



Deadline Extended – Looking For a Few More Great Candidates

— POSITION AVAILABLE —

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR – SALT LAKE VALLEY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

Apply by January 26, 2024

Located in the heart of the breathtaking Rocky Mountains, the Salt Lake Valley offers year-round recreation, stunning scenery, and a vibrant cultural scene. Known as the Crossroads of the West, the Valley has a rich pioneer history that has evolved into a modern city with every urban amenity. For those ready to find the kind of place that feels anything but ordinary, this mountain metropolis must be experienced. In Salt Lake County, you'll find yourself right where you belong.

Utah is an outdoor adventurer's dream. Bordered by the Great Salt Lake, the Oquirrh Mountains and the snow-capped Wasatch Range, you will find plenty to explore. The area is the ultimate winter destination with four first-class resort facilities in Salt Lake County (Alta, Brighton, Snowbird and Solitude) plus five additional resorts within an hour's drive in or near Park City, Provo Canyon, and Ogden.

The Salt Lake area is the kind of place where you can ski in the morning and golf in the afternoon. It is the perfect base



camp for adventure. Within just a few minutes, you can find yourself in local canyons enjoying camping, hiking, biking, fishing, rafting, or kayaking.

With over 20 national and state parks only a few hours away, Utah is truly nature's playground, with miles upon miles of diverse and spectacular terrain, including deep forests and craggy peaks, vast deserts and lunar salt flats, red-rock towers and arches, secret slot canyons, and winding rivers. Opportunities for boating, climbing, outdoor photography, and general exploring are practically endless.

As the largest natural lake west of the Mississippi River and the largest saltwater lake in the western hemisphere, the Great Salt Lake is the best-known geologic feature in the area. It has a rich history, plays an important role in the ecosystem and provides abundant recreational opportunities.

While Utah's remote mountains and deserts may hog the front of most of the state postcards, families don't necessarily need to travel far for a heaping dose of fun. The Valley boasts more than its fair share of entertainment and adventure for the kiddos, and adults are bound to love the outings, too. The Salt Lake area has numerous hands-on museums, water parks, a zoo, aquarium, and aviary. During the summer months, ski resorts offer aerial trams, alpine slides, climbing walls, and bungee trampolines.

Shopping opportunities are by no means rare. The newest shopping area in the County is the Mountain View Village in Herriman. South Town, Jordan Landing, Valley Fair, and South Jordan are all host large shopping areas. City Creek Center is a shopping and dining destination that features a fully retractable glass roof for a climate-controlled, open-air shopping experience year-round. The Center features over 100 shops and restaurants including luxury retailers, unique-to-market stores, and emerging brands.

Over the past decade, Salt Lake City has become a destination for food lovers, with award-winning restaurants, minimalist cafés, and trendy bars. The area's significant immigrant population adds spice to the dining venues. The area's thriving art scene encourages creativity for all. Take a stroll through one of 30 Salt Lake area art galleries, catch a glimpse of your favorite celebrity at

the Sundance Film Festival, lose yourself in music with the world-class Utah Symphony, choose from a dozen or so music festivals, or catch a Broadway show at the Eccles Center. The Hale Center Theater is another popular venue for live theater.

Salt Lake City is a sports city, and that means you can find venues for every game imaginable. Utah is home to the NBA's Utah Jazz, and Major League Soccer's Real Salt Lake. The Utah Warriors play in Major League Rugby, the Salt Lake Bees are the Los Angeles Angels' Triple affiliate, and the Utah Grizzlies are one of the best teams in the ECHL (a mid-level professional hockey league).

The people in the area are characteristically generally respectful and polite as well as kind, friendly, and welcoming. They care about their families, neighbors, and communities. In fact, neighbors readily help not only neighbors but also strangers. They are also supportive of law enforcement. If you have children, the public schools are excellent. Salt Lake County hosts five school districts, each with a solid 4 out of 5 stars rating from niche.com. Numerous public charter and private schools provide other options. Overall, there is probably not a better metropolitan area in the country for education.

Higher education is a priority in Utah, and Salt Lake City is home to the University of Utah and Westminster University. Other nearby notable universities in the state include Brigham Young University, Utah State University, Utah Valley University, and Weber State University. These universities lie less than two hours from the Salt Lake Valley.

Economically the region hosts a cluster of established and start-up information technology, software development, and hardware manufacturing and research firms. As a result, Utah has become known as the Silicone Slopes.

