



INDIANA EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES WORKFORCE

January 11, 2025 – April 14, 2025
STUDENT DATA REPORT

Quarter 4 Student Data Report

Executive Summary

- The majority of students (53.8%) reported completing EMT programs.
- Approximately 76% reported having no prior experience with ambulance services.
- The average reported cost of EMS training programs was approximately \$672, while the average expected hourly wage upon employment was around \$24.
- Nearly half of the respondents (46.2%) learned about EMS career opportunities through someone they know currently working in the field.
- Very few students reported being contacted by ambulance service providers—only 6.7% by Indiana-based services and 1.9% by out-of-state providers.
- Most students expressed a preference to work in fire departments (63.5%) or hospital-based ambulance departments (32.7%) after completing their training.
- When selecting a community for employment, cost of living (66.4%), commute time (48.1%), and safety/crime rates (47.1%) were identified as the most important considerations.
- In evaluating future employment opportunities, health insurance (74.0%) and paid time off (68.3%) were the most important benefits.

Introduction

Recognizing the need for a comprehensive assessment of Indiana's emergency medical services (EMS) workforce, the Indiana Department of Homeland Security (IDHS) sponsored the development of the [2023 Indiana EMS Workforce Assessment](#). EMS workforce issues such as shortages of qualified personnel able to provide services in the communities that need them have been documented. Indiana's training pipeline for EMS personnel is critically important to developing the workforce with the skills necessary to support Hoosiers. It is important to understand the distribution, outcomes, and opportunities in Indiana EMS training institutions, especially from the perspective of current students to enhance training.

Methodology

The [Indiana EMS Student Pulse Check](#) survey was developed to understand the experience of students regarding their recently completed EMS training program and provide IDHS with a better understanding of this aspect of the training pipeline. This survey asked questions regarding demographics, training and certification, professional experience, and employment plans.

The Bowen Center for Health Workforce Research and Policy (Bowen Center) developed an electronic version of the survey in REDCap, and the link to this survey was embedded into the ACADIS certification and education management system by IDHS. When students complete their EMS training program, they are required to sign in

to the ACADIS system to sign off on several final steps, including completing the embedded survey. A member of the IDHS team also sends out manual emails reminding students to complete the survey. This strategy was identified by IDHS and the Bowen Center as the most feasible and appropriate given the ACADIS system specifications. As of April 14, 2025, 308 individuals have responded to the survey. Data were exported from REDCap and imported into Microsoft Excel. Incomplete responses (n=32) as well as responses for training completed outside of Indiana (n=1) were removed. Responses received outside of January 11, 2025, through April 14, 2025, were also removed (n=171). Data from 104 individuals were then cleaned and analyzed using STATA.

Limitations

There are important limitations to this report that should be noted. First, the information presented is largely based on self-reported data, which introduces the potential for some level of response bias. Additionally, while it is unclear how many students completed training programs between January and April 2025, it is likely that a sample size of 104 represents a low response rate. It is important to note that this report does not aim to generalize findings from such a small sample across the entire student population but rather to describe the demographics and experiences of those who participated.

Findings

Demographics

Table 1 presents the demographics of EMS students. Females represented 73.1% of survey respondents. Additionally, male students reported more racial diversity than female students. Overall, the majority of survey respondents reported their race as White (81.7%).

Table 1 Demographic characteristics for Indiana EMS students

	Female		Male		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Total	76		28		104	
Race/Ethnicity						
American Indian/Alaska Native	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Asian	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Black or African American	2	2.6%	0	0.0%	2	1.9%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	0	0.0%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
White	63	82.9%	22	78.6%	85	81.7%
Some other race	1	1.3%	0	0.0%	1	1.0%
Not Hispanic or Latino	1	1.3%	2	7.1%	3	2.9%
Latina/o or Spanish origin	9	11.8%	4	14.3%	13	12.5%

Student Background

When asked about current certifications, 26% of respondents reported holding Firefighter I, while 24% of respondents reported holding the Firefighter II credential. These were followed by Volunteer Firefighter certification (13.5%) and EMR certification (12.5%). Additional details can be found in Table 2.

