

**Port of Centralia
Executive Director**

Salary Range: \$127,000-\$190,000
plus benefits

Application Deadline: March 25, 2026

The Port of Centralia is seeking to hire a new Executive Director. The Executive Director performs an essential role in operations, planning, oversight, regulation and policy enforcement, fiscal management, and community outreach.

About the Port of Centralia

The Port of Centralia was founded in 1986 and is governed by a 3-member Commission. The Commissioners strive to represent their constituents and create jobs for their community. It has not only been the Port's goal to bring new industry to the area, but also to create industrial parks that are beneficial to the employees and citizens of Centralia while serving the needs of the business community.

The Port comprises two industrial parks. Parks I and II operate over 30 businesses, including Lowe's, Michaels, Sierra Pacific Industries, Lineage Logistics, Cascade Mental Health, United Natural Foods Incorporated, STIHL Northwest, Dick's Brewing Company, and The Truss Company that provide over 2,500 jobs to the local workforce.

Centralia Station, the Port's third park, is a mixed-use development. Anchor tenant WinCo Foods is now open with more businesses coming soon, including Chick-fil-A and Wilco Farm Store.

The Port offers industrial sites ranging from one to 100 acres with a wide variety of options including land lease, build-to-suit, and outright sales. These properties are prepared for immediate development with all utilities currently onsite.

While all three parks are less than three miles from I-5, the Port also offers rail access through Puget Sound and Pacific Railroad, Union Pacific, and Burlington Northern Santa Fe.

The Port of Centralia's current assessed value is \$4.41 billion with \$1.8 million in annual operating expenses.

Job Description

The Executive Director is the chief executive officer of the Port of Centralia, responsible for strategic leadership, daily operations, financial management, economic development, and policy implementation. Reporting to a three-member elected Commission, the role oversees staff, facilities, capital projects, business development, and regulatory compliance while serving as the Port's primary representative to government partners, businesses, and the community.

Essential Job Duties & Responsibilities:

- Implementing policies and direction as set by the Port Commission.
- Keep the Port Commission fully informed of significant operational, financial, legal, risk, safety, and security matters; advise the Port Commission with timely and accurate information and professional recommendations; and ensure there is an official record and history of the Port.
- Gather, analyze, and present information regarding trends, needs, and utilization of Port resources to support Commission decision making.
- Work closely with the Director of Finance to ensure long-term financial success.
- Regularly work with the Director of Finance and Port counsel to confirm legal obligations are met and relevant Public Records Act laws and regulations are adhered to.
- Manage day-to-day operations, facilities, properties, and infrastructure.
- Negotiate land sales and building leases.
- Prepare and administer the annual budget to ensure financial responsibility.
- Lead business development and tenant relations, including leases, contracts, and revenue generation.
- Oversee capital projects and compliance with funding regulations.
- Coordinate efforts with key legislators to improve local economic opportunities by supporting the retention, expansion, and recruitment of preferred employers.
- Understand and adhere to the principles and requirements of public sector and governmental operations.
- Ensure compliance with all applicable federal laws, Washington State laws, port district statutes, Open Public Meetings Act laws, regulatory requirements, and adherence to the Port Master Plan.
- Serve as the Port's primary public representative working with local and state representatives, businesses, tenants, community partners, regional agencies, and citizens.
- Promote the Port's mission to support economic vitality, job creation, and responsible development in the community.
- Oversee audits and ensure compliance with the Washington State Auditor's Office.
- Manage Port legal liabilities and insurance ratings while ensuring public and staff safety.

- Provide oversight of staff and consultants to prepare, manage, or contract for studies, architectural designs, engineering reports, land appraisals and surveys, and other information services.
- Ensure a positive, collaborative, and operationally successful working environment.

Community, Intergovernmental, and Stakeholder Relations:

- Attend Centralia City Council and Lewis County Board of County Commissioners meetings and maintain a strong, collaborative working relationship with the other local agencies.
- Oversee the resolution of grievances and sensitive personnel matters in accordance with Port policies and applicable laws.
- Ensure proper handling, documentation, and response to inquiries, complaints, and concerns related to Port operations and personally respond to the most serious or complex matters.