The Salt Lake International Airport is the 21st busiest airport in the U.S., serving over 26 million passengers annually with more than 300 flights departing daily to 90 nonstop destinations. It is a major Delta Airlines hub, and this past September, it was ranked as the 3rd Best Large Airport in the United States by Business Insider. Its ranking should only improve as the airport is currently undergoing a \$5.1 billion redevelopment program. Ten miles to



its south lies South Valley Regional Airport, a general aviation airport hosting business-related flying, law enforcement/fire/rescue flying services, recreational flying, flight training, and air charters.

Housing prices in the area vary from affordable to quite expensive, and you can find a nice home in the area for a reasonable price. As of October 2023, the median home sold price in Salt Lake County was \$513K.

Utah is a religious state, with 55% of the population being affiliated with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints (previously known as Mormons); however, numerous other religious communities flourish here, as well. Those who are not affiliated with a church will also enjoy Utah for its charming characteristics such as having family-focused communities, safe neighborhoods, and welcoming citizens.

With an enviable combination of an excellent job market, a strong economy, good schools, low crime, and friendly neighbors, the Salt Lake Valley really has some of the best features that families look for when choosing a good community to raise children.

HISTORY

While the first U.S. visitor to see the Salt Lake area was Jim Bridger in 1824, the first permanent settlers arrived on July 24, 1847. They were members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who sought to establish an autonomous religious community where they would be safe from persecution. In the following months and years, thousands of Mormon pioneers followed and arrived in the Salt Lake Valley.

The valley soon became a vital trading point for travelers going west. The world began arriving in Salt Lake City in 1869 with the completion of the First Transcontinental Railroad. The City became Utah's state capital on January 4, 1896, when Utah entered the union as the 45th state.

Over the succeeding decades, the area grew slowly but steadily. From 1929 to 1941, the Great Depression hammered the region, and unemployment peaked at 36%. The true recovery began with the Second World War and the influx of defense industries, as well as the demand for local mining products, particularly copper.

Growth began to increase significantly after the War. By 2002, the area was widely recognized for its winter sports, and it hosted that year's Winter Olympics. The \$1.6 billion dollar in infrastructure investment was a nice boost to the valley and surrounding environs. The Salt Lake City–Provo–Ogden, UT Combined Statistical Area now hosts a population of 2.7 million people.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Demographic statistics are not available for the VECC service area. Statistics for the entire County appear to the right.

CLIMATE

The Salt Lake Valley has four distinct seasons: a cold, snowy winter; a hot, dry summer; and a comfortable fall and spring. High temperatures in July and August average between 90° and 94°F while lows are in the high 60s. Winters, of course, are the opposite. Average high temperatures in December and January are near 39°F while the average lows hover around 25°F. The Rocky Mountains to the east and north usually block the really cold, powerful polar highs from affecting the state during the winter. Temperatures rarely fall below 0 °F, but frequently stay below freezing.

The west side of the county averages 16.5 inches of precipitation per year (including 61 inches of snow), while the east averages up to 20 inches of precipitation (with 80 to 100 inches of snow) annually. May is the wettest month, averaging 2.09 inches of precipitation. The four major ski resorts surrounding the valley

regularly average more than 500 inches per year. A major contributor to the snow fall is the Great Salt Lake and its lake effect. The average year-round humidity is 55%.

GEOGRAPHY

Salt Lake County occupies the Salt Lake Valley, as well as a portion of the Oquirrh Mountains to the west and the Wasatch Range to the east. In addition, the northwestern section of the county includes part of the Great Salt Lake. The county has a total area of 807 square miles, of which 742 square miles is land and 65 square miles is water. It is the fifth-smallest county in Utah by area, but the most populous county. Its county seat and largest city is Salt Lake City, the state capital. The average elevation is 4,200 feet above sea level.

Table 1: Salt Lake County Demographics

Distribution by Race		Distribution by Age	
White	80.7%	0 to 14	20.4%
Black	3.3%	15 to 24	14.7%
Native American	2.6%	25 to 44	30.9%
Asian	5.9%	45 to 59	16.6%
Pacific Islander	2.5%	60 to 74	12.8%
Other	5.0%	75 and Over	4.6%
Total	100%		
Hispanic Ethnicity (all races)	19.7%		
2021 Estimated Population: 1,231,912			

Educational Achievements (25 & Over) and Other Statistics	
High School or Higher	91.1%
Bachelor's Degree or Higher	38.9%
Median Age—Salt Lake County	34.2
Median Age—U.S.	38.1
Poverty Rate	7.4%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

COMMERCE

The county is relatively prosperous compared to the rest of the country. Its unemployment rate, for example, is 2.6%, compared to the U.S. average of 3.9%. Salt Lake County has seen the job market increase by 1.5% over the last year. Future job growth over the next ten years is predicted to be 41.3%, which is higher than the U.S. average at 33.5%. The county's principal employers can be found in Table II.

