



The Valley International Airport invites applications for
Director of Aviation

Valley International Airport (HRL)
Harlingen, TX

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The Airport

Valley International Airport (HRL) serves as a critical transportation gateway for the Rio Grande Valley, connecting one of the fastest-growing regions in Texas to key domestic and international destinations. Strategically located in Harlingen, HRL provides convenient access for residents, businesses, and visitors across a broad service area that includes South Texas and northern Mexico.

HRL is a commercial service airport offering a user-friendly travel experience, efficient operations, and a strong commitment to customer service. The airport plays an essential role in supporting regional economic development, tourism, cross-border commerce, and overall mobility throughout the Valley.

Connectivity and Air Service

Valley International Airport provides nonstop service to major hub airports, enabling seamless connections across the United States and beyond. The airport is served by multiple commercial carriers, offering travelers reliable and competitive air service options for both business and leisure travel.

Facilities and Passenger Experience

HRL is designed to deliver a convenient and efficient passenger experience. Travelers benefit from:

- Easy terminal access and short walk distances
- Streamlined security screening and minimal congestion
- On-site parking with close proximity to the terminal
- Dining and retail concessions that reflect regional character
- Rental car services and ground transportation options

The airport's manageable size allows for a stress-free travel experience while maintaining the amenities expected by today's travelers.





The Airport *(continued)*

Air Cargo and Economic Impact

In addition to passenger service, Valley International Airport plays a vital role in air cargo operations. The airport supports regional logistics, manufacturing, and agricultural industries by facilitating the movement of goods domestically and internationally. Its proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border enhances its importance as a binational trade and distribution hub.

HRL contributes significantly to the economic vitality of the Rio Grande Valley by supporting jobs, attracting business investment, and enabling regional growth.

General Aviation and Aviation Services

Valley International Airport maintains a strong general aviation presence, supporting corporate aviation, flight training, and private aircraft operations. The airport's infrastructure and services accommodate a wide range of aviation users, reinforcing its role as a comprehensive aviation facility.

Strategic Position and Growth

Positioned in a dynamic and expanding region, HRL continues to focus on enhancing air service, improving facilities, and supporting long-term development opportunities. The airport's leadership remains committed to strengthening connectivity, elevating the customer experience, and driving economic impact for the communities it serves.

Valley International Airport stands as a key transportation asset for South Texas - delivering accessibility, efficiency, and opportunity for the entire Rio Grande Valley region.





The Community

Located in the heart of the Rio Grande Valley, Harlingen, Texas offers a unique blend of economic opportunity, cultural richness, and an exceptional quality of life. As one of the region's key cities, Harlingen serves as a hub for healthcare, education, commerce, and transportation - making it an attractive destination for professionals and families alike.

A Strategic and Connected Region

Harlingen's location in South Texas positions it as a gateway to both domestic and international markets. Situated near the U.S.-Mexico border and within close proximity to the Gulf Coast, the city benefits from strong trade, tourism, and logistics activity. Its central location within the Rio Grande Valley provides convenient access to neighboring communities such as McAllen, Brownsville, and South Padre Island.

Economic Vitality and Growth

The Harlingen area continues to experience steady economic growth, supported by a diverse mix of industries including healthcare, logistics, manufacturing, retail, and agriculture. The city is home to a strong business environment with ongoing investment and development, creating opportunities for innovation and long-term economic sustainability.

Harlingen's pro-business climate, strategic infrastructure, and access to a binational workforce make it an increasingly attractive location for companies seeking expansion in South Texas.



The Community *(continued)*

Healthcare and Education Hub

Harlingen is widely recognized as a regional center for healthcare. The city is home to Valley Baptist Medical Center and other leading healthcare providers that serve a large population across South Texas. This strong healthcare presence not only enhances quality of life but also drives employment and economic stability.

Education is another cornerstone of the community. Harlingen Consolidated Independent School District, along with higher education institutions such as Texas State Technical College and nearby universities, provide a range of educational opportunities and workforce development programs.

Quality of Life

Harlingen offers a high quality of life with a cost of living that is significantly lower than many metropolitan areas. Residents enjoy affordable housing, short commute times, and a welcoming, community-oriented atmosphere.

