



# County of Powhatan, Virginia

3834 Old Buckingham Road  
Powhatan, VA 23139

## Press Release

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 15, 2025

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## Powhatan County Hires Fire & Rescue Chief

**POWHATAN, VA** – Powhatan County is proud to announce the hire of David “DJ” C. Johnston as the new Fire & Rescue Chief, effective January 17, 2025. This appointment follows a thorough and competitive selection process, underscoring the County’s dedication to outstanding public safety services and excellence in emergency response.



Chief Johnston succeeds retiring Fire & Rescue Chief Phil Warner, whose years of dedicated service have left an enduring legacy in Powhatan County. We also extend our heartfelt appreciation to Interim Chief Taylor Goodman for his exemplary leadership and unwavering commitment during the transition. Deputy Chief Goodman’s contributions have been instrumental in setting the standards of service the County is known for.

Chief Johnston brings a wealth of experience and expertise to his new role. He joins Powhatan County after an impressive 17-year tenure with Hanover County Fire-EMS, where he served in various capacities, including most recently as Deputy Chief. In this role, he oversaw operations, capital projects, budget, training, and logistics.

In addition to his extensive professional experience, Chief Johnston holds a master’s degree in public administration from Liberty University. His dedication to excellence has been recognized with numerous awards and leadership roles, including the Chief’s Choice Award and Career Officer of the Year with Hanover Fire-EMS, as well as serving as President of the Forest View Volunteer Rescue Squad.

As Fire & Rescue Chief, Chief Johnston will lead Powhatan County’s emergency services, which include fire, rescue and emergency management, building on our strong foundation to further enhance public safety, emergency response, and community engagement.

County Administrator Bret Schardein stated “Volunteerism is the foundation of emergency services in Powhatan County. We were impressed with DJ’s dedication and focus on volunteers, as he will lead our hybrid system that includes both volunteer and career staff to serve our citizens and business communities. I want to thank Deputy Chief Taylor Goodman for his service, not just for stepping up during the transition, but for his contributions over the years that are in no small part why we enjoy such an excellent emergency services team today.”

Chief Johnston stated, “I am excited to work alongside the men and women of Powhatan Fire and Rescue and ensuring that our team is prepared and ready to serve the community.”

Powhatan County looks forward to welcoming Chief Johnston and supporting him in his mission to serve and protect our residents.

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