Table 2 Current credentials

	Total	
	N	%
None	1	1.0%
EMR certification	13	12.5%
EMT certification	6	5.8%
Advanced EMT certification	1	1.0%
Paramedic license	0	0.0%
Critical Care Paramedic certification (ISBC certification)	0	0.0%
Flight Paramedic certification (ISBC certification)	0	0.0%
Community Paramedic certification (ISBC certification)	0	0.0%
Tactical Paramedic certification (ISBC certification)	0	0.0%
Volunteer Firefighter	14	13.5%
Firefighter I	27	26.0%
Firefighter II	25	24.0%
Interagency Wildfire	0	0.0%
Physician assistant	0	0.0%
Nurse – ASN	0	0.0%
Nurse – BSN	3	2.9%
Physician	0	0.0%
Other health profession	4	3.9%
Other non-health profession	4	3.9%

Note: Percentages in this table do not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses

Regarding the programs students were enrolled in, more than half (53.9%) reported they were completing education for an EMT certification. Another 37.5% indicated they were pursuing EMR certification, while 4.8% reported not being enrolled in any program (see Table 3).

Table 3 Current education program

	Total	
	N	%
None	5	4.8%
EMR certification	39	37.5%
EMT certification	56	53.9%
Advanced EMT certification	3	2.9%
Paramedic license	2	1.9%
Critical Care Paramedic certification (ISBC certification)	0	0.0%
Flight Paramedic certification (ISBC certification)	0	0.0%
Community Paramedic certification (ISBC certification)	0	0.0%
Tactical Paramedic certification (ISBC certification)	0	0.0%
Volunteer Firefighter	6	5.8%
Firefighter I	10	9.6%
Firefighter II	10	9.6%
Interagency Wildfire	0	0.0%
Physician Assistant	0	0.0%

Table 3 Current education program

	Total	
	N	%
Nurse – ASN	0	0.0%
Nurse – BSN	0	0.0%
Physician	0	0.0%
Other health profession	0	0.0%
Other non-health profession	0	0.0%

Note: Percentages in this table do not add up to 100% because respondents were able to select multiple responses

Students were asked to indicate how they developed an awareness of EMS careers, as shown in Table 4. Nearly half (46.2%) stated that they knew someone working in the EMS field, while approximately 19.2% reported learning about these careers through other means.

Table 4 Knowledge of EMS careers

	Total	
	N	%
I know someone who is an EMR, EMT, or paramedic	48	46.2%
I learned about it during academic advising through my school counselor (or related activity)	3	2.9%
I learned about this career at a job fair	2	1.9%
I did my own research to learn about these jobs	11	10.6%
I learned about careers in EMS on a television show or movie	2	1.92%
General knowledge	18	17.3%
Other	20	19.2%

Students were also asked about their previous experience working on an ambulance, as detailed in Table 5. The majority (76.0%) reported having no previous ambulance experience. Meanwhile, 11.5% indicated having less than 1 year of experience, and 5.8% reported having either 1-5 years or more than 10 years of experience.

Table 5 Previous ambulance experience

	Total	
	N	%
None	79	76.0%
Less than 1 year	12	11.5%
1-5 years	6	5.8%
6-10 years	1	1.0%
More than 10 years	6	5.8%

Estimated Costs and Anticipated Wages

To better understand the financial landscape of EMS training, students were asked to estimate the total cost of their EMS training program. Students were asked to include non-tuition expenses, such as educational materials or uniforms, in this estimated cost. Students were also asked to report what their expectations were for a realistic hourly wage after program completion. Averages and ranges are presented in Tables 6-10.

Overall, respondents reported an average estimated program cost of approximately \$672.00, with an anticipated hourly wage of nearly \$24.00 (Table 6). When analyzed by certification type, the EMR program had the lowest average cost at \$241.00, with an expected hourly wage of \$24.10 (Table 7). In contrast, the Paramedic program had the highest average cost at approximately \$3,500.00, with an expected hourly wage of \$30.00 (Table 10).