SALT LAKE VALLEY EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS CENTER

The Salt Lake Valley Emergency Communications Center (VECC, or the Center) is a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP). Its primary purpose is to handle emergency communications and other services for member communities, including 911 services, and police, fire and medical dispatching. It is the largest PSAP in the state of Utah.

The Center was formed in 1988 to coordinate/consolidate 911 services among the suburbs of Salt Lake City within Salt Lake County. Its goal was to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the 911 function and improve interoperability. Today, the Center serves 11 police and 8 fire agencies supporting the public safety of nearly 900,000 residents of Salt Lake County. The city of Sandy, originally a member, left VECC in October 2013 to contract with Salt Lake City for PSAP service.

The Center is physically located in West Valley City, Utah (which is adjacent to Salt Lake City's southwestern boundary). VECC currently provides services to agencies of the following jurisdictions: Alta, Bluffdale, Cottonwood Heights, Draper, Herriman, Holladay, Midvale, Murray, Riverton, South Jordan, South Salt Lake City, Taylorsville, West Jordan, West Valley, and Salt Lake County.

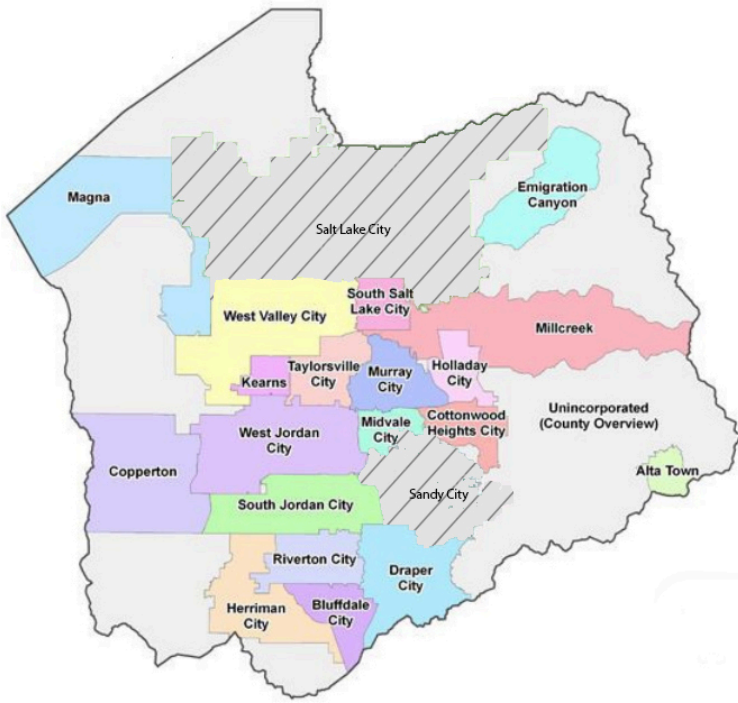


Figure 1: VECC Service Area (Diagonal Lines Indicate Non-Service Areas)

Table 2: Principal Employers, Salt Lake County, Utah

Employer	Industry	Employees
University of Utah	Higher Education	20,000+
Intermountain Healthcare	Healthcare	15,000–19,999
State of Utah	Government	15,000–19,999
Walmart Associates	Retail	10,000–14,999
Granite School District	Public Education	10,000–14,999
Zions Bancorporation	Financial	7,000–9,999
Smith's Food and Drug	Grocery	7,000–9,999
Jordan School District	Public Education	7,000–9,999
United Parcel Service (UPS)	Parcel & Delivery	5,000–6,999
Salt Lake County	Government	5,000–6,999

Source: Utah Department of Workforce Services, 2022

VECC is governed by a 17 member Board of Trustees. Each member is appointed by one of the member agencies. The actual trustees are primarily city managers, city administrators and other career officials. The Board members' votes are the weighted percentage of the member's contribution to the total Center budget for the previous fiscal year. The Board serves as the legislative body of the Center and has authority to approve budgets, contracts, policies, agency assessments, and provides oversight of the Executive Director. The Trustees are collegial, work well together, and respect and support staff as well as the Executive Director. The Operations Board provides additional support to the organization and is composed of 19 members broken into two groups (Police or Fire Chiefs) from the member agencies. It oversees and develops operational policies and procedures, and reviews services. It also works well together, and is respectful and supportive of staff.

The Executive Director oversees the day-to-day operations of VECC and is the primary face of the organization to outside agencies. The individual is appointed and removed by a weighted majority vote of the Board of Trustees.