The region's subtropical climate allows for year-round outdoor activities. Residents and visitors alike enjoy access to parks, nature reserves, golf courses, and nearby beaches along South Padre Island - one of Texas' premier coastal destinations. Just a short drive away, the island offers miles of pristine white-sand beaches, warm Gulf waters, world-class fishing, boating, and waterfront dining. Whether it's watching breathtaking sunrises over the Gulf, dolphin spotting, kiteboarding, or enjoying vibrant beachside events and festivals, South Padre Island provides a resort-style escape that enhances everyday living. The area is also a renowned destination for birdwatching, attracting enthusiasts from around the world.

Culture, Recreation, and Lifestyle

Harlingen features a vibrant cultural scene rooted in its diverse heritage. The city hosts a variety of festivals, community events, and performing arts experiences throughout the year. Local dining reflects the rich cultural influences of the region, offering a wide range of culinary options.

From outdoor recreation and cultural attractions to shopping and entertainment, Harlingen provides a balanced lifestyle that appeals to a wide range of interests.

A Welcoming and Dynamic Community

Known for its friendly residents and strong sense of community, Harlingen offers an inviting environment for newcomers. Whether seeking professional growth, family-friendly living, or a warm climate with abundant recreational opportunities, Harlingen delivers a compelling combination of accessibility, affordability, and opportunity.





Position Overview

The Director of Aviation serves as the chief executive of Valley International Airport, reporting directly to the Airport Board. This role provides strategic leadership and overall management of airport operations, financial performance, and long-term development. The Director is responsible for advancing the airport's economic impact, expanding passenger and cargo service, and positioning the airport as a critical regional asset. With oversight of key functional leaders and all major airport activities, the Director ensures regulatory compliance, operational excellence, and strong alignment with community and governmental stakeholders.

About the Role

The Director leads both the strategic vision and day-to-day operations of the airport, balancing operational performance with long-term planning and development initiatives. The role works closely with the Airport Board, City of Harlingen leadership, and regional partners to support economic development and aviation growth. The Director oversees budgeting, capital planning, and air service development while ensuring compliance with federal regulations and industry standards. As the public face of the airport, the Director maintains strong relationships with tenants, airlines, government agencies, and the community, while promoting a high-quality customer experience and positive organizational reputation.

Key Responsibilities

- Lead the overall management and operation of the airport, ensuring safety, efficiency, and regulatory compliance
- Develop and implement strategies to expand passenger service, cargo activity, and general aviation growth
- Direct financial planning, including annual budgets, capital improvement programs, and investment oversight
- Oversee lease administration, tenant relations, and contract negotiations
- Serve as liaison to the Airport Board, City of Harlingen, and regional stakeholder organizations
- Guide air service development, marketing initiatives, and community engagement efforts
- Ensure compliance with FAA, TSA, and Homeland Security regulations and audit requirements
- Supervise senior leadership staff and foster a high-performing, collaborative organization
- Represent the airport in public forums, media relations, and industry partnerships

Leadership Qualities and Style

The ideal candidate is a visible, strategic leader who combines strong business acumen with a collaborative and community-focused approach. This individual communicates effectively with governing bodies, stakeholders, and staff, translating complex issues into clear direction and action. The Director demonstrates sound judgment, accountability, and the ability to lead in a dynamic regulatory environment. A commitment to organizational excellence, team development, and customer service is essential, along with the ability to build trust and maintain productive relationships across diverse constituencies.

Preferred Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in aviation management, business, public administration, or a related field
- Accredited Airport Executive (A.A.E.) designation or ability to obtain preferred
- Minimum of four years of experience in airport administration and operations
- Demonstrated leadership experience overseeing multidisciplinary teams
- Strong knowledge of airport finance, regulatory compliance, and capital development
- Proven ability to engage stakeholders and support economic development initiatives

For the full job description, [click here](#).





Salary and Benefits

The salary range for this position is \$188,541 - \$282,812 depending on qualifications and experience, and is accompanied by a competitive benefits package.

How To Apply

To apply online, [click here](#).

Deadline for applications: May 3, 2026

The contacts for this search are:

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Valley International Airport is an equal-opportunity employer. We support diversity and are committed to creating an inclusive environment for employees.