Table 6 Student reported cost and expected wages

Total Costs			Expected Wage		
Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
\$672.00	\$0.00	\$8,000.00	\$24.00	\$0.00	\$60.00

Table 7 Student reported cost and expected wages, EMR students

Total Costs			Expected Wage		
Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
\$241.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00	\$24.10	\$0.00	\$60.00

Table 8 Student reported cost and expected wages, EMT students

Total Costs			Expected Wage		
Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
\$743.00	\$0.00	\$220.00	\$23.40	\$14.50	\$48.00

Table 9 Student reported cost and expected wages, AEMT students

Total Costs			Expected Wage		
Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
\$500.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00	\$18.70	\$16.00	\$20.00

Table 10 Student reported cost and expected wages, Paramedic students

Total Costs			Expected Wage		
Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Minimum	Maximum
\$3,500.00	\$500.00	\$6,500.00	\$30.00	\$30.00	\$30.00

Student Comfort Level

Students were asked to report their level of comfort handling common or complex EMS runs (Table 11). Approximately 62.5% expressed confidence in providing care for patients with COVID-19, and 59.6% felt comfortable managing accident-related cases. Notably, 18.27% of respondents reported feeling the least comfortable when faced with situations involving the death of a child, representing the highest level of discomfort reported.

Table 11 Comfort level with difficult runs

	Very Comfortable		Somewhat Comfortable		Not Very Comfortable		Unsure		Not Applicable	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Caring for patients with or suspected to have COVID-19	65	62.5%	34	32.7%	1	1.0%	3	2.9%	1	1.0%
Accidents	62	59.6%	39	37.5%	3	2.9%	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Your own friend or family member needing care	58	55.8%	33	31.7%	8	7.7%	5	4.8%	0	0.0%
Massive traumatic injury	48	46.2%	45	43.3%	6	5.8%	5	4.8%	0	0.0%
Domestic violence	46	44.2%	50	48.1%	3	2.9%	4	3.9%	1	1.0%
Burns	46	44.2%	49	47.1%	5	4.8%	4	3.9%	0	0.0%
Disasters	34	32.7%	62	59.6%	5	4.8%	3	2.9%	0	0.0%
Other types of crime	44	42.3%	48	46.2%	6	5.8%	5	4.8%	1	1.0%
Sexual assault	42	40.4%	48	46.2%	9	8.7%	4	3.9%	1	1.0%
Death of a child	31	29.8%	45	43.3%	19	18.3%	9	8.7%	0	0.0%

Employment Plans

Students were asked several questions to understand their employment plans after program completion. These questions covered employment hours, setting, job title, community factors, benefits, and other factors.

Desired Employment

Among EMR students, approximately 33.3% expressed interest in non-ambulance service employment in other fields, while 20.5% were uncertain about their employment preferences (Table 12). For EMT students, over one-third (35.7%) indicated a desire for full-time employment after graduation (Table 13). Of the three AMET students, two (66.7%) reported interest in full-time employment and one (33.3%) expressed interest in non-ambulance service employment (Table 14). Both Paramedic students ($n = 2$) indicated they were open to either full-time or part-time employment (Table 15).

Table 12 Desired ambulance service employment for EMR students

	Total	
	N	%
Yes, full-time	5	12.8%
Yes, either full- or part-time	3	7.7%
Yes, part-time	1	2.6%
Unsure	8	20.5%
No, seeking work with a hospital	0	0.0%
No, seeking work in another health care related service	3	7.7%
No, seeking further health care related training	2	5.1%
No, seeking further non health care related training	4	10.3%
No, other	13	33.3%

Table 13 Desired ambulance service employment for EMT students

	Total	
	N	%
Yes, full-time	20	35.7%
Yes, either full- or part-time	8	14.3%
Yes, part-time	7	12.5%
Unsure	11	19.6%
No, seeking work with a hospital	2	3.6%
No, seeking work in another health care related service	1	1.8%
No, seeking further health care related training	0	0.0%
No, seeking further non health care related training	2	3.6%
No, other	5	8.9%

Table 14 Desired ambulance service employment for AEMT students

	Total	
	N	%
Yes, full-time	2	66.7%
Yes, either full- or part-time	0	0.0%
Yes, part-time	0	0.0%
Unsure	0	0.0%
No, seeking work with a hospital	0	0.0%
No, seeking work in another health care related service	0	0.0%
No, seeking further health care related training	0	0.0%
No, seeking further non health care related training	0	0.0%
No, other	1	33.3%

Table 15 Desired ambulance service employment for Paramedic students

	Total	
	N	%
Yes, full-time	1	50.0%
Yes, either full- or part-time	1	50.0%
Yes, part-time	0	0.0%
Unsure	0	0.0%
No, seeking work with a hospital	0	0.0%
No, seeking work in another health care related service	0	0.0%
No, seeking further health care related training	0	0.0%
No, seeking further non health care related training	0	0.0%
No, other	0	0.0%

Employer Type

Table 16 presents the desired employment settings of EMS students. Among them, 63.5% expressed a preference for working in a fire department upon completing their program. Approximately 32.7% indicated a preference for employment in a hospital ambulance department, followed by 18.3% who preferred working in a third service setting.

