

# ILLINOIS MUNICIPAL LEAGUE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER



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The Illinois Municipal League (IML) is seeking applicants for the newly created position of Chief Operating Officer (COO). The COO reports directly to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and will assist him in managing the day-to-day operations of the organization. Headquartered in Springfield, IML serves all 1,294 cities, villages, and towns in Illinois. Its mission, which has remained consistent since its formation in 1913, is to articulate, defend, and promote the interests and concerns of Illinois municipalities.

## HISTORY OF IML

The Illinois Municipal League was first discussed at a meeting of the Illinois Mayors' Association in Rockford in 1913. Professor John Farlie, a faculty member in the Department of Political Science at the University of Illinois, urged the reorganization of the Illinois Mayors' Association into what would become IML with the following primary objectives:

- Provide information and techniques of municipal management.
- Increase the level of efficiency and capabilities of municipalities.
- Represent the interests of municipalities before the state legislature.
- Increase membership of the organization.

In 1914, at the convention of the Illinois Mayors' Association, in which 37 delegates from 20 cities were represented, a new constitution was adopted providing for the organization to be called the Illinois Municipal League and electing its first group of officers. In October of 1914, in Urbana, IML's constitution was approved and ratified by the membership.

From its beginning more than a century ago, the organization has grown and evolved into the leader in advocacy and education for Illinois municipalities and local government officials.



In 1967, the Illinois Municipal League formed a legislative implementation program to assist with the passage of good local government legislation.

## ABOUT IML

Today, IML membership consists of 1,284 of the 1,294 municipalities in the State of Illinois. It serves as the primary legislative advocate for its members in both Springfield and Washington, DC.



IML headquarters in Springfield



## GOVERNANCE:

IML is governed by a Board of Directors consisting of 44 Mayors. From among the members of the Board, the organization's officers (President, First Vice President, and Second Vice President) are elected to serve one-year terms. The Board also appoints a Chief Executive Officer to oversee and manage the day-to-day affairs of the organization.

## CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER:

In addition to managing the 20 employees of the organization, the CEO is responsible for the implementation and operation of all IML programs and projects. He leads the legislative affairs team and is in regular contact with members of the Illinois General Assembly and members of the Illinois delegation in the United States Congress. The CEO also currently serves as the Managing Director of the Illinois Risk Management Association.

The current CEO, Mr. Brad Cole, has served in that position since December 2014. Mr. Cole previously served as the Mayor of Carbondale and was the Downstate Director for former U.S. Senator Mark Kirk. Mr. Cole previously served as the Deputy Chief of Staff for former Illinois Governor George Ryan. He was Senior Vice President for Pepsi MidAmerica immediately prior to joining the staff at IML.



Brad Cole, IML CEO

Educate.

Advocate.

Empower.

## TRAINING & EDUCATION:

Under the direction of the IML Board of Directors, the organization provides a wide range of services to its members including a plethora of educational programs ranging from newly elected officials training, pension trustee training, seminars for municipal attorneys, ethics training, cybersecurity seminars and FOIA / Open Meetings Act training.

IML promulgates special reports and studies on numerous local government topics, which are made available to their member municipalities. These reports cover important issues and challenges facing Illinois municipalities such as public pension reform, municipal tax policy, economic development strategies, etc.

IML publishes the *Illinois Municipal Review*, a monthly magazine that showcases a variety of best practices in municipal government, provides information on important topics and includes advertising for companies that provide services and products to municipal governments.

The League hosts the IML Annual Conference in September of each year which is routinely attended by more than 2,000 municipal officials. This conference is without question the largest and most important networking and educational event in Illinois for both elected and appointed municipal officials. The three-day conference, convened in Chicago, regularly includes speakers of national prominence speaking on a variety of topics of interest to municipal officials. The conference also provides a multitude of workshops and seminars that address relevant topics to benefit every attendee irrespective of the size or location of their municipality.

## LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY:

Of course, IML is also known as the primary advocate for cities, villages, and towns in the Illinois General Assembly and in the United States Congress. With input from a variety of constituencies, the League annually assembles a program of legislative priorities that are ultimately endorsed by the IML Board of Directors. The legislative department works with state and federal officials, both legislators and staff, to implement those important legislative initiatives. IML is also prepared to react to other proposed legislation, either in support or in opposition, depending upon the expected impact of those initiatives on its municipal members.

## IML RISK MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION:

As a service to its members, IML created the IML Risk Management Association (RMA) in 1981. RMA provides a variety of cost-effective insurance products and services to Illinois municipalities on a pooled basis. These products and services include insurance coverage (property, automobile, general liability, workers' compensation, crime and public officials' liability); risk management; loss control; and, claims administration.

RMA is governed by an experienced group of local elected officials appointed by the IML Board of Directors. The IML CEO serves as an ex-officio member of the RMA Board of Directors. RMA currently provides insurance coverage and other related services to 60% of all Illinois municipalities.



NFL Hall of Fame player and coach, Mike Ditka, speaking at an IML Annual Conference



Illinois Municipal League

**RMA** Risk Management Association

## THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

The newly created COO position is expected to undertake a wide range of highly responsible and complex duties. The COO will assist the CEO in managing the entire organization. The position will require supervising and directing staff; working with state and federal legislators, as well as high level office holders; interacting with members of the IML Board of Directors; coordinating and advising numerous IML committees and task force groups; communicating with local officials from member municipalities; and, representing IML at a variety of venues throughout the state.

The COO reports directly to the CEO and is the second ranking administrative official in the organization. The COO will be involved in all aspects of the organization including program development, strategy and planning, policy analysis, staff hiring and oversight, membership development, legislative advocacy and Board relations.

It is important that applicants for this position understand that it is the expectation of the IML Board of Directors that the COO will ascend into the CEO position when the incumbent CEO retires, which is expected to occur in three years.

## DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

Qualified candidates for this position must hold a bachelor's degree in a relevant field of study. A master's degree is preferred but not required. In addition, candidates must have a general understanding of the governance systems and political environment in Illinois. They must also be able to work effectively with people of all political affiliations.

The ideal candidate for the COO position will possess many of the following skills and attributes:

- Outstanding interpersonal skills with the ability to develop harmonious and productive relationships with Board members, local officials, legislators, employees and other stakeholders.
- Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal, including strong public presentation skills.
- Strong analytical and problem-solving skills with forward-thinking abilities.
- Outstanding leadership attributes including the ability to effectively empower and motivate employees while holding them accountable for their performance and behavior.
- Understanding of the primary functions and governance structures of Illinois municipalities.
- Familiarity with the history, geography and culture of Illinois.
- Ability to work in a fast-paced and dynamic environment, and to anticipate and adapt to changing conditions and circumstances.
- Strong work ethic including a commitment to consistently produce excellent work products in a timely manner.
- Long-term commitment to the organization.
- Residency in or near Springfield, Illinois.



## COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS

The starting annual salary for the COO position will be \$275,000 +/- DOQ/E. IML also provides an excellent package of fringe benefits including an employer funded 401(a) defined benefit retirement plan, an employee funded 457 deferred compensation program, excellent group health and life insurance programs, and generous leave time allowances including vacation, holiday and sick leave.

Residency in or near the City of Springfield, will be required within six months of appointment. This is a full-time, in-person position functioning out of the IML office located in Springfield.

## HOW TO APPLY

If this position is of interest to you, please submit a cover letter, resume, and contact information for five (5) work-related references to [www.GovHRjobs.com](http://www.GovHRjobs.com) to the attention of Mark Peterson, Vice President, GovHR USA. Online applications are required. Please apply by September 1, 2024, at 5:00 pm and direct all questions to Mr. Peterson at (309) 825-5091 or [mpeterson@govhrusa.com](mailto:mpeterson@govhrusa.com).

*The Illinois Municipal League is an Equal Opportunity Employer*

