

POLICE CHIEF

City of Bartow, Florida

Annual Salary:
$130,000 – $180,000 DOE/DOQ

City of Bartow
Polk County's Capital City

Are you an experienced, forward-thinking law enforcement leader who can guide a growing, accredited Police Department that is committed to community policing? If so, apply to be the City of Bartow's next Chief of Police.

We're looking for a Police Chief who is:

- A visionary and decisive leader who is service-oriented and passionate about directing the City's law enforcement operations
- A principled leader, exhibiting the highest integrity, moral character, and accountability
- Approachable and accessible, seeking to serve and connect with all segments of Bartow's diverse community
- Committed to professional development, accountability, and service excellence

Polk County's Capital City – read on to learn more about this exciting opportunity!

Executive Recruitment Provided by SGR

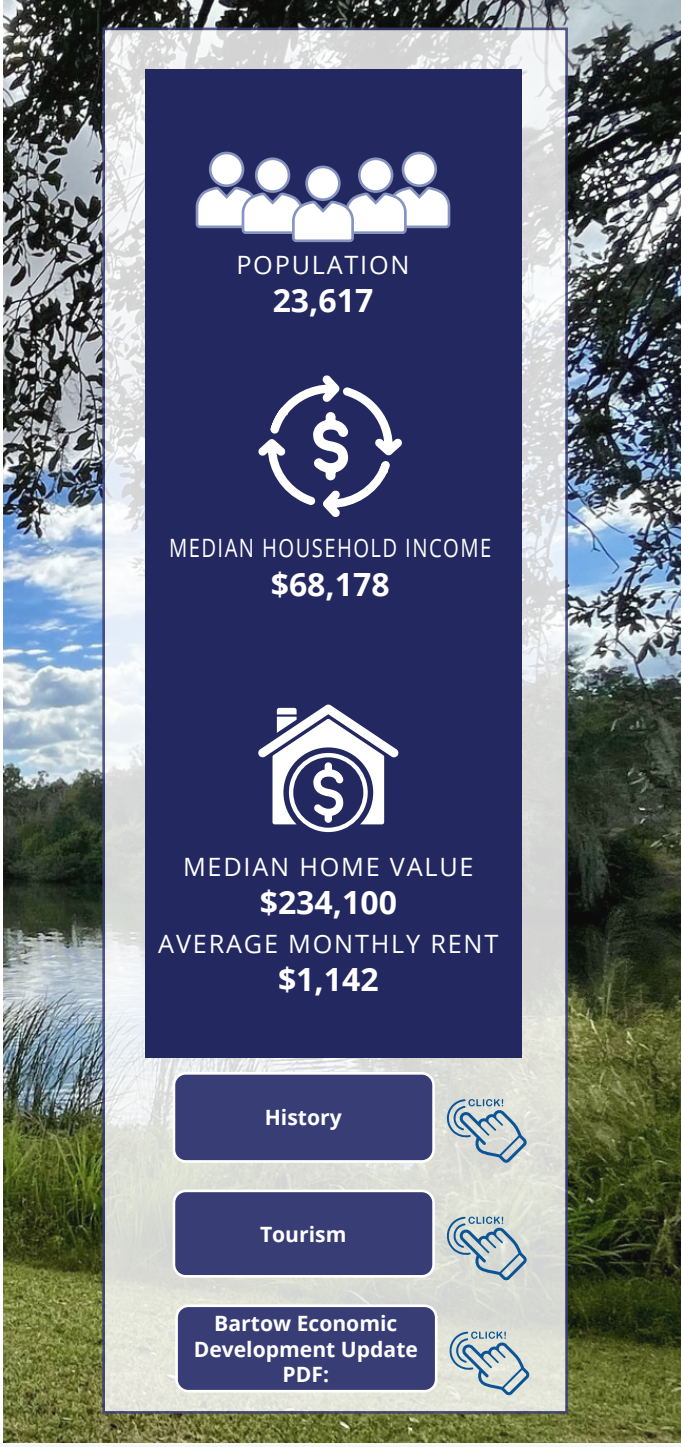
ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

Bartow is a city of roughly 23,600 residents and serves as the county seat of Polk County. Known as the "City of Oaks and Azaleas," Bartow combines the charm of a historic town with the resources of a regional government hub. The City is home to numerous county, state, and federal offices, including the Florida Department of Transportation's District One headquarters.