Table 16 Desired employer setting

	Total	
	N	%
Fire department	66	63.5%
Hospital ambulance department	34	32.7%
Third service (county, city, township, municipal)	19	18.3%
Hospital in a non-ambulance position	6	5.8%
Private nonprofit	6	5.8%
Private for-profit	9	8.7%
Law enforcement/corrections	11	10.6%
No preference	13	12.5%
Federal or military ambulance department	3	2.9%
Government service in a non-ambulance position	3	2.9%
Public health agency	2	1.9%
Unsure	4	3.9%
Higher education in a staff or faculty role	3	2.89%
Plan to continue education and not enter workforce in the near term	1	1.0%
Military in a non-ambulance position	4	3.9%
Research institution	2	1.9%
Other	0	0.0%
None of the above	8	7.7%

Job Type

Among the 39 students who reported completing EMR programs, 20.5% indicated a preference for careers in EMR (other), followed by 17.9% who were interested in becoming Firefighters (EMT), and 15.4% who preferred roles in EMR (ambulance) (Table 17).

Table 17 Desired job type for EMR students

	Total	
	N	%
EMR (ambulance)	6	15.4%
EMR (hospital/clinic)	2	5.1%
EMR (other)	8	20.5%
EMT (ambulance)	4	10.3%
EMT (hospital/clinic)	2	5.1%
EMT (other)	1	2.6%
Advanced EMT (ambulance)	1	2.6%
Advanced EMT (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Advanced EMT (other)	1	2.6%
Paramedic (ground ambulance 911)	1	2.6%
Paramedic (ground ambulance critical care)	1	2.6%
Paramedic (rotor/fixed wing ambulance)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (community paramedic)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (other)	0	0.0%

Table 17 Desired job type for EMR students

	Total	
	N	%
Firefighter (EMR)	1	2.6%
Firefighter (EMT)	7	17.9%
Firefighter (Nurse)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (Paramedic)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (Educator)	1	2.6%
Firefighter (Leadership)	1	2.6%
Physician Assistant	0	0.0%
Nurse (ground ambulance 911)	0	0.0%
Nurse (ground ambulance critical care)	0	0.0%
Nurse (rotor/fixed wing ambulance)	0	0.0%
Nurse (community paramedic)	0	0.0%
Nurse (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Nurse (other)	0	0.0%
Educator (ambulance)	0	0.0%
Educator (fire department)	1	2.6%
Educator (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Educator (other)	0	0.0%
Leadership (ambulance)	0	0.0%
Leadership (fire department)	1	2.6%
Leadership (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Leadership (other)	0	0.0%
Physician (agency affiliated)	0	0.0%
Physician (EMS medical director)	0	0.0%
Military	0	0.0%
Other	2	5.1%
None of the above	5	12.8%

Among the 56 students currently enrolled in EMT programs, 69.6% expressed a preference for pursuing EMT roles in ambulance services after graduation. Additionally, 53.6% indicated interest in Firefighter (EMT) roles (Table 18).

Table 18 Desired job type for EMT students

	Total	
	N	%
EMR (ambulance)	5	8.9%
EMR (hospital/clinic)	3	5.4%
EMR (other)	3	5.4%
EMT (ambulance)	39	69.6%
EMT (hospital/clinic)	16	28.6%
EMT (other)	12	21.4%
Advanced EMT (ambulance)	0	0.0%
Advanced EMT (hospital/clinic)	1	1.8%
Advanced EMT (other)	0	0.0%

