

# Become a Flight Paramedic

A Guide to Achieving Your Career Goal

## Introduction

Becoming a flight paramedic is a rewarding career choice for those who thrive in high-stress environments and have a passion for helping others. This role involves providing critical care to patients during aeromedical evacuations, often under challenging conditions. If you have dedication and drive, this guide will help you navigate the steps to becoming a flight paramedic, including education requirements, funding options, and practical experience opportunities.

## Education and Certification Requirements

### 1. EMT Certification

The first step towards becoming a flight paramedic is to obtain your Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) certification. This typically involves completing a state-approved training program, which can last from a few months to a year, depending on whether you pursue it full-time or part-time. After completing the program, you must pass the National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) exam to become a certified EMT.

### 2. Paramedic Certification

Once you are a certified EMT, the next step is to advance your training to become a paramedic. Paramedic programs are more intensive and usually take about one to two years to complete. These programs include both classroom instruction and hands-on clinical experience. Upon completion, you must pass the NREMT paramedic exam to obtain certification. Some states, like Oregon, require an associate degree.

### 3. Advanced Certifications

Flight paramedics often require additional certifications beyond the standard EMT and paramedic credentials. These may include:

- Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS)
- Pediatric Advanced Life Support (PALS)
- Pre-Hospital Trauma Life Support (PHTLS)
- Neonatal Resuscitation Provider (NRP)

- Critical Care Paramedic (CCP-C) or Flight Paramedic Certification (FP-C)

Each of these certifications involves completing specialized courses and passing the respective exams.

## Funding Your Education

### 1. Work While Studying

One way to finance your education is to work as an EMT while completing your paramedic training. Many EMTs work part-time or on a flexible schedule, allowing them to earn an income while pursuing further education. This approach not only helps cover tuition costs but also provides valuable experience in the field.

### 2. Scholarships and Grants

EMT & Paramedic programs are offered at community colleges. Because of this, they are eligible for financial aid and scholarships. Students can fill out a [Free Application for Federal Student Aid \(FAFSA\)](#) to be eligible for grants and low-interest loans. Some organizations, such as the National Association of Emergency Medical Technicians (NAEMT), offer scholarships specifically for EMT and paramedic students.

### 3. Tuition Reimbursement Programs

Some employers offer tuition reimbursement programs for employees who are furthering their education. Check with your current or prospective employer to see if they provide financial assistance for EMT or paramedic training. LFN offers tuition reimbursement for employees. EMTs can utilize this benefit to attend paramedic training while working at LFN. This can be an excellent way to reduce the financial burden of your education while building a name for yourself in the air medical community.

### 4. Volunteer with Your Local Fire Department

Many fire departments rely on volunteers, so much so that they will pay for your training in exchange for volunteer hours. Not only does this help financially, but it can give you an opportunity to gain valuable experience on EMS calls while giving back to your community.

# Gaining Practical Experience

## 1. 911 Experience

At LFN, we require new flight paramedics to have 5 years of experience working as a paramedic. We prefer that our paramedics have experience in busy 911 systems. Because our flight crews combine paramedics with nurses, we expect our paramedics to have strong emergency medicine skills and solid experience stabilizing and treating patients.

## 2. Join a Specialized EMS Team

Joining a specialized EMS team, such as a critical care transport team or a tactical EMS unit, can provide you with advanced training and experience. These teams often handle complex medical emergencies, preparing you for the demanding role of a flight paramedic.

## 3. Get Flight-Specific Training

AAMS (Association of Air Medical Services) has a [Critical Care Transport Academy](#) for people interested in becoming a flight nurse or paramedic.

There are various online courses and textbooks to prepare you to take the Certified Flight Paramedic (FP-C) test.

## Conclusion

Becoming a flight paramedic requires dedication, rigorous training, and practical experience. With determination and hard work, you can achieve your goal of becoming a flight paramedic and making a difference in the lives of patients in critical need. We would love to have you come join our team at Life Flight Network. You belong here.