Located at the crossroads of US-98, State Route 60, and US-17, Bartow is less than an hour from both Tampa and Orlando International Airports and the Port of Tampa. Within a short drive are some of the world's top attractions, including Disney World, Legoland, and Busch Gardens.

Bartow residents enjoy a variety of cultural and recreational opportunities, from annual arts and craft festivals to historic downtown events, a local craft brewery, and the Florida Historic Golf Trail. Outdoor enthusiasts can explore the Mosaic Peace River Park, Circle B Bar Reserve, and over 550 freshwater lakes across Polk County. The Fort Fraser Trail provides more than seven miles of paved pathway linking Bartow to Lakeland.

Bartow's schools are consistently recognized among the best in the region. Bartow High School hosts a nationally ranked International Baccalaureate program, and Summerlin Academy offers a rigorous military-style curriculum. Opportunities for higher education are also close by, including Florida Polytechnic University and Polk State College.



GOVERNANCE & ORGANIZATION

The City operates under a Council-Manager form of government, with a five-member elected City Commission serving as the legislative and policymaking body. Two of the City Commissioners are elected at-large, with the remaining three elected by district. There are no term limits on the tenure of the governing body. The City Commission appoints the City Attorney and City Manager as Charter Officers. Day-to-day operations of the City are the responsibility of the City Manager. The City Clerk, the Chiefs of Police and Fire, and the Directors of Communications, Parks, Recreation & Cultural Arts, Community Affairs & Special Projects and the Community Redevelopment Agency report directly to the City Manager, as do the Assistant City Manager over Infrastructure, the Assistant City Manager over Community Development and Community Services and Deputy City Manager. The remaining Department Heads report to one of the two Assistant or the Deputy City Managers.

The City provides a wide array of local government services including police, fire, utilities, solid waste, roads and drainage, building permitting and inspections, planning, parks and recreation, library, cemetery, and multiple support functions. Bartow employs roughly 352 full-time and 50 part-time and seasonal employees and operates with an overall FY 2027 Annual Budget of approximately $131 million (General Fund $38 million), supported in part by an ad valorem property tax of 6.1080 mills.

THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The Bartow Police Department is committed to proactive, community-oriented policing built on respect, integrity, service, and excellence. With 48 sworn and 28 civilian positions, the Department provides patrol, investigations, traffic enforcement, K-9, and community outreach programs. The Department is accredited through the Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA), and the Bartow Police/Fire Communications Center is accredited by the Florida Telecommunications Accreditation Commission.

Department Mission Statement:

In partnership with our community, our mission is to maintain order, prevent and investigate crime, and improve the quality of life of the citizens we serve.

Department Vision Statement:

To build a safer Bartow through strong community partnerships, open communication, and proactive policing – creating a city where trust, respect, and collaboration between officers and residents are the foundation of public safety.

VALUES

As a Department, we RISE:

- **Respect** – Everyone at the Bartow Police Department shares in the recognition that all people are to be treated with respect and dignity.
- **Integrity** – Each member has a solemn commitment to maintain the highest levels of personal and organizational integrity.
- **Service** – We will dedicate ourselves to improve the quality of life in our community by providing a safe environment for all. We are committed to protecting life and property, reducing fear, and developing a partnership with citizens to prevent and solve crime.
- **Commitment to Excellence** – We strive for excellence in all aspects of our mission.

DEPARTMENT STRUCTURE

Divisions

- Uniformed Patrol & K9 Units
- Criminal Investigation Section
- Crime Scene/Evidence
- Telecommunications
- Records Section
- Recruiting/Job Opportunities
- Community Services Team
- Accreditation

NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

76 Full time

48 Sworn (represented by the Fraternal Order of Police)

28 Civilian

DEPARTMENT BUDGET

$12.8 Million

KEY PROJECTS AND INITIATIVES

- **New Impact Unit to address quality-of-life, traffic, and narcotics issues**
- **New Drone Response Unit**
- **Upgrades to body-worn camera and patrol unit video systems**
- **Red Light Camera Program**
- **Commitment to Community Policing**



ABOUT THE POSITION

Appointed by and reporting directly to the City Manager, the Police Chief plays a critical role in sustaining Bartow's commitment to public safety while fostering strong relationships with the community and partner agencies. The position is responsible for the overall administrative direction of the Police Department's functions, operations, and personnel through supervision of subordinate staff and review of their activities.