Level of Authority:

- Report directly to the elected 3-member Port of Centralia Commission.
- Follow the Port's Delegation of Authority as adopted or amended by the Port Commission.
- Manage and motivate all levels of Port staff while encouraging autonomy in accordance with the Port's personnel policies.

Work Environment/Location:

- Full-time in-person position at the Port of Centralia Administrative Office.
- Office hours are 8:00 am to 5:00 pm Monday through Friday.
- Work will primarily be indoors in offices and meeting rooms.
- Some work will be performed outdoors within the Port's three parks and on construction sites with exposure to potential hazards and all weather conditions.
- Some travel will be required for meetings.
- Some work will be after regular business hours and on weekends.
- Port Commission-led employee reviews will take place after an initial term of 3 months of employment and then again at 6 months and one year after time of hire. Employee reviews will then take place annually thereafter. The probationary period ends at 6 months after time of hire.

Physical Capabilities

- Ability to traverse Port buildings, facilities, and properties in the course of every day responsibilities.

- Ability to maintain visual surveillance of Port facilities and properties and be able to recognize unsafe or undesirable conditions that are not in accord with Port policies.

Qualifications/Competencies:

- Master's degree in business administration, economics, economic development, marketing, public policy, finance, or similar educational background (preferred).
- Bachelor's degree in the areas listed above with 5-10 years of experience in a similar role (minimum requirement).
- Must be skilled with computer and office equipment, public speaking and presentations, and other business communications.
- Must possess a valid driver's license.
- Demonstrated track record of success in public administration, economic development, or port management (or a similar field).
- Strong background in accounting, budgeting, contracts, and grants; an understanding of public sector finances and operations, including distinctions between public and private work; and with experience in public service and management of public funds preferred.
- Knowledge of public port operations in Washington State.
- Understanding of the role of Port Commissioners to the Executive Director.
- Familiarity with construction processes and projects and railroad operations.
- Ability to anticipate future trends and possible revenue streams and work proactively to promote and efficiently run the Port to move forward proactively in a strategic manner.
- Excellent communications skills with experience in negotiations, relationship building, and working with elected officials and governing boards.
- Strong oral communication skills, including the ability to make effective presentations to leadership boards, public groups, and community stakeholders.
- Reading and comprehension ability sufficient to review legal, technical, plans and blueprints, and financial materials and apply them appropriately to Port operations.
- Willingness and ability to serve as the public face of the Port, setting a tone of honesty, fairness, accountability, and open communication.
- Residency within the Port district (preferred, though not required at time of hire. Relocation will be expected within a reasonable timeframe after probationary period has ended).

Compensation/Benefits:

- Base salary range of \$127,000-\$190,000 DOE.
- Exempt position.
- Paid vacation and sick leave consistent with applicable laws and the Port's personnel policy.
- Paid federal holidays.

- Medical, dental, and vision insurance for full family.
- Long-term disability and life insurance.
- Participation in the State of Washington Public Employees Retirement Systems (PERS) and Washington State Deferred Compensation (DCP) programs (optional).

To Apply:

Candidates should submit the following to agraber@portofcentralia.com on or before March 25, 2026:

- Cover letter
- Resume
- Short biography demonstrating the connection between applicant's work history and relevance to this role.

Submitted materials will be screened based on criteria outlined in this request. The submission of an application does not guarantee an interview.

Selection Process:

- Initial and secondary interviews will be conducted with the Port of Centralia Commission and Port staff privately during executive sessions of Port of Centralia Commission meetings.
- Final candidates will be required to attend an open house to meet local officials and members of the public.
- Final candidates will be required to pass detailed background and soft credit checks.
- Final candidates will be required to provide five references.

This request for applications has been posted on the Port of Centralia's website and its Facebook page. It can also be located on Indeed, the Washington and Oregon Public Ports Associations' websites, and LinkedIn.

The Port Commission reserves the right to reopen the position for further application submissions or to acquire the assistance of a recruiting agency at its discretion.

The Port of Centralia is an equal opportunity employer. In accordance with Federal law and US Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, disability, religion, sex, and familial status. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs.)

To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC, 20250-9410, or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TDD).