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Q2 2024

A Quarterly Insight Into New Hampshire's Fire & EMS Workforce

# Recruitment & Retention News



## paramedic wages >>>

### New Hampshire Ranked #2 Best State for Paramedics

New Hampshire was found to be the second-best state in which to work as a paramedic when considering specifically the average annual salary and the number of jobs available per capita.

Total Paramedic Jobs:	84
Average Annual Salary:	\$51,533
Lowest 10 Percent Earn:	\$35,000
Highest 10 Percent Earn:	\$75,000

For more information go to [www.zipppia.com/paramedic-jobs/best-states/](http://www.zipppia.com/paramedic-jobs/best-states/).



## Keeping You Dialed-In Recent Developments

*This newsletter describes the events, trainings, updates, and resources relating to recruitment and retention coordinated by New Hampshire Fire Standards and Training & Emergency Medical Services during the second quarter of 2024.*

This past quarter the Recruitment & Retention Coordinator has been busy traveling throughout the State giving ideas

and sharing strategies on how departments of all types can better recruit and retain members. The vitality and success of any organization are contingent upon two fundamental pillars: recruitment and retention. They provide the framework around which an

organization develops its personnel, creates its culture, and propels its expansion. Recruiting high school students to the fire service can be a valuable endeavor, as it introduces them to a noble profession while fostering a sense of community service and responsibility. That is why in May the Recruitment & Retention Coordinator invited high schools from across the State along with

the New Hampshire Department of Education to come to the Fire Academy to hear why the fire and EMS services are a great career

option for their students. An impressive number of high school counselors attended and learned of career pathways, wages and benefits information, and funding resources to share with their students. Two high school graduates from the Class of 2022 also attended to share

their personal reasons for joining emergency services and how they got there. Each took a different path but both ended up with the results they wanted: Full-time careers and a commitment to continuing to help the local call fire departments who supported their journeys.

We believe the event will inspire the next generation of firefighters and EMS providers.



paid training program >>>

# New Hampshire Program Paid for Firefighter I Training and Launched Career



## Stephen Francis Firefighter/EMT

Seeing his home be destroyed by fire in 2019 (left), Stephen Francis wanted to become a firefighter, and after an unexpected job layoff nothing stood in his way of achieving his goal. Stephen got his



*The Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA) program paid for Firefighter I (FFI) training to Stephen Francis, now at Bedford Fire Department.*

## WIOA Dislocated Worker

The WIOA Dislocated Worker program assists unemployed job seekers with their career and occupation searches, removing obstacles to employment, and receiving training to re-enter the workforce.

EMT, then received financial help through the WIOA program to get FFI. While taking the CPAT a firefighter encouraged him to apply in Bedford, so he did. He credits Bedford for taking a chance and sponsoring him so he could get Firefighter II. Stephen is now full-time on Bedford and loves it.

## Contact

For information on the WIOA program contact Ann Martland, Employment Counselor Specialist at (603) 656-6531 or [ann.m.martland@nhes.nh.gov](mailto:ann.m.martland@nhes.nh.gov). Visit [nhes.nh.gov/services/job-seekers/dislocated-worker.htm](https://nhes.nh.gov/services/job-seekers/dislocated-worker.htm) for an overview of the WIOA program, eligibility, and other services offered.

*Photo of Stephen Francis's home on fire by Jeff Hastings.*



Students at New Hampshire Fire Academy learning building construction in their first week of recruit school.

# WorkInvestNH-EMT Incentive Program Update

As of April 2024, 51 EMS units are using the program to get their people trained as either EMTs or Advanced EMTs. 88 people are using it to get their EMT and 94 people are using it to get their Advanced EMT. **For more information on this program go to <https://www.nhes.nh.gov/services/employees/EMTTrainingIncentiveProgram.htm>.**

fully involved >>>



# Sugar Hill Embraces Multi-Generations

*For rural communities to maintain a robust call or volunteer fire department, it is important that the department's current members actively recruit new members of all generations and maintain a positive environment to ensure there is a sense of belonging and support.*

With a population of fewer than 700 people, Sugar Hill relies on call firefighters and EMS providers to assist its residents and visitors in emergency situations. Luckily, the town has Chief Alan Clark to lead its fire department as he understands that different generations need to work together towards a common goal to successfully operate. He encourages seasoned members to learn from younger generations and vice versa. Chief Clark also makes every effort to introduce himself to new residents as a means to recruit and to stay engaged with his community. Both strategies have proved to work.



# American Medical Response's Recruitment Program

*Chosen candidates will be employed to complete a full-time EMT training program under the Earn While You Learn program, allowing them to obtain state certification before working on an ambulance at American Medical Response Inc.*



Photo of most recent program graduates. Front row left to right: Destiny Lee, Mary Chaquette, Abigail Eaton, Christian Greener. Back row: Cheyenne Waterman, Ben Coderre, Bojames Bandanza, Jake McGrath, Jared Toms, and Lucas Hoey. Photo courtesy of AMR.

## Candidate Physical Ability Test (CPAT) Numbers Soar!

The CPAT of April 22<sup>nd</sup> had a pass rate of 83% and then on June 10<sup>th</sup> the pass rate was 82% making these the most successful CPAT numbers in years. What is even more impressive is that **New Hampshire has beaten the national average!**

American Medical Response (AMR) in New Hampshire ran their first program in 2021 to address a shortage of EMTs in the market and to improve recruiting to reflect the communities that they serve. Earn While You Learn (EWYL) students are hired from within the community. In a 8 to 10 week program, applicants learn the skills necessary to become an EMT while receiving compensation. In order to be

eligible, a candidate must be at least eighteen years old, possess a high school diploma or GED, be up to date on any recommended vaccinations, and pass background checks. So far AMR in New Hampshire have had approximately 35 participants in the EWYL program with 85% of them staying on after the one-year commitment. This forward thinking recruitment strategy is paying off.



