

What does a Paramedic do?

Paramedics care for the sick or injured in emergency medical settings. People's lives often depend on their quick reaction and competent care. Paramedics respond to emergency calls, perform medical services and transport patients to medical facilities. A 111 operator sends paramedics to the scene of an emergency, such as an auto accident, where they often work with police and firefighters. Paramedics assess a patient's condition and determine a course of treatment, following guidelines learned in training or from physicians who oversee their work. They transfer patients to the emergency department of a healthcare facility and report their observations and treatment to the staff. When taking a patient to a hospital, one paramedic may drive the ambulance while another monitors the patient's vital signs and gives additional care. Some paramedics work as part of a helicopter's flight crew to transport critically ill or injured patients to a hospital.

Salary

New paramedics usually earn \$45,000 to \$58,000 per year, while experienced paramedics usually earn \$58,000 to 75,000 per year.

What subjects do I need to take at school?

- ❖ Biology
- ❖ Chemistry
- ❖ Health
- ❖ English

How do I get into it?

To become a paramedic you need a relevant degree or experience as an ambulance crew volunteer with St John. The study pathway requires you to:

- ✓ Complete a Bachelor of Health Science majoring in paramedicine through Whitireia New Zealand or Auckland University of Technology
- ✓ Hold a full Class 1 driver's licence for one year, and have a good driving record
- ✓

The volunteer pathway requires you to:

- ✓ Apply for an operational volunteer position with St. John
- ✓ Hold a full Class 1 driver's licence for one year, or
- ✓ Hold a full Class 1 driver's license and complete a defensive driving course

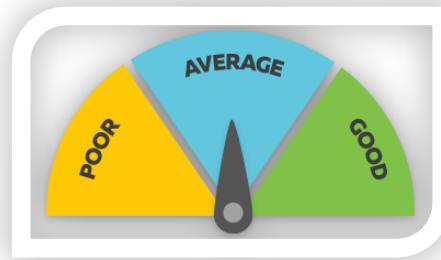
Paramedics working in air rescue may require postgraduate qualifications.

Interpersonal skills

- ❖ maturity and caring attitude
- ❖ alertness

- ❖ good communication and team player
- ❖ ability to work well under pressure and remain calm in emergencies
- ❖ problem solving
- ❖ decision making
- ❖ conscious of cultural and religious beliefs about how the body should be treated.

Useful experience for a paramedic includes working in a health-related environment and emergency services call centre or working as a medic in the New Zealand's Defence Force.



Will I get a job after training?

Chances of getting a job as a paramedic are average, and experience boosts chances of securing paramedic work. Working as a volunteer or assistant ambulance officer is a good way to gain work experience. Knowledge and experience of other cultures is also valuable in New Zealand's diverse population; understanding of Maori and Pasifika cultures is particularly valuable. St John is the country's largest employer of paramedics and provides ambulance services for about 95% of the country's population. Wellington Free Ambulance is a smaller independent ambulance service that also employs paramedics. Paramedics are also in demand in the New Zealand Defence Force.

Where can I find out more?

- **Ambulance Union NZ**
<https://nzambulance.org.nz/>
- **St. John**
www.matatini.com