



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

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Steve McKinster Named Next Fire Chief in City of Riverside

Current Deputy Chief has spent 29 years in fire service, including 25 in Riverside

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – Deputy Fire Chief Steve McKinster, who has 29 years of experience in the fire service, including 25 with the Riverside Fire Department, has been named the city’s next Fire Chief. He starts Oct. 10.

McKinster has held the Chief Officer rank for 12 years, most recently as Deputy Chief for Administration. He will replace Chief Michael Moore, who is retiring after a decade as chief in Riverside and more than 42 years in the fire service. McKinster was chosen as the next Riverside Fire Department Chief after a national recruitment lasting three months with 37 highly qualified candidates applying for the position.

“Steve McKinster is the right combination of leadership, management expertise, and professionalism to lead RFD moving forward,” City Manager Mike Futrell said. “His commitment to Riverside, his integrity, and his understanding of this community’s needs set him apart as our department’s next chief.”

McKinster’s experience includes leadership positions in fire operations, prevention, training, and urban search and rescue, giving him a comprehensive understanding of the Riverside Fire Department. His deep knowledge of special operations, emergency medical services and disaster emergency response have helped him create strong relationships with other city departments, as well as external agencies, and the state and federal government.

“I have a clear vision for keeping us focused on our daily mission of service while also looking forward to future opportunities for growth,” McKinster said. “Every action I take is driven by a heartfelt desire to make a positive impact and ensure the safety and well-being of both our department members and the community.”

McKinster has been Deputy Fire Chief of Administration for two years, managing three divisions – Fire Prevention, Urban Search and Rescue, and Fire Investigations – and overseeing 26 employees,

eight search canines and volunteer members of California Task Force 6. He oversees administrative functions like budgeting and finance, contracts and purchasing, labor relations and more.

Before that, he spent seven years as an Urban Search and Rescue Division Chief, supervising and coordinating four full-time staff and more than 200 personnel across six agencies. He also supervised and managed 21 members of the City of Riverside Technical Rescue Team.

Previous posts include Battalion Chief, Training Captain, Captain/Paramedic, Engineer/Paramedic and Firefighter/Paramedic, starting in 1999.

McKinster earned his paramedic license from Daniel Freeman Paramedic School; his associate degree in Fire Science from Mt. San Jacinto College; and his bachelor's degree in Organization Leadership from Azuza Pacific University.