

Healthcare Practitioners and Technicians

Emergency Medical Technicians and Paramedics

Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) and Paramedics provide immediate medical attention and transportation to people involved in incidents such as motor vehicle accidents, heart attacks, childbirth, trauma, and any other medical situation that requires immediate attention.

EMTs and paramedics are dispatched by a 911 operator to the scene of an emergency. Once there they assess the patient's condition and gather a medical history. They then provide emergency care and transport to a medical facility. EMTs and paramedics work in teams with one driving the ambulance and the other providing medical care to the patient. Once at the medical facility they report the condition of the patient to the medical staff there and provide any additional care that is needed under the direction of the medical doctors. After each run they document the trip, restock the ambulance with supplies, and decontaminate the interior of the ambulance in the case of the patient having a communicable disease such as AIDS or hepatitis.

There are three levels of certification available: EMT-Basic, EMT-Intermediate, and paramedic. One must be an EMT-Basic before they can become an EMT-Intermediate, and to become a paramedic one must be certified as EMT-Intermediate.

- The EMT-Basic is trained to care for patients at the scene of an emergency and while the patient is being transported to the hospital. They are trained to assess the patient's condition and manage respiratory, cardiac, and trauma emergencies.
- EMT-Intermediates have more advanced training than the EMT-Basics but their level of training varies by state. The highest attainable certification level is the paramedic.
- Paramedics can administer medications orally and intravenously (through IVs), interpret EKGs, and perform endotracheal intubations. Paramedics can work as part of a helicopter's flight crew to transfer seriously injured patients to hospitals. They can become instructors, supervisors, managers, and administrative directors of emergency service agencies.

EMTs and paramedics work indoors and out in all types of weather. It is a physically demanding job that requires kneeling, bending, and heavy lifting. In addition to these physical demands EMTs and paramedics are exposed to communicable diseases such as hepatitis-B and AIDS. They are at a higher risk for sustaining an injury while working and being exposed to violence by mentally unstable or aggressive patients. EMTs and

paramedics typically work irregular hours and are often required to work more than 40 hours per week because emergency services run 24 hours per day, 7 days a week.

Education/Training

How to Obtain:

To become an EMT-Basic one must hold a high school diploma and complete formal training and a certification process which varies at the state level. Once an EMT-Basic certification has been obtained further certification can be attained at the intermediate and paramedic level, with paramedic being the highest attainable level of certification available. The formal training and certification process for EMT-Intermediate and paramedic varies at the state level.

All 50 states and the District of Columbia require EMTs and paramedics to be licensed, but the requirements for licensure vary by state. Most states, however, require certification through the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT). Recertification is required every 2 - 3 years along with completion of continuing education programs. These also vary at the state level.

More information on Licensing and Certification:

- National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT):
<http://www.nremt.org/>

Average Costs:

Average cost of licensure varies by state. New York does not rely on the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians Exam used by many of the states in the USA. New York EMT and Paramedics must complete and pass a State Sponsored EMS Course and examination process.

National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) application fee is \$70*. This fee is charged for each attempt of the examination.

National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) recertification costs range from \$65 - \$85*.

*Note: Costs of continued education, certification and recertification may vary.