



COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR RECRUITMENT

MARINETTE COUNTY, WISCONSIN

POSITION PROFILE



Public Administration Associates

This recruitment is facilitated by Public Administration Associates, LLC

THE COMMUNITY

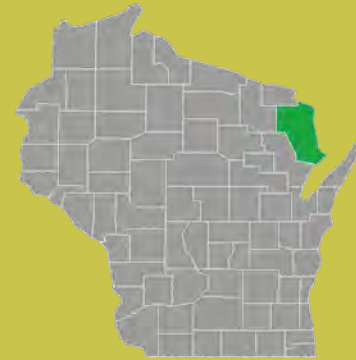
Quality of Life

Located in Northeast Wisconsin, Marinette County (Population 41,900) offers an exceptional quality of life along the shores of Green Bay and the Michigan Upper Peninsula. The County combines welcoming small communities with abundant natural resources, affordable living, quality schools, employment opportunities, and convenient access to the Green Bay metropolitan area. Marinette County is especially known for its outdoor recreation, with more than 230,000 acres of county forest, numerous lakes and rivers, trout streams, waterfalls, and miles of trails. Residents and visitors enjoy year-round opportunities for boating, fishing, canoeing, kayaking, hiking, biking, hunting, cross-country skiing, snowmobiling, and ATV riding. Marinette County is organized into 18 towns, 4 villages and 3 cities.

The top five most populous jurisdictions are:

- Marinette, City 11,152
- Peshtigo, Town 3,985
- Stephenson, Town 3,576
- Peshtigo, City 3,317
- Porterfield, Town 1,893

There are activities to suit all interests in Marinette County. Its communities offer local shops, restaurants, festivals, parks, and recreational opportunities, while the County's extensive public lands provide nearly unlimited opportunities to experience the outdoors. Cultural and historical attractions, including sites associated with the region's lumbering heritage and the Great Peshtigo Fire, add to the area's distinctive character and make Marinette County an attractive place to live, work, and visit. Music in the Park at Stephenson Island in Marinette is pictured below.



Established in 1879 when it was separated from Oconto County, Marinette County grew rapidly during northeastern Wisconsin's great lumbering era. Its vast forests and location along the Menominee River made the area a major center for logging, sawmills, and shipping. Communities including Marinette and Peshtigo prospered from the timber industry, whose influence helped shape the County's economy, settlement patterns, and character.



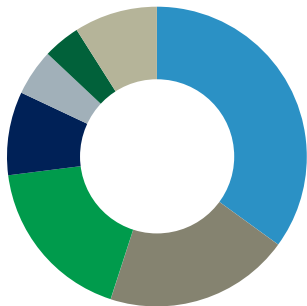
Marinette County's rivers and waterways offer exceptional opportunities for whitewater rafting, kayaking, canoeing and fishing amid some of northeastern Wisconsin's most scenic landscapes.



The Peshtigo Fire Museum, located in the City of Peshtigo (shown above), preserves the story of the devastating Peshtigo Fire of October 8, 1871—the deadliest wildfire in U.S. history. Housed in the first church built after the fire, the museum features artifacts, photographs and exhibits documenting the disaster and the resilience of the community that rebuilt in its aftermath.

THE ECONOMY

Marinette County boasts a diverse economy, characterized by a strong manufacturing base. Major employment sectors are shown on the following chart.



Marinette County Employment

Manufacturing	29.0%
Education and Health Services	19.6%
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	19.1%
Leisure and Hospitality	9.3%
Professional & Business Services	5.7%
Public Administration	5.2%
All Other Sectors	12.0%

Agricultural products comprise an important part of the County’s economy. According to a study by UW-Extension, agriculture accounts for over 1,500 jobs and over \$200 million in economic activity.



Pictured above is Fincantieri Marinette Marine, located along the Menominee River in the City of Marinette. Founded in 1942, the shipyard has grown into a world-class builder of sophisticated naval vessels and is one of the region’s largest employers. The company has constructed more than 1,500 vessels during its history and today represents an important center of advanced manufacturing, skilled trades and engineering, helping anchor Marinette County’s strong manufacturing economy.

EDUCATION

Marinette County is served by eight public school districts, including Beecher-Dunbar-Pembine, Coleman, Crivitz, Goodman-Armstrong, Marinette, Niagara, Peshtigo, and Wausaukee. The County is also served by Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, which operates a campus in Marinette offering career and technical education, workforce training, and opportunities for students to prepare for in-demand occupations. Marinette County residents also have access to higher education through the University of Wisconsin–Green Bay.