The Center is divided into two departments: Operations (the 911 function) and Administration (in support of the operation) with a Deputy Director supervising each. Of VECC's 142 full-time and 16 part-time employees, 128 full-time and all the part-time employees work in Operations.

The Operations Department has three divisions. The Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Geographic and Information System (GIS) Division (three employees); Training and Quality Assurance Division (five employees); and the Call-Taking and Dispatch Division (the remaining 120+ employees). The latter group is organized into four platoons (each under a shift commander) which are scheduled to provide 24/7 services. The remaining employees compose the Administration Department (finance, HR, IT and facilities). None of the Center's employees are unionized.

VECC answers over 600,000 emergency calls for service each year and uses two primary performance measures. The first is to answer 90% of emergency calls within 15 seconds, and it has consistently met that measure on a monthly basis in 2023. The

second measure is to answer 95% of incoming 911 calls within 20 seconds. On a daily basis, it generally meets that goal when fully staffed. It has yet to meet that threshold for any month this year, although the percentages in the most recent three months have exceeded 94%.

VECC has a total budget of \$20,863,655. It is funded almost entirely from two sources: the 911 franchise tax (applied to all telephone service in the state of Utah), and assessments to the member agencies prorated on the amount of dispatch service they receive.

THE CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

While VECC is a well-run operation staffed by dedicated and hardworking employees, the Center has a few challenges. The next Executive Director definitely will have important issues to address.

The first and foremost issue is consistently meeting the goal of answering 95% of the emergency calls within 20 seconds. VECC has made great strides over the past few years to achieve this standard. The challenge now is to stay there. A related issue is, by focusing on the emergency calls, some of the non-emergency calls can be on hold for what seems like a long time. Although having much less direct impact, it can create a negative impression with the public. Hence, improving response time to emergency calls is important, but improving the response time to non-emergency calls cannot be neglected.

An underlying issue in improving response times is staffing. When the Center is almost fully staffed, VECC consistently answers over 95% of the emergency calls in 20 seconds or less. If more than the expected number of dispatchers are absent, however, it is extremely difficult to meet the target. Hence, it is important that unplanned absences be kept to a minimum. The solution has two parts: retaining well-qualified staff, while ensuring a positive work environment and organizational culture. Recently, VECC has increased salaries, and they are more competitive. Employees now work three 12 hour shifts one week followed by four 12 hour shifts the next. At the same time, the Center has been completely renovated and it is now a first-class

facility. Finally, efforts have been made to reduce the stress level. As a result, turnover has declined, and morale has improved.

Another issue is callers are occasionally routed to the wrong PSAP (Salt Lake City instead of VECC and vice versa). It occurs most commonly when contact is made via cell phone. By the time the dispatcher realizes the caller needs to be transferred, the caller may have provided quite a bit of information. To expedite the response, the state government enacted legislation mandating when the dispatcher transfers the individual, the information already collected must be transferred as well. Achieving this goal has not been smooth or easy. While both Salt Lake City and VECC now use the same software vendor, work remains in melding their operating protocols.

A significant challenge is keeping up with technological change. Thirty years ago, 911 calls came in on a land line. That continues but more common are cellular calls. They are also now arriving via automated calls from OnStar, texts, watches, apps and so on. AI is an emerging technology. Can it play a role in dispatch? No one knows what the future will bring, but VECC will need to be nimble.

Action from third parties, outside VECC's control, can also pose issues for the Center. For example, the State of Utah is requiring public safety agencies across the state to use new 800 megahertz radio systems. As a result, most, if not all, the agencies VECC serves will need to purchase and program new equipment. Fortunately, VECC's equipment already meets the requirements, but the Executive Director may need to assist member agencies in working through the transition. The good news is the two Salt Lake area PSAPs will be one of the last to transition, and hopefully, the kinks will be worked out by then.

The final, and perhaps the most important challenge the new Executive Director will face is establishing credibility and building consensus among the 14 cities, the county, and the 19 police/fire departments which compose VECC—all of which sometimes seem to have different needs and perspectives.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The Board is seeking an outstanding leader and manager to take VECC to the next level. The individual will be an energetic, self-

starter who can envision the future and then build the bridge to make VECC a model 911 emergency call center.

The best candidate will be a partner and trusted advisor to the Board. The individual will recognize that all the members of the board have demanding jobs as high level local government officials—city managers or administrators, police or fire chiefs, and so on. Thus, they are very busy. As such, the next Executive Director must work diligently to keep them informed and provide thorough and complete staff work. Importantly, they will be someone the Board can rely on to get the job done. When issues arise, the individual will not hesitate to contact Board members so there will be no surprises.

