

**400.13 Chief of police and chief of fire department.**

1. The chief of the fire department and the chief of the police department shall be appointed from the chiefs' civil service eligible lists. Such lists shall be determined by original examination open to all persons applying, whether or not members of the employing city. The chief of a fire department shall have had a minimum of five years' experience in a fire department, or three years' experience in a fire department and two years of comparable experience or educational training. The chief of a police department shall have had a minimum of five years' experience in a public law enforcement agency, or three years' experience in a public law enforcement agency and two years of comparable experience or educational training. A chief of a police department or fire department shall maintain civil service rights as determined by [section 400.12](#).

2. Any person who becomes chief of police or chief of the fire department shall be allowed to transfer all rights the person may have acquired under [chapter 410](#) or [411](#), including employer contributions during the person's years of service in a city, employee contributions, and interest, to the retirement system of the city that hires the person as chief. Such person shall also transfer the number of years served as seniority toward other benefits provided by the city which hires the person. If a chief of a police or fire department is relieved of that position, the person shall be entitled to remain in the department for which the person was chief at a position commensurate with the person's civil service status, even if this means that the city must create a position for the person to fill until a regular position becomes vacant.

3. In cities under the commission plan of government the superintendent of public safety, with the approval of the city council, shall appoint the chief of the fire department and the chief of the police department. In cities under a council-manager form of government the city manager shall make the appointments with the approval of the city council, and in all other cities the appointments shall be made as provided by city ordinance or city charter.

[C24, 27, 31, 35, 39, §5699; C46, 50, 54, 58, 62, 66, 71, 73, §365.13; C75, 77, 79, 81, §400.13]  
[86 Acts, ch 1171, §1](#); [2017 Acts, ch 54, §76](#)

Referred to in [§372.4, §400.6](#)  
Code editor directive applied