## ApprenticeshipNH

Did you know that Fire Departments and EMS Units can **build talent to fill their workforce** needs by starting an apprenticeship program? And they could have access to technical and financial assistance such as incentives and funding support. The workforce training program is funded through Federal Grants from the U.S. Department of Labor and has programs set up for **Firefighter and Emergency Medical Technicians** which can be stackable to create a career pathway. To learn more contact Apprenticeship USA-NH Hub Developer, Delilah R. Smith at [drsmith@ccsnh.edu](mailto:drsmith@ccsnh.edu) or (603-230-3526). You can also visit [apprenticeshipnh.com/](http://apprenticeshipnh.com/).

### behind the scenes >>>

## Andover Emergency Services Auxillary

The Auxillary's mission is to support the Department's members by providing food and refreshments to its firefighters and emergency medical service providers during lengthy emergency calls and assist with various events all year long. Andover's Auxiliary is made up of family members of the fire department and an employee of the police department.



This is a great reminder that there is more than one way to volunteer for your community.

staffing>>>

# Semi-Annual Staffing Questionnaire Results

In June a recruitment & retention semi-annual staffing questionnaire was sent to all NH fire departments and EMS units to gauge the previous six (6) months.



## Recruited

According to answers received, at least 285 firefighters and at least 203 EMS providers were hired in the past 6 months.

Note: These numbers could include lateral transfers.



## Still Needed

At least **320 firefighters** and at least **247 EMS providers** are still needed according to those departments that responded. That is a **decrease** of 6.7% of firefighter vacancies, and 1.2% decrease of EMS providers vacancies from January's numbers.

We continue to see progress made every 6 months. Keep up the strong work New Hampshire!

## Survey Takers

99 fire departments and 22 EMS units answered the questionnaire for a total of 121 organizations. The more answers received the better we can gauge progress and what areas remain troublesome.

## Not Retained

According to answers received, at least 168 firefighters and at least 103 EMS providers left organizations in the past 6 months.



## Helping Candidates Succeed

This February and May three highly qualified and respected NH Fire Officers taught a class of individuals seeking to get hired or promoted on how to prepare for an oral board interview. Students practiced being interviewed and interviewing each other while receiving candid feedback and learning essential techniques to help them prepare. Resumes and cover letters were also reviewed to help each student stand out for their future oral boards.

latest numbers >>>

# New Hampshire's Licenses & Certifications

## EMS Providers

As of June 2024, the total number of active EMS Providers is 5,708. Below is the breakdown by license level.

Emergency Medical Technicians: 2,616

Advanced Emergency Medical

Technicians: 1,459

Paramedics: 1,384

Emergency Medical Responders: 239

NH EMT – Basics: 8

Apprentice: 2

## Firefighters

As of June 2024, the total number of Firefighters is 4,561. Below is the breakdown.

Firefighter I Certified: 3,877

Firefighter II Certified: 2,937

NOTE: This is down a little from last year, mostly due to fire departments cleaning up their rosters in RespondNH and removing personnel that are no longer affiliated.

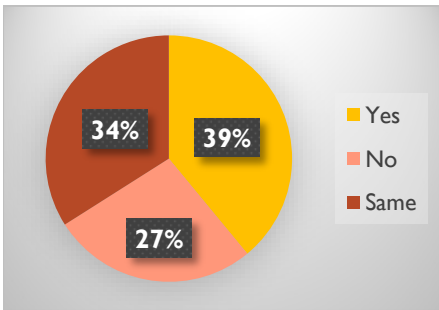
Source: ImageTrend RespondNH

insight >>>

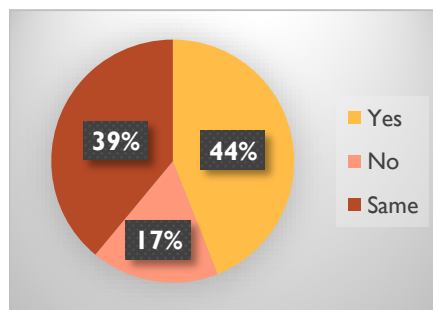
# Fire and EMS Organizations Shared Their Opinions in Recent Survey



**Question:** Do you feel your department's **recruitment** is better off today than it was two years ago?



**Question:** Do you feel your department's **retention** is better off today than it was two years ago?



coming soon >>>

## upcoming classes

- **July 18** – Recruitment & Retention for Non-Career Departments @ Lincoln
- **July 23** – Wage & Hour Laws Bootcamp: Getting Payroll Right is Essential to Retention @ Dover
- **August 14** – Finances for First Responders @ NH Fire Academy

While this is a great sign that things are looking up for New Hampshire, there is still much work to be done.

## time warp>>> 1885



Front row seated left to right: Herbert Keyes, Dewey Ladd, M.V.B. Clark, H.H. Haines, E.S. Foster, J.P. Wellman, G.H. Piper, C.M. Cummings. Standing: Frank Davis, C.E. Joslin, A.W. Dickinson, A.W. Green, C.H. Clark, Ed Crown, George Dort, Mr. Hulett, J.Q. Jones, W. Ellery Wright, E.A. Shaw, G.O. Wardwell and John Howe.  
Photo courtesy of **Keene Fire Department**.

## Have any fantastic news to share?

If you have a recent success story with recruitment or retention and would like to have it shared in a future newsletter please email [Kimberly.M.McCulloch@dos.nh.gov](mailto:Kimberly.M.McCulloch@dos.nh.gov).