of the Gila River Indian Community.



08. QUALIFYING CRITERIA

Education: Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in Police Administration, Police Science, Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, Public Administration, or a closely related field and eight (8) years' experience in law enforcement with at least three (3) of those years in an executive police leadership command level at the rank of Commander or Deputy Chief.

Master's degree from an accredited college or university in Police Administration, Police Science, Law Enforcement, Criminal Justice, Public Administration, or closely related field is preferred.

Tribal Law Enforcement experience is preferred.

Additional Requirements

- Arizona Peace Officer Standards and Training (AZPOST) certification is required at the time of hire or must be obtained within one year of hire.
- You must possess a State of Arizona Driver's license.
- Clear Federal Regulated Adjudication background.



09. COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

The salary range for the Chief of Police is up to \$252,821 annually, and placement will be based on qualifications and professional achievements. In addition, the position offers an excellent array of benefits. Benefit information can be viewed on the GRIC website.

10. APPLICATION PROCEDURES



APPLY TODAY!

This is a confidential process. Candidates are strongly encouraged to apply early for optimal consideration by April 10, 2026. Electronic submittals should include a compelling cover letter, a comprehensive resume, and a list of five (5) references submitted to apply@publicsectorsearch.com.

Only a select group of candidates will be invited to participate in the selection process. After the selection process, an offer contingent on a detailed background investigation will follow. Ideally, the police chief will be appointed in June 2026 or on a mutually agreed-upon date.

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

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

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