

Financial Specialist II Job Analysis

Shauntell Gavino-Collins

Old Dominion University

IDS 493

Dr. Phan

July 19, 2026

Abstract

The Financial Specialist II position with Fairfax County fire and Rescue closely matches my current experience and long-term goals. The job combines accounting, procurement, budgeting, financial reporting, travel and training support, and customer service inside a public safety agency. I currently perform accounting and procurement work for Prince William County Fire and Rescue as a contingent employee, so many of the listed duties are already part of my daily work. My background includes invoices, purchase orders, Vendor Invoice Management, procurement cards, account reconciliation, financial systems, policy compliance, and vendor communication. The advertisement also points to important soft skills, including communication, time management, judgement, independence, teamwork, and problem ownership. By examining the job's stated requirements and implied expectations, this paper argues that my professional experience, public-service background, and education make me a strong fit for the position. This role would also allow me to grow in long-range forecasting, budgeting, contract management, and procurement while moving into stable full-time county employment.

Financial Specialist II Job Analysis

When I read the advertisement for the Financial Specialist II position with Fairfax County Fire and Rescue, my first thought was that I already do this. This position stood out to me because it combines accounting with the work of a fire and rescue department. I currently support Prince William County Fire and Rescue in accounting and procurement, but I am a contingent worker seeking a full-time role. For me, this is not just another finance job. It is a chance to continue serving a public safety agency while gaining stability, benefits, and room to advance. The advertisement shows that Fairfax County needs someone who can manage financial work, solve problems, communicate across departments, and remain organized in a fast-moving environment (Fairfax County, 2026). My background in public-sector accounting, procurement, problem-solving, and communication makes this position a strong fit, while the role would also help me grow in forecasting and higher-level planning.

The main purpose of the position is to support the financial operations of Fairfax County Fire and Rescue. The employee handles accounts payable, accounts receivable, procurement cards, travel and training expenses, account reconciliation, budget monitoring, financial reports, and compliance with county policies (Fairfax County, 2026). The employee also coordinates parts of the travel and training program and works under a Financial Specialist III. This structure suggests an intermediate professional role rather than an entry-level clerical job. The title “Financial Specialist II”, the required experience, and the expectation of independent work all point to someone who can make decisions without constant direction. Kenyon (2024) explains that the order and wording of a job ad reveal what an organization values.

The job advertisement lists several hard skills as well. Fairfax County wants someone who has knowledge of generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP), budgeting,

procurement, payment procedures, financial statements, etcetera (Fairfax County, 2026).

Preferred qualifications include advanced Excel skills, experience with FOCUS or another SAP-based system, Vendor Invoice Management, procurement cards, travel and training expenses, spreadsheets, and databases. Altogether, these duties show that the employee must understand the full path of a transaction (cradle-to-grave), from a request or purchase order through invoice review, payment, recording, and later audit. Harris and Clayton (2018) note that employers value skills that can transfer across changing job settings. My experience covers both the accounting process and the systems used to manage it, which would help me adjust to Fairfax County's procedures.

My current and past work directly connects to these requirements. In my present role, I serve as a main contact for procurement, accounting, and contract questions. I manage purchase orders, invoices, supplier communication, and policy compliance. I also use SharePoint and other various workflow tools to organize records and improve communication across departments. My resume shows that I helped improve financial workflows by 25% and regularly resolve discrepancies before they impact payment accuracy. In a previous position, I monitored multimillion-dollar project expenses, processed time-sensitive invoices through SAP, and coordinated complex purchase orders. Since I have managed the majority of these, these experiences make Fairfax County duties familiar rather than theoretical.

My education also supports my fit even though my degree is not in accounting. I will be earning a Bachelor of Science with majors in Cybercrime and Sociology with a minor in Criminal Justice. These fields strengthened my research, analysis, ethics, policy knowledge, communication, and attention to detail. They also taught me to examine problems from more than one angle. A financial issue may involve a vendor, contract, purchase order, employee,

county policy, and software system at the same time. That approach helps in accounting and procurement because the best answer often depends on both financial rules and the larger organizational setting. My education therefore adds useful investigative and analytical skills to my direct financial experience.

The culture appears formal, service-focused, and holds their employees accountable. Financial work in a fire and rescue department supports emergency operations, training, equipment, and the employees who serve the public. Accuracy matters because errors can delay supplies, travel, training, or payments. Public-sector finance gives me a practical way to help the community. The culture may be demanding, but it also seems meaningful because financial work contributes to a larger mission. Fairfax County also interests me because it offers public service and opportunities for advancement.

Although time management is not listed as a separate qualification, it is clearly necessary because the position includes wearing multiple hats and being extremely demanding. I have already handled this time of pressure while supporting the Chief's Office, where urgent requests from Chiefs, county employees, vendors, and fiscal year-end deadlines often overlap. One example involved a vendor submitting 148 invoices several months late, with many prices that did not match the purchase orders. I reviewed each invoice, researched the correct pricing, documented the discrepancies, and helped prevent inaccurate payments. This role will likely remain important as public agencies face stricter financial oversight and even more pressure to manage public funds carefully.

Conclusion

The Financial Specialist II position is a strong match for my current experience and future goals. I already perform many of the same accounting, procurement, reconciliation, customer-service, and problem-solving duties within a neighboring County in the Fire and Rescue department. My experience correcting complex invoice problems, creating standard operating procedures, managing urgent requests, and working across departments shows that I can meet both the technical and interpersonal demands of the role. The position also offers what I am seeking next, which is, full-time stability, public-service work, advance, strong benefits and continuous learning. Although long-range forecasting would require further growth, I have repeatedly shown that I have the ability to learn new systems, research unfamiliar issues, and apply policies carefully. For these reasons, Fairfax County would gain an employee who understands the pace and responsibility of the Fire and Rescue finance and who is ready to contribute from the beginning while continuing to develop in procurement and contract management.

References

- Fairfax County. (2026). Financial specialist II [Job advertisement]. Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department.
- <https://www.governmentjobs.com/careers/fairfaxcounty/applications/submitted/5376953/0d4cbb54-2a29-4dc6-b14e-f21774842f67/jobdetails>
- Gavino-Collins, S. (2026). Financial specialist resume [Unpublished resume].
- Harris, R., & Clayton, B. (2018). Editorial: The importance of skills – but which skills? *International Journal of Training Research*, 16(13), 195-199.
- <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/14480220.2018.1576330>
- Kenyon, K. (2024). How to read job advertisements [Presentation slides]. Cornell University Center for Teaching Innovation.