NOW HIRING

City of Elma

Chief of Police

City Information:

Elma is a welcoming town of 3,500 residents nestled in the Chehalis River Valley, midway between Washington's capital city of Olympia and the Pacific Coast. Known as the Gateway to Grays Harbor, Elma offers the best of both worlds—country living with easy access to the I-5 corridor.

For generations, Elma has been the commercial hub of East Grays Harbor County, with deep roots in the agricultural and timber industries that still contribute to the local economy. Today, Elma is one of the fastest-growing communities in Grays Harbor County, drawing families, commuters, and retirees who value its small-town charm, safe neighborhoods, and strong sense of community.

Public safety is a top priority for Elma's residents and leaders. The City has consistently invested in its Police Department and demonstrated strong community support for law enforcement. Elma citizens value their close connection with the officers who serve them, and city leadership works in partnership with the department to ensure officers have the tools and resources they need to succeed. The department now calls the newly remodeled Community Safety and Service Building home — a beautiful, modern facility where the next Chief of Police can help shape the department's future. This culture of trust and cooperation makes Elma a truly police-friendly community where the next Police Chief will be supported.

Elma offers abundant recreational opportunities. Just north of town, Schafer State Park provides 113 acres along the Satsop River for camping, swimming, and fishing for trout and salmon. To the south, the Chehalis River—Washington's second largest—offers kayaking, canoeing, and world-class fishing as it winds toward Grays Harbor Bay. Within an hour's drive, residents can enjoy the Pacific Ocean's sandy beaches, the trails of the Olympic Mountains, or the vibrant state capital of Olympia.

Elma also celebrates community spirit through its youth sports, school activities, and events like the annual Heat On The Street Custom Car and Motorcycle Show, which draws thousands of visitors each summer for a weekend of family-friendly fun.

Incorporated in 1888, Elma operates under a mayor-council form of government with an independently elected Mayor and a five-member City Council. The City maintains an annual budget of $12 million, managed by a dedicated staff of about 20 full-time employees across Finance, Police, Public Works, and Building. This lean but effective team reflects Elma's strong fiscal management and commitment to public service. The Police Department operates with an annual budget of approximately $2 million and maintains a staff of ten personnel. This includes eight commissioned officers, among them the Chief of Police, and two administrative clerks.

For the right candidate, Elma offers a unique opportunity: to lead a department in a community that not only respects and supports its police officers but also values stability, safety, and collaboration. The next Police Chief will inherit a department that is trusted by the community and positioned to grow alongside the city's bright future.

Elma is more than a place to work—it is a place to call home.

Qualifications:

Thorough knowledge of modern criminal justice and law enforcement principles, practices, and techniques of police service administration, organization, and management; of the laws, regulations, codes, and current practices affecting law enforcement; of the principles and practices that apply to patrol, traffic control, criminal investigation, and crime prevention.

Skills:

Strong leadership and management skills with a relational style. Strategic planning and management change skills. Strong understanding of community policing is desired.

Abilities:

Ability to effectively direct, coordinate and evaluate the activities of department personnel; to effectively supervise subordinates to achieve a high level of service and productivity; to reason and react calmly and quickly in emergency and life-threatening situations; to express ideas clearly and concisely orally and in writing, to groups and individuals; to establish and maintain effective working relationships with subordinates, elected officials, and the public.

Education & Experience:

High School graduation or a GED certificate and any combination of experience and education that provides the required knowledge, skills and abilities which may include:
Possession of a Bachelor's preferred from an accredited college or university in business or public administration, criminology or related field; or equivalent experience with a minimum of five years' experience in a state, county, or municipal law enforcement agency including a minimum of three years' experience at the rank of Sergeant or above., plus one of the following:

- Graduation from an accredited law enforcement academy in Washington State; or
- A passing score on the Washington State Equivalency examination; or
- Graduation from an accredited law enforcement academy in some other state (applicants in this category must pass the Washington State equivalency examination within twelve months of hire. Failure to pass this examination within the time limit could be grounds for termination.)

Candidates that have been out of active law enforcement for more than 24 months will not be considered.

Special Requirements:

Must be able to pass or prove the ability to pass a LEOFF II medical examination or a standard medical examination, as specified by the employer or the State of Washington. Must possess a valid Washington State Driver's License and have a driving record acceptable to the City's insurance carrier. Must pass a thorough background investigation, polygraph, and psychological examination.

Compensation & Benefits:

The City of Elma is offering a salary range of $125,000 to $135,000 annually for this position dependent upon experience and qualifications. Longevity is accrued at a rate equal to the bargaining unit with the most generous percentages. Employees who meet the educational requirements receive 3% for the possession of 90 credits or Associates of Arts Degree and an incentive increase of five percent (5%) in wages for the possession of a Bachelor of Arts Degree. The benefits package includes full medical, dental, and vision insurance. The city makes a monthly contribution of $50 ($600 annually) into a HRA VEBA account. All employees receive a $12,000 life insurance policy at no cost. The position receives 80 hours of Executive Leave, as well as 12 paid holidays in accordance with the official state calendar, as well as one floating holiday. Vacation time is accrued up to 360 hours per year and is accrued based on longevity. Sick leave is accrued at eight hours per month, up to 960 hours. Upon retirement, employees may cash out sick leave up to 320 hours or deposit proceeds into a deferred comp account or medical savings account. The Chief of Police is a full-time, non-union, FLSA exempt position and is a member of the Law Enforcement Officers and Fire Fighters Retirement System (LEOFF)

Application Details:

Recruitment Timeline

Position Posting: October 13, 2025

First Review of Submissions: November 17, 2025

The Application

To Apply for this position, please submit:

- A resume (three page maximum)
- A detailed cover letter (two page maximum) describing your experience, leadership style, and why you are interested in position.

Resume and cover letter must be submitted electronically to Rachelle Harwood at Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs (WASPC)
Email rharwood@waspc.org Phone 360-486-2380

Questions?

Contact Bryan Jeter, Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs
Email bjeter@waspc.org Phone 253-677-8576

Please do not contact City of Elma Employees or Elected Officials. Direct all questions about this position to Bryan Jeter.

Washington Association of
SHERIFFS &
POLICE CHIEFS