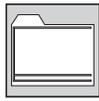


Emergency Medical Technician-Paramedic



Occupational Description

Emergency medical technicians (EMTs) and EMT-paramedics are trained to provide medical care to people who have suffered from an illness or an injury outside of the hospital setting. EMTs and paramedics work under protocols approved by a physician medical director to recognize, assess, and manage medical emergencies and transport patients to definitive medical care. EMTs provide basic life support, and EMT-paramedics provide advanced life support.



Profession Description

EMTs and EMT-paramedics may be employed by a private ambulance company, fire department, police department, public EMS agency, private ambulance company, hospital, or combination of the above. EMS responders may be paid or volunteers in the community.

EMTs must be proficient in CPR, and training is centered on recognizing and treating life-threatening emergencies outside the hospital environment. EMTs learn the basics of how to handle cardiac and respiratory arrest, heart attacks, seizures, diabetic emergencies, respiratory problems, and other medical emergencies. They also learn how to manage traumatic injuries such as falls, fractures, lacerations, and burns. EMTs also are introduced into patient assessment, history taking, and vital signs.

EMTs perform CPR, artificial ventilations, oxygen administration, basic airway management, defibrillation using an AED, spinal immobilization, vital signs, bandaging/splinting, and may administer Nitroglycerin, Glucose, Epinephrine, and Albuterol in special circumstances.

EMT-paramedics perform all of the skills performed by an EMT-Basic. In addition, they perform advanced airway management, such as endotracheal intubation. They obtain electrocardiographs (ECGs), introduce intravenous lines, and administer numerous emergency medications. EMT-paramedics assess ECG tracings and defibrillate. They have extensive training in patient assessment and are exposed to a variety of clinical experiences during training.



Educational Programs

In most locations in the United States, the minimum level of education that most EMS professionals have before entering the workforce is that of a Basic-Level EMT. Individuals who work as firefighters or police officers may perform some emergency medical work when trained as first responders. Some paramedic programs provide an all-inclusive program that includes both EMT and paramedic training in one program. All levels of EMS training are set by the federal government through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

EMT training is offered at community colleges, technical schools, hospitals, and universities and EMS, fire, and police academies. Those interested in EMT training should contact their state's EMS Office. Those interested in paramedic training should contact the Committee on Accreditation for EMS Professionals. Both of these agencies can help potential students find local training.

Length. EMT training varies from 2 to 6 months, depending on the training site and hours of class scheduled per week. There are training programs that have class every day for several months for those interested in quick completion. Longer programs are available to accommodate students who have family, a full-time job, or other responsibilities that limit their available time for education. Approximate training requirements are:

- First Responder 40 hours of training
- EMT-Basic 110 hours of training
- EMT-Intermediate 200-400 hours of training
- Paramedic 1,000 or more hours of training

Prerequisites. An EMT student is expected to be a high school graduate or the equivalent and to meet the physical and mental demands of the occupation. EMT-paramedic students must have completed their EMT training prior to enrollment in most EMT-paramedic courses unless they are enrolled in a joint EMT and paramedic program. Some paramedic programs are part of bachelor of science degree programs offered at colleges and universities.

Curriculum. EMT and Paramedic training are composed of in-classroom, didactic instruction; in-hospital clinical practice; and a supervised field internship on an ambulance. Courses typically are competency-based and supported by performance assessments. Instruction provides students with knowledge of acute and critical changes in physiology and psychological and clinical symptoms that they might encounter in an emergency medical situation.



Inquiries

Careers

National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT)
PO Box 1400
Clinton, MS 39060-1400
800 34-NAEMT
www.naemt.org

Certification/Licensure

National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT)
Rocco V Morando Bldg
Box 29233/6610 Busch Blvd
Columbus, OH 43229-0233
614 888-4484
www.nremt.org

Program Accreditation

Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP) in collaboration with:
Committee on Accreditation of Educational Programs for the EMS Professions
1248 Harwood Rd
Bedford, TX 76021-4244
817 283-9403
www.caahep.org