Marinette County students are served by a number of quality public school districts. Crivitz High School (pictured above) is representative of the strong educational opportunities found throughout the County. The school earned an “Exceeds Expectations” rating on Wisconsin’s 2024–25 school report card and has received Blue Ribbon honors. Students benefit from Advanced Placement courses, dual-credit opportunities and partnerships with Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, along with a broad range of athletics, fine arts, clubs and other extracurricular activities.



Marinette County residents enjoy convenient access to both technical and university education. Northeast Wisconsin Technical College operates a full-service campus in Marinette offering associate degrees, technical diplomas and certificates in high-demand fields including nursing, manufacturing, automation, business and skilled trades. Nearby UW–Green Bay provides more than 200 undergraduate majors and minors, along with graduate and professional programs. UW–Green Bay also maintains a community presence in Marinette through the Bayshore Arts Center and its longstanding theatre and arts programming.



MARINETTE COUNTY GOVERNMENT

Marinette County government provides a diverse range of services in areas including public safety, health and social services, land use and highway maintenance, among many others. An \$74.1M annual (2026 all-funds expense) budget supports 358 positions. The County is governed by a thirty-member, nonpartisan Board of Supervisors, elected from districts every two years. The County Board Chair is elected by the Board. The Administrator reports to the Executive Committee but is accountable to the full Board. In addition to County Board Supervisors, other officials elected directly by voters include the County Clerk, Treasurer, Sheriff, Clerk of Circuit Court, Register of Deeds, Circuit Court Judges, and District Attorney. The County Board is organized into numerous standing committees to provide policy oversight of the departments. Much of the work for the County Board is conducted by these committees.

Pictured at the top of the page is the Marinette County Courthouse, a prominent landmark in downtown Marinette. Constructed in 1941–42, the courthouse reflects the Art Deco architectural style of its era and has served for more than eight decades as an important hub of county government and civic life. The historic building remains actively used today, housing numerous judicial and administrative departments while continuing to serve as one of Marinette’s most recognizable public buildings.



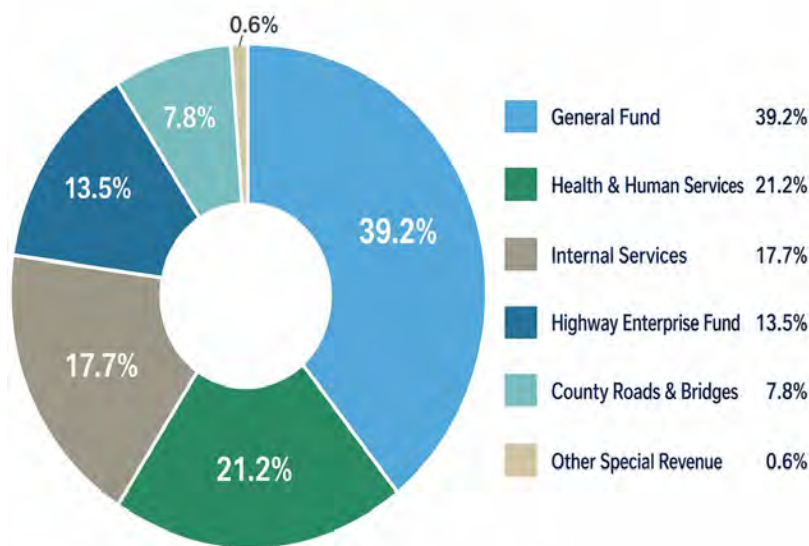
Marinette County’s Law Enforcement Center provides a modern hub for countywide public-safety operations. Constructed in 2004 and located at 2161 University Drive in Marinette, the facility houses the Sheriff’s Office and the 164-bed County Jail. The complex also supports the County’s emergency communications operations, helping coordinate law enforcement, fire and emergency medical response throughout Marinette County. Its contemporary design and consolidated public-safety functions provide an effective contrast to the County’s historic courthouse.



FINANCES

Like all Wisconsin counties, Marinette County relies heavily on property taxes to fund operations. Charges for services are also a key revenue source that supports the annual budget. Since 2001, the County has collected a 1/2 cent sales tax on many purchases. (The amount of sales tax that a county may impose is fixed by state law.) Wisconsin counties administer many state programs; as a result, state grants and reimbursements comprise a major source of revenue. State funding is not spread equally among the departments, however. Health and human service programs receive the “lion’s share” of state funding, while other programs, such as the Sheriff’s Office, rely much more heavily on the property tax levy. Unless, additional borrowing is authorized in 2026, the County will be debt free in 2027. Major categories of expenses are shown to the right.

