

# Becoming an Aircraft Mechanic in the Air Medical Transport Industry

A Comprehensive Guide for High School Graduates

## Introduction

Becoming an aircraft mechanic in the air medical transport industry is a rewarding career path that offers numerous opportunities. This guide is designed to help individuals with a high school degree understand the various pathways to becoming an aircraft mechanic, including military and on-the-job training, and provide resources for funding their education.

## Pathways to Becoming an Aircraft Mechanic

### Military Training

Various branches of the military offer specialized training programs for aircraft mechanics. Enlisting in the military can provide you with comprehensive technical training, hands-on experience, and certifications that are highly valued in the civilian workforce.

Advantages:

- Structured and disciplined training
- Hands-on experience with military aircraft
- Access to certifications and credentials
- Potential for financial aid and scholarships

Disadvantages:

- Experience is often limited to one type of aircraft or aircraft system such as hydraulics, structures, or powerplants.
- You will still need to obtain your A&P certificate and need further education and experience to satisfy all of the airframe and powerplant certificate requirements.

## On-the-Job Training

Another viable path to becoming an aircraft mechanic is through on-the-job training programs offered by various aviation companies. These programs allow you to gain practical experience while working under the supervision of experienced mechanics who hold an Inspector's Authorization.

Advantages:

- Immediate immersion in the industry
- Learning from experienced professionals
- Potential for advancement within the company
- Earn a salary while you train

Disadvantages

- This path can take longer
- Your experience may be limited to a specific aircraft

## Formal Education and Certification

Attending aviation maintenance schools or community colleges that offer FAA-approved programs can provide you with the necessary education and certifications to become an aircraft mechanic. These programs typically cover subjects such as aircraft systems, maintenance procedures, and safety regulations.

Advantages:

- Comprehensive education and training
- Access to FAA certification
- Networking opportunities with industry professionals
- Financial aid options available (Pell Grants, Scholarships, Federal Student Loans)

Disadvantages:

- Experience may be very broad and require significant hands-on experience after school

## A&P Certification

To work as an aircraft mechanic in air medical transport, you will need both your Airframe (A) and Powerplant (P) certifications. To do this, you must have at least:

- 18 months of practical experience with the procedures, practices, materials, tools, machines, and equipment generally used in constructing, maintaining, or altering an airframe or powerplant, appropriate to the rating sought; or
- 30 months of practical experience concurrently performing the duties appropriate to both the airframe and powerplant ratings.

Or you may be eligible by:

- graduating from an FAA-approved [Aviation Maintenance Technician School \(AMTS\)](#) or
- completing the [Joint Service Aviation Maintenance Technician Certification Council \(JSAMTCC\)](#) training course for military personnel.

Completing one of these routes makes you eligible to test for your A&P Certification. The testing consists of knowledge, oral, and practical tests.

## How to Pay for Training

Funding your training is a crucial aspect of becoming an aircraft mechanic. Several options are available to help alleviate the financial burden.

### Financial Aid and Scholarships

Many institutions offer financial aid and scholarships to students enrolled in aviation maintenance programs. It's essential to research and apply for these opportunities to reduce the cost of your education. Students who have financial hardship may qualify for Pell Grants, which could potentially cover the entirety of your education. Additionally, many states offer free tuition to community college (see the bottom four bullet points).

Resources:

- [FAFSA \(Free Application to Federal Student Aid\)](#)
- [Aircraft Electronics Association Scholarships](#)
- [Aviation Technician Education Council \(ATEC\) Scholarship](#)
- [National Business Aviation Association Scholarship List](#)
- [Pathways to Aviation Scholarships \(And a great resource website.\)](#)
- [Women in Aviation International Scholarships: Dedicated to supporting women pursuing careers in aviation.](#)
- [Oregon Student Promise Grant \(Up to 90 Credits of Community College for Oregon Residents\)](#)

- [Washington State Financial Aid](#)
- [Idaho State Scholarships and Financial Aid](#)
- [Montana Promise Grant](#)

## Student Loans

Student loans can be an option to finance your education. Federal and private loan programs offer varying interest rates and repayment plans, so it's important to choose the best option for your financial situation. These are only available to students in a program where the school accepts Federal Student Aid. To learn if you are eligible for this assistance, [complete a FAFSA form](#).

## Employer Sponsorship

Some aviation companies offer sponsorship programs for employees who wish to pursue aircraft mechanic training. These programs may cover tuition fees, certification costs, and provide a pathway to employment within the company.

## Gaining Experience

Working for a Part 145 repair station while you're in school or after is a great way to gain the experience required to work for an air medical transport industry. The broader the experience, the better. Ideally, you will have worked on both the frame structure and the engine components of multiple aircraft types.

## Conclusion

Becoming an aircraft mechanic in the air medical transport industry is an achievable goal for high school graduates through various pathways, including military and on-the-job training. By leveraging financial aid, scholarships, and other resources, you can embark on this fulfilling career without being overwhelmed by the costs. With dedication and the right training, you'll be well-equipped to ensure the safety and efficiency of air medical transport aircraft.