Table 18 Desired job type for EMT students

	Total	
	N	%
Paramedic (ground ambulance 911)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (ground ambulance critical care)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (rotor/fixed wing ambulance)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (community paramedic)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (other)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (EMR)	2	3.6%
Firefighter (EMT)	30	53.6%
Firefighter (Nurse)	1	1.8%
Firefighter (Paramedic)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (Educator)	1	1.8%
Firefighter (Leadership)	1	1.8%
Physician Assistant	1	1.8%
Nurse (ground ambulance 911)	0	0.0%
Nurse (ground ambulance critical care)	0	0.0%
Nurse (rotor/fixed wing ambulance)	0	0.0%
Nurse (community paramedic)	0	0.0%
Nurse (hospital/clinic)	1	1.8%
Nurse (other)	0	0.0%
Educator (ambulance)	1	1.8%
Educator (fire department)	2	3.6%
Educator (hospital/clinic)	1	1.8%
Educator (other)	0	0.0%
Leadership (ambulance)	0	0.0%
Leadership (fire department)	1	1.8%
Leadership (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Leadership (other)	0	0.0%
Physician (agency affiliated)	0	0.0%
Physician (EMS medical director)	0	0.0%
Military	1	1.8%
Other	1	1.8%
None of the above	3	5.4%

Among the three AEMT students surveyed, 66.7% identified Advanced EMT (ambulance) as their preferred job type. Additionally, one student expressed interest in Advanced EMT (hospital/clinic), Advanced EMT (other), and Firefighter (EMT) roles, respectively (Table 19).

Table 19 Desired job type for AEMT students

	Total	
	N	%
EMR (ambulance)	0	0.0%
EMR (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
EMR (other)	0	0.0%

Table 19 Desired job type for AEMT students

	Total	
	N	%
EMT (ambulance)	0	0.0%
EMT (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
EMT (other)	0	0.0%
Advanced EMT (ambulance)	2	66.7%
Advanced EMT (hospital/clinic)	1	33.3%
Advanced EMT (other)	1	33.3%
Paramedic (ground ambulance 911)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (ground ambulance critical care)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (rotor/fixed wing ambulance)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (community paramedic)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (other)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (EMR)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (EMT)	1	33.3%
Firefighter (Nurse)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (Paramedic)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (Educator)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (Leadership)	0	0.0%
Physician Assistant	0	0.0%
Nurse (ground ambulance 911)	0	0.0%
Nurse (ground ambulance critical care)	0	0.0%
Nurse (rotor/fixed wing ambulance)	0	0.0%
Nurse (community paramedic)	0	0.0%
Nurse (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Nurse (other)	0	0.0%
Educator (ambulance)	0	0.0%
Educator (fire department)	0	0.0%
Educator (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Educator (other)	0	0.0%
Leadership (ambulance)	0	0.0%
Leadership (fire department)	0	0.0%
Leadership (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Leadership (other)	0	0.0%
Physician (agency affiliated)	0	0.0%
Physician (EMS medical director)	0	0.0%
Military	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%
None of the above	0	0.0%

Among the two Paramedic students surveyed, both expressed interest in pursuing roles as Firefighter (Paramedic). Additionally, they also indicated interest in Paramedic (ground ambulance 911), as well as Paramedic (rotor/fixed wing ambulance) (Table 20).

Table 20 Desired job type for Paramedic students

	Total	
	N	%
EMR (ambulance)	0	0.0%
EMR (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
EMR (other)	0	0.0%
EMT (ambulance)	0	0.0%
EMT (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
EMT (other)	0	0.0%
Advanced EMT (ambulance)	0	0.0%
Advanced EMT (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Advanced EMT (other)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (ground ambulance 911)	1	50.0%
Paramedic (ground ambulance critical care)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (rotor/fixed wing ambulance)	1	50.0%
Paramedic (community paramedic)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Paramedic (other)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (EMR)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (EMT)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (Nurse)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (Paramedic)	2	100.0%
Firefighter (Educator)	0	0.0%
Firefighter (Leadership)	0	0.0%
Physician Assistant	0	0.0%
Nurse (ground ambulance 911)	0	0.0%
Nurse (ground ambulance critical care)	0	0.0%
Nurse (rotor/fixed wing ambulance)	0	0.0%
Nurse (community paramedic)	0	0.0%
Nurse (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Nurse (other)	0	0.0%
Educator (ambulance)	0	0.0%
Educator (fire department)	0	0.0%
Educator (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Educator (other)	0	0.0%
Leadership (ambulance)	0	0.0%
Leadership (fire department)	0	0.0%
Leadership (hospital/clinic)	0	0.0%
Leadership (other)	0	0.0%
Physician (agency affiliated)	0	0.0%
Physician (EMS medical director)	0	0.0%
Military	0	0.0%
Other	0	0.0%
None of the above	0	0.0%