MARINETTE COUNTY 2026 OPERATING EXPENDITURES \$74.1 Million



One challenge facing all Wisconsin counties is a state-imposed tax levy cap. A county’s ability to increase the tax levy is limited to the value of new construction (“net new construction”) that took place during the previous year. Operating expenses often rise at a faster rate than net new construction. For example, in 2025, net new construction accounted for 1.49% of the growth in equalized value in the County. To proactively address this challenge, it will be important for the next Administrator to have strong financial and planning skills as well as the ability to “think outside of the box” in terms of funding operations. Financial skills, including budgeting, accounting, and capital improvement planning, were identified by County stakeholders as being key to the success of the next Administrator.



The Sheriff is considered the chief law enforcement officer of the County and is directly elected by the voters. The statutory responsibilities of the Sheriff are broad and include: appointing deputies, directing law enforcement services, deputy discipline, taking charge of the jail, attending to the Circuit Court, serving and executing writs and legal process, enforcing the law, executing warrants, and transporting prisoners.

MAJOR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Marinette County provides a wide range of services, from assisting veterans to overseeing elections. The following are some major services provided by the County, but by no means a complete list. For a complete overview of the names and functions of the County's departments, visit its [website](#).

Public Safety and Justice

The County provides law enforcement and public safety services through the Sheriff's Office, Dispatch/911 Center and Emergency Management. The District Attorney, Medical Examiner, Courts, Clerk of Circuit Court, Corporation Counsel, Child Support and related offices support the County's justice system. The 911 Center provides countywide dispatch services for law enforcement, fire and EMS.

Health and Human Services

Health and Human Services provides programs serving children, families, seniors and persons with disabilities. Services include public health, behavioral health and substance-use treatment, child welfare, economic support, adult protective services, long-term care programs and the Aging and Disability Resource Center.

Highways and Infrastructure

The Highway Department maintains county and state highways. Facilities maintains County buildings and grounds, while Technology Services supports the County's information and communications systems.

Land and Natural Resources

Land Information combines zoning, sanitation, GIS, property listing, surveying and land and water conservation. Its programs address agriculture, water quality, shoreland and floodplain development, private wastewater systems, solidwaste, invasive species and conservation of the County's natural resources.

Forestry, Parks and Recreation

The Forestry department and Parks department manage the County's extensive forest lands, recreational facilities and trails, critical components of the County's economy and quality of life.

General Government

Administration, Finance, Human Resources, County Clerk, Treasurer, Register of Deeds and Technology Services provide the organizational backbone of County government. Economic Development, Tourism, Library Service, UW-Madison Extension and Veterans Service provide additional services supporting residents, businesses and communities throughout Marinette County.

The Marinette County Highway Department operates from its main facility in Peshtigo, with additional maintenance shops in Crivitz and Pembine. Under the County Administrator form of government, the Highway Commissioner is appointed by the County Administrator. In addition to maintaining approximately 330 miles of County highways, the Department maintains about 154 miles of State and federal highways under Wisconsin's unique highway maintenance system whereby counties are reimbursed to maintain state roads.



THE POSITION

POSITION SUMMARY

The County Administrator serves as chief administrative officer of the county and has the powers, duties, and responsibilities set forth in §59.18, Wis. Stats., the Marinette County Code of Ordinances, as well as those set forth in the official job description. The County Administrator is responsible for supervising and coordinating the day-to-day administrative management responsibilities of the county and performing other duties as assigned by the Marinette County Board of Supervisors. The County Administrator must exercise professional administrative judgment and initiative daily within policy guidelines established by the County Board.

COMPENSATION

The salary for the position is \$135,000 to \$160,000 plus excellent benefits.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS

SOME ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS OF THE POSITION INCLUDE:

Administration & Organizational Leadership. Direct and coordinate County administrative and management functions; recommend and implement management practices; work closely with department heads to achieve goals; recommend organizational and staffing needs; resolve operational and personnel concerns; and oversee County property, facilities, space needs and capital improvements.

County Board & Committee Support. Advise and assist the County Board, Executive and Administrative Committees, and standing committees; research policy and legislative issues; provide information needed for informed decisions; assist with County Board agendas; and meet regularly with the County Board Chair and Vice-Chair.

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Budget, Finance & Risk Management. Recommend annual budget policy; assist departments with budget preparation; develop and present the annual County budget; administer and monitor the adopted budget; identify state and federal funding opportunities; oversee property and liability insurance, claims and litigation files; and maintain loss-prevention and risk-control programs.

Intergovernmental, Labor & Contract Relations. Serve as liaison between the County Board and other units of government; assist with intergovernmental leases, contracts and agreements; monitor legislation affecting County funding; and participate with the County team in union negotiations.

Public Communication & Accountability. Coordinate County public relations, promote transparency, meet with taxpayers, and respond to concerns, complaints and suggestions regarding County services and operations.

These are representative duties of the position. The full position description is available to candidates upon request. Candidates are directed to section 59.18 of the Wisconsin Statutes for additional information.