Responsibilities include formulating policies and regulations governing activities and preparing or directing the preparation of proposals concerning department activities for consideration by the City Manager; selection, training, assignment, and discipline of all Departmental personnel; directing the preparation of annual budget estimates and controlling expenditures; developing short- and long-range plans and objectives to improve Department services; directing the development of in-service training programs to increase department efficiency and prepare employees for advancement; resolving citizen complaints; and coordinating department activities with those of other City Departments and law enforcement agencies.

The Police Chief serves as the primary City authority on matters pertaining to department programs and law enforcement, and speaks before public groups on the plans, programs, and goals of the Police Department.

FULL JOB DESCRIPTION



IDEAL CANDIDATE

The City of Bartow is seeking a committed, decisive leader as its Police Chief who is service-oriented and passionate about directing the City's law enforcement operations, actively working to ensure the community's trust and confidence in the integrity and effectiveness of the Police Department. The ideal candidate will lead the Department through transparency with a commitment to advancing the principles of contemporary community policing through Best Management Practices and data-driven deployment of personnel and resources. The next Chief should be an engaging and approachable leader who sets a positive tone for the organization by fostering an organizational culture of accountability, confidence, trust, and honesty. The successful candidate must be a principled leader, exhibiting the highest integrity and moral character. The Chief should be approachable and accessible and will actively seek to serve and connect with all segments of Bartow's diverse community and become part of Bartow's social fabric.

The ideal Chief should be willing to actively seek and listen to input at all organizational levels and make opportunities to solicit both formal and informal feedback. A candidate with a demonstrated track record of building and maintaining effective working relationships with local and state law enforcement agencies is strongly desired. The City is seeking candidates who have developed a strong and wide network of peer professionals and are active in state and national law enforcement organizations. Experience working with accredited agencies, coupled with a contemporary collective bargaining background, is considered a plus.

The Chief of Police will be a visionary who can communicate and help establish the strategic direction of the Police Department and be a visible advocate for its operations and programs to ensure personnel have a clear understanding of their roles in achieving both long-term and short-term objectives. The ideal candidate will set a positive tone for the organization and will empower the command staff and unite sworn and civilian employees with a shared sense of purpose through strong communications. A team builder who can generate engagement and enthusiasm at all levels, the successful candidate will be committed to succession planning by mentoring, developing, and recognizing future leaders within the Department.

EXPERIENCE & QUALIFICATIONS



Required:

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in law enforcement, criminal justice, criminology, public administration, or a related field
- Ten (10) years' experience of a wide and progressively responsible nature in law enforcement, five years of which must have been at the level of Chief or Command Level position in a comparable department
- Possess or have the ability to obtain certification as a Law Enforcement Officer from the Florida Criminal Justice Standards and Training Commission, or an equivalent certification from another state with the ability to obtain certification in Florida prior to commencing employment
- An equivalent combination of relevant education and experience which provides the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and other competencies necessary for the position will be considered
- Possession, or ability to obtain, a valid Florida driver's license

Preferred:

- Master's degree from an accredited college or university with major coursework in law enforcement, criminal justice, criminology, public administration, or a related field
- Completion of advanced leadership programs (FBI National Academy, University of Louisville Southern Police Institute, Northwestern University School of Police Staff & Command, etc.)
- Experience in accredited agencies

SALARY & BENEFITS

The City of Bartow offers a competitive starting salary of $130,000 – $180,000 DOE/DOQ.

Retirement: Participation in a police pension plan with vesting following six years of completed service, plus an optional 457 deferred compensation plan.

Insurance: Medical, dental, and vision coverage, with additional options for accidental death, dismemberment, and long-term disability.

Leave: Paid annual leave, sick time, and 12 paid holidays.

Additional Benefits: Assigned take-home vehicle, professional development opportunities, and participation in the City's "Employer of Choice" program.



HOW TO APPLY

Apply Here

For more information on this position, contact:
Doug Thomas, Executive Vice President, Recruitment & Leadership Development
Strategic Government Resources
DouglasThomas@GovernmentResource.com | 863-860-9314

The City of Bartow is an Equal Opportunity Employer and values diversity in its workforce. Applicants selected as finalists for this position will be subject to a comprehensive background check. Pursuant to Florida law, all applications are a public record once submitted and available for disclosure upon receipt of a public records request.

A TRADITION OF SERVICE
BARTOW
POLICE
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