Recruitment

To gain insight into the interactions between ambulance services and EMS students, respondents were asked whether they had been contacted by ambulance service providers (Table 21). Only 6.7% reported being contacted by Indiana-based ambulance services, and an even smaller proportion (1.9%) reported contact from out-of-state providers. These findings highlight potential opportunities for Indiana EMS organizations to strengthen engagement with students in training programs, which could play a critical role in improving recruitment and retention outcomes.

Table 21 Interactions with Ambulance Services

	Yes		No	
	N	%	N	%
Have any Indiana ambulance services contacted you?	7	6.7%	97	93.3%
Have any non-Indiana ambulance services contacted you?	2	1.9%	102	98.1%

Community Factors

To understand the influence of community factors on students' employment decisions, respondents were asked to rate the importance of various community aspects in deciding whether to work at an ambulance service (Table 22). A majority (66.4%) indicated that the cost of living in the community was a very important factor in their decision-making process. Additionally, commute time (48.1%) and crime rates/safety (47.1%) were also considered very important by a significant portion of respondents. In contrast, factors such as nightlife were deemed not important by more than half of the respondents (58.7%).

Table 22 Desired community for employment

	Very Important		Somewhat Important		Not too Important	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Cost of living	69	66.4%	25	24.0%	7	6.7%
Commute time	50	48.1%	42	40.4%	9	8.7%
Crime rates/safety	49	47.1%	44	42.3%	7	6.3%
Proximity to spouse work/school	44	42.3%	33	31.7%	20	19.2%
Hospital/health system reputation (not the employer)	42	40.4%	45	43.3%	13	12.5%
Small town or a more rural lifestyle	42	40.4%	35	33.7%	19	18.3%
Quality of schools for children	44	42.3%	27	26.0%	27	26.0%
Recreational opportunities	36	34.6%	41	39.4%	23	22.1%
Proximity to extended family & friends	28	26.9%	40	38.5%	27	26.0%
Proximity to co-parent	21	20.2%	23	22.1%	42	40.4%
Proximity to higher education	22	21.2%	39	37.5%	35	33.7%
Diversity in the community members	21	20.2%	39	37.5%	38	36.5%
Proximity to major travel routes (airport, interstate, etc.)	11	10.6%	32	77.0%	51	49.0%
Big city or a more urban lifestyle	11	10.6%	34	32.7%	48	46.2%
Cultural amenities	23	22.1%	41	39.4%	32	30.8%
Nightlife	8	7.7%	27	26.0%	61	58.7%

Note: Individuals who reported not sure have been removed from this table.

Desired Benefits and Employer Factors

To identify the employment benefits most valued by students, respondents were asked to indicate which benefits they considered important when evaluating job opportunities after completing their program (Table 23). Health insurance (74.0%), paid time off (68.3%), and 401(k) plans (67.3%) were rated as the top three most important benefits. In contrast, benefits such as gym memberships (28.9%) and sign-on bonuses (27.9%) were viewed as less important, with a notable share of respondents indicating these were not too important.

Table 23 Desired benefits from employers

	Very Important		Somewhat Important		Not too Important	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Health insurance	77	74.0%	17	16.4%	7	6.7%
Paid time off	71	68.3%	25	24.0%	6	5.8%
401k/403b/457b/IRA	70	67.3%	25	24.0%	6	5.8%
Short-term disability coverage	59	56.7%	30	28.9%	10	9.6%
Long-term disability coverage	60	57.7%	29	27.9%	10	9.6%
Recertification costs and reimbursement	58	55.8%	34	32.7%	8	7.7%
Life insurance	65	62.5%	25	24.0%	11	10.6%
Uniform allowance	55	52.9%	38	36.5%	7	6.7%
Pension/OPERS	61	58.7%	30	28.9%	9	8.7%
Extra compensation for working a less desirable shift	49	47.1%	43	41.4%	9	8.7%
Retention bonus	46	44.2%	47	45.2%	7	6.7%
Tuition reimbursement	46	44.2%	35	33.7%	18	17.3%
Social security payments	48	46.2%	39	37.5%	10	9.6%
Other retirement programs	57	54.8%	35	33.7%	8	7.7%
Relocation reimbursement	34	32.7%	42	40.4%	21	20.2%
Scholarships	28	26.9%	44	42.3%	25	24.0%
Conference support	30	28.9%	46	44.2%	20	19.2%
Sign-on bonus	26	25.0%	44	42.3%	29	27.9%
Gym membership	35	33.7%	36	34.6%	30	28.9%

Note: Individuals who reported not sure have been removed from this table.

