



How to become a Firefighter

Being a firefighter is a rewarding career in public service. Firefighters report high job satisfaction. These jobs are often well compensated with excellent health and retirement benefits including a flexible schedule.

Here is the path:

1. **Get your Emergency Medical Technician Certificate (EMT)**, in emergency care and transportation of the sick and injured. Usually a one semester evening class at a local community college. This is a nationally recognized training and is the prerequisite to work on an ambulance or to get into most Firefighter Academy's. You will learn how to take care of sick and injured people and provide emergency care. <https://www.sierracollege.edu/>, <https://ncti.edu/>, <http://ltcc.edu/>, <https://www.tmcc.edu/>
2. **Attend a Fire Academy**. Fire Academies are usually a 6-month program designed to take students from the very beginning to competency in all of the skills necessary to work as a firefighter. Students also earn transferable college credits. <http://www.butte.edu/>, <https://www.sierracollege.edu/>, <http://ltcc.edu/>, <https://www.tmcc.edu/>
3. **Take the CPAT (Candidate Physical Ability Test)**. Most fire departments require that candidates for a job meet certain standardized physical abilities. Testing goes on throughout the year in many different locations in California and Nevada. <https://www.fctconline.org/cpat/>

Once you have completed items 1-3, the minimum standards, you can start applying for firefighter jobs. However, if you want to become even more marketable, here are two other things that you can do.

4. **Go to paramedic school**. Although it is a significant commitment, many firefighter jobs require that candidates are also paramedics. At the Fire Department, 80% of calls for service are EMS related. The one-year program will give you the education and skills necessary to provide advanced care to sick and injured patients, including skills like cardiac monitoring, IV's and various drug administration. This is a Nationally recognized license. <https://ncti.edu/>, <https://www.remsahealth.com/>
5. **Work on an Ambulance** or get other EMS and fire type experience. Having the training is the beginning but getting experience will put you ahead of others and help you feel confident in some of the key responsibilities of a firefighter/paramedic. Working on an ambulance or as a part-time or volunteer firefighter is a great way to start. <https://www.remsahealth.com/>, <https://www.amr.net/home/sac>, <https://www.ssvems.com/nevada-county/>