The next Executive Director will strive for and value consensus, but be decisive when necessary and/or appropriate. They will be a people person who is approachable and comfortable speaking to employees involved in every aspect of the organization, as well as to outside parties including elected officials at both the local and state government level. At times, they may need to be an advocate before the state government. Accordingly, the individual will have excellent oral and written communication skills and be an articulate spokesperson for VECC and its story. They will also recognize that listening is a very important part of communication—truly hearing what others have to say. Taking time to explain decisions will contribute to his/her success. At the same time, the best candidate will be confident and comfortable expressing his/her opinion. People can be forceful in this industry at times. Thus, it will be important to be strong and to be able to tell people “no” for the right reasons in a pleasant and respectful manner. Being open and transparent will be crucial.

The best candidate will inspire staff and create a sense of comradery. They will have high, but realistic expectations and translate the Board's priorities into action by establishing clearly defined goals, delegating responsibility and authority, and then expecting results. While being tough and firm, the individual will be patient, fair and have a softer side. The dispatcher's job can be very stressful and understanding and promoting mental health and wellness will be important to the organization's success. Accountability, along with integrity, will be key guiding principles. They will mentor employees and focus on helping

them develop into the best they can be. Given the staff is very capable, the new Executive Director should be comfortable letting them do their jobs without micromanaging them.

VECC's environment can sometimes seem chaotic. Hence, remaining calm and rational at all times in what can be a sea of turbulence is important. The individual will be analytical and a problem solver – always looking for ways to help the staff be more efficient and effective. At the same time, they will not hesitate to make decisions. Being technically savvy will be important. The way business is conducted in this industry is anything but static, and technology will play an enormous role in its future. Thus, keeping abreast of industry trends/innovations and being able to see how they might be used at VECC is expected.

A background in 911 operations is not essential, but having experience running a PSAP—ideally serving more than one political subdivision—is a big plus. Expertise in budget and finance will be helpful. As a provider of service to multiple local government agencies, VECC's budget is regularly and carefully scrutinized. Everyone wants to pay less but also recognizes the service is not free. If and when additional resources are needed, the Executive Director will be an effective advocate. Given staffing is limited, an understanding of procurement, as well as how cities function, are other pluses.

In terms of specific skills, the individual will have a demonstrated track record of achievement in management, finance, and consensus building. Reporting to a Board composed of so many jurisdictions and interacting with Salt Lake City and the State means skill in intergovernmental relations will be critical.

The selected candidate will be expected to make a commitment to VECC and ideally stay a long time. The position should not be viewed as a steppingstone but is indeed a gem in its own right.

COMPENSATION

The salary range is \$140,000 to \$190,000 and the salary will depend on qualifications and experience. Benefits are excellent.

VECC provides a pension to the Executive Director through the Utah Retirement System and will contribute an additional 6.2% of the base salary into an ICMA Retirement Investment Account.

RESIDENCY

The Executive Director is not required or expected to live in Salt Lake County but should be a reasonable distance from the Center to be able to respond to emergencies and lead daily operations.

HOW TO APPLY

E-mail your cover letter and resume to Recruit39@cb-asso.com by January 26, 2024. Please apply ASAP as resumes will be screened as they arrive. Questions should be directed to Lynelle Klein at (970) 433-7189, Scott Krim at (801) 628-8364, or Colin Baenziger at (561) 707-3537.

THE MOST RECENT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The most recent Executive Director served for three years and did an outstanding job of fixing many of the issues the agency faced. He was highly respected, and left on positive terms.

INTERNAL CANDIDATES

There are no serious internal candidates. Both Deputy Executive Directors (one of which is the Interim Executive Director) have decided they prefer to remain in their current roles.

CONFIDENTIALITY

This recruitment is very unlikely to draw scrutiny from a third party, such as the media, until the announcement of the new Executive Director. That said, pursuant to Utah's Governmental Records Access and Management Act, in the unlikely event applications are requested, they may be subject to disclosure.

THE PROCESS

As noted, resumes will be screened as they arrive so please apply ASAP. Finalists will be selected on February 21st. A reception and interviews will be held on February 29th and March 1st. A selection will be made shortly thereafter.

OTHER IMPORTANT INFORMATION

The Salt Lake Valley Emergency Communications Center is an Equal Opportunity Employer and strongly encourages women, minorities, and veterans to apply.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For additional information about VECC, Utah, and the Salt Lake Valley, visit:

slvecc.com

slco.org

www.visitsaltlake.com

visitutah.com

utah.com