Employers can attract students by offering innovative employment arrangements beyond traditional benefits.

Table 24 outlines the employment options that students considered important. Peer support (29.8%), ensuring staff are not held over to cover uncovered shifts (25.0%), and fatigue management plan (22.1%) were identified as the top three key factors by respondents.

Table 24 Desired employment options by importance

	Most Important		Moderate Important		Somewhat Important		Not At All Important	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Flexible scheduling	21	20.2%	40	38.5%	31	29.8%	12	11.5%
At least three days off for full-time employees	21	20.2%	24	23.1%	42	40.4%	17	16.4%
Ensuring staff are not held over to cover uncovered shifts	26	25.0%	29	27.9%	34	32.7%	15	14.4%
Scheduling additional staff shifts to cover known busy periods	21	20.2%	37	35.6%	30	28.9%	16	15.4%
Peer support (mental health)	31	29.8%	31	29.8%	27	26.0%	15	14.4%

Table 24 Desired employment options by importance

	Most Important		Moderate Important		Somewhat Important		Not At All Important	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
48-hour workweek or less	17	16.4%	25	24.0%	41	39.4%	21	20.2%
Rotating crews between busy and slow assignments	18	17.3%	32	30.8%	34	32.7%	20	19.2%
Minimum time for calling off a shift before it is considered disciplinary	19	18.3%	32	30.8%	42	40.4%	11	10.6%
Fatigue management plan	23	22.1%	35	33.7%	29	27.9%	17	16.4%
Employer-assisted scheduling of time-off coverage	18	17.3%	31	29.8%	35	33.7%	20	19.2%
Minimum time off between shifts	16	15.4%	22	21.2%	46	44.2%	20	19.2%
Staff support for extended drop-off/wait/boarding times	12	11.5%	32	30.8%	42	40.4%	18	17.3%
Short time requirement for ePCR completion at end of shift	12	11.5%	31	29.8%	42	40.4%	19	18.3%
Maximum number of dispatches per time/shift	13	12.5%	24	23.1%	40	38.5%	27	26.0%
Maximum duty time policy	11	10.6%	28	26.9%	43	41.4%	22	21.2%

Ranking of Important Factors

Respondents were asked to select and rank the three most important factors influencing their choice of an employer after completing their program. Nearly half (48.1%) identified the location of the ambulance service as the most significant factor. This was followed by staffing patterns, including shift length and rotation, which were important to 36.5% of respondents. Additional details on the influencing factors can be found in Table 25.

Table 25 Employment seeking: employer

	Total		
	Average	N	%
Career advancement/promotion opportunities within the ambulance service	2.28	33	31.7%
Professional development opportunities including career advancement funding or reimbursement.	2.28	29	27.9%
Run volume of the ambulance service	2.32	25	24.0%
Type of responses for the ambulance service (example rural versus urban)	2.42	12	11.5%
Offering additional assignments (e.g., TEMS, bike team, committees, community outreach, etc.)	2.00	16	15.4%
Staffing pattern (length of the shifts, shift rotation).	1.53	38	36.5%
Station-based response with amenities such as bedrooms, kitchen, dayroom, office space	2.24	33	31.7%
Having the same (three or more) employees working at the same base with regular interpersonal interaction	2.20	25	24.0%
Location of the ambulance service (e.g.. located in your home jurisdiction)	1.52	50	48.1%

Geographic Distribution

Survey respondents were asked to provide the zip codes of both their residence and their training program. As shown in Figure 1, only 31.7% (n=33) reported completing their training in the same zip code as their home. This indicates that the majority of EMS students (68.3%) are leaving their home zip codes and counties to complete training and education in a different location.

Figure 1