Administrator versus Administrative Coordinator

Under Wisconsin law, the administration of County government is to be provided in one of three ways:

- Elected County Executive
- Appointed County Administrator
- Appointed Administrative Coordinator.

The difference between the Administrator and the Administrative Coordinator is that the former position has many of its responsibilities and authorities established by state law. Marinette County created the position of County Administrator in 1987.

ANTICIPATED RECRUITMENT SCHEDULE

AUGUST 19
Application Period Opens

SEPTEMBER 21
Application Period Closes

OCTOBER 1
Finalists Selected

OCTOBER 12/13
Assessment for final candidates in person in Marinette, WI

OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Marinette County offers an opportunity for a collaborative, forward-looking leader to help position the organization for long-term success while preserving the quality of life and natural assets that define the County. The next Administrator will help the County navigate workforce pressures, financial constraints, infrastructure needs, changing service demands, and opportunities for economic and recreational development. Key opportunities and challenges include:

WORKFORCE, COMPENSATION AND ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

Recruiting and retaining a strong workforce is among Marinette County's most significant challenges. Competitive compensation and benefits, employee morale, anticipated retirements, succession planning, and the availability of qualified workers will require continued attention. Staff reductions and vacancies have also increased workloads and stress in some areas. The new Administrator will have an opportunity to strengthen recruitment and retention efforts, expand training and succession planning, and foster a more collaborative organizational culture in which departments work together toward shared County priorities.

FINANCIAL STABILITY & LONG-TERM PLANNING

Budget constraints, economic uncertainty, and limited State and Federal funding place increasing pressure on County operations. The County must balance fiscal responsibility with the need to maintain essential services, competitive compensation, public safety, and infrastructure. Opportunities exist to improve long-range budgeting and capital planning, identify operating efficiencies and new revenue sources, strengthen advocacy for outside funding, and make timely decisions regarding County assets and liabilities. The Administrator will play an important role in helping the County Board establish priorities and address difficult issues before they become more costly.

INFRASTRUCTURE, FACILITIES & COUNTY ASSETS

The condition of County roads and the need for additional highway funding are recurring concerns. Marinette County must also determine how best to maintain, invest in, repurpose, or divest public assets in a financially responsible manner. Particular attention will be needed for realistic capital-improvement planning and execution and the future use of the former UW campus property. The new Administrator will help establish priorities, advance projects that have been deferred, and develop sustainable strategies for maintaining the infrastructure and facilities that support residents, businesses, and County services.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, HOUSING AND QUALITY OF LIFE

Economic development, workforce housing and quality of life will remain important priorities. Opportunities exist to attract and retain good-paying jobs, expand affordable housing options, grow the tax base, and build upon the County's exceptional natural and recreational assets. The next Administrator can help strengthen partnerships, support tourism and economic-development initiatives, and advance projects that make Marinette County an attractive place to live, work and invest.

THE IDEAL CANDIDATE

The ideal candidate for the Marinette County Administrator position will be an innovator and an approachable leader with a proven track record of building high-quality teams. The County seeks a collaborative problem-solver with open, positive, and effective communication skills. Flexibility and the ability to react effectively to changing circumstances, along with the ability to cultivate productive relationships with staff, citizens, County Board Supervisors, and other units of government, will be critical to success.

SKILLS & EXPERIENCE

A strong finance background, including demonstrated experience in budget development and capital improvement planning and execution, is essential. The successful candidate will possess strong strategic planning skills and significant experience in human resources management, including compensation, employee performance and general personnel management. Experience working effectively with federal, state and local governments is also highly desirable.

QUALIFICATIONS

- Bachelor's Degree in from an accredited university in business or public administration, government finance, accounting, or a related field; a Master's degree is preferred.
- Four years of experience in business, industry, or administration of a public agency or department.
- Administrative management experience in county or municipal government.
- A driver's license acceptable to the County's insurer.
- No criminal convictions arising from circumstances relating to County Administrator duties.

Private sector and military candidates who have led comparably sized, complex organizations are encouraged to apply.



Marinette County is known as Wisconsin's waterfall capital, with more waterfalls than any other county in the state. Its rushing rivers, rocky gorges, and forested landscapes create dramatic natural settings such as Dave's Falls, pictured above, one of the County's many scenic outdoor destinations.

HOW TO APPLY

Email cover letter, résumé, three professional references and salary history as a single PDF to Jon Hochkammer, Public Administration Associates, LLC at smcdade@public-administration.com. Include Marinette County Administrator Search in the subject line. Questions regarding the position should be directed to Mr. Hochkammer at (608) 225-3024. The deadline for applications is September 21, 2026.

Confidentiality must be requested by applicant and cannot be provided for finalists.