

Paramedic

Two years of college, then the front line of emergency medicine.

TYPICAL PAY**\$80,000**

a year, full time

PAY RANGE**\$55k to \$105k**

starting to experienced

TIME TO QUALIFY**2 years**

after high school

DEMAND**Good**

job outlook

LICENCE NEEDED**Yes**

regulated job

WHERE YOU WORK**Ambulance services, hospitals, air ambulance, industry**

How you get there

- 1 High school** Grades 11 and 12
Grade 12 with biology and chemistry. Most programs require a standard first aid and CPR certificate to apply.
- 2 Primary care paramedic (PCP) diploma** 2 years
Two years at a college. Classroom, simulation, hospital placements and ambulance ride-outs. Admission is competitive, with fitness and lifting tests.
- 3 Provincial certification exam** After graduation
Ontario's A-EMCA (Advanced Emergency Medical Care Assistant) exam, or the COPR (Canadian Organization of Paramedic Regulators) exam in most other provinces.
- 4 Register and get hired** Months
Register with your provincial regulator (where one exists) and apply to services. Each service runs its own testing.

Pros and cons

- + Fast path: two years to a real health career
- + Good pay, pension and union
- + Genuine autonomy, you make decisions on scene
- Trauma exposure and high PTSD (post-traumatic stress) rates
- Physically hard on the back
- Nights, weekends and holidays

Good to know

Canada has three levels

Primary care, advanced care and critical care paramedics. Most on-road paramedics are primary care (PCP). Only advanced care paramedics (ACP) can give most cardiac drugs.

The ambulance is a mobile emergency room

A modern advanced care ambulance carries a cardiac monitor, defibrillator, ventilator, and dozens of medications. Paramedics often start treatment that used to wait for the hospital.

Optional boosts

Advanced care paramedic (ACP). Critical care paramedic (CCP). Community paramedicine. Bridge to nursing.

Where these numbers come from

Job Bank: Paramedics, wages (updated Nov 2025)

Canadian Organization of Paramedic Regulators: Provincial regulators

Canadian Organization of Paramedic Regulators: Exams

Paramedic Association of Canada

Numbers checked September 2026. Pay figures are typical full-time annual amounts in Canadian dollars, based on Government of Canada Job Bank wage data and published salary grids. They vary by province, employer and experience. Tuition is for domestic students. Sources, links and the click-through version: <https://career.help/ca/careers/paramedic>



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