



News Release

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CCAC Public Safety Institute adds classes to train more emergency services professionals for the region

PITTSBURGH—The Public Safety Institute (PSI) at the Community College of Allegheny County (CCAC) has announced the addition of two Advanced Emergency Medical Technician (AEMT) classes and one Paramedic class to its course offerings for spring 2025. The AEMT classes will begin in January, and the added Paramedic training is set to start in April.

The CCAC Public Safety Institute was established in the early 1980s and provides training in the areas of Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Rescue, Fire, Hazardous Materials, Communications, Emergency Vehicle Operations and CPR/First Aid. It also offers a comprehensive instructor training program designed for those who wish to instruct in the public safety arena.

According to Rick Susalla, CCAC PSI director, the college is experiencing a heightened interest in the AEMT, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) and Paramedic programs, and additional classes can help with the current shortage of emergency services professionals throughout the region.

“Our goal in expanding course offerings is simply to get more students trained and certified so they can get hired and serve the growing need in the region’s communities,” said Susalla.

Kacie Shultz, a recent graduate of CCAC’s Paramedic program, serves as a medic in Monroeville and New Kensington. She is also an assistant instructor for CCAC’s EMT classes. Kacie said that jobs are readily available for those interested in a public safety career and that she received several offers upon graduation. She also credited CCAC’s flexible programming options as an added incentive for interested students.

“The CCAC Public Safety Institute’s program is more flexible than other courses. Students can choose their own service organization for on-the-job training hours and create their own schedules instead of being assigned where to go and when to be there. This is beneficial to those students changing careers or those who have full- or part-time jobs,” said Shultz.

CCAC’s Paramedic training is an 11-month program that includes 454 hours of lecture and 170 lab hours, totaling 624 hours. The college is currently accepting registrations for the spring Paramedic class that will start

in April 2025. Participants in the Paramedic training must be at least 18 years of age as of the first class session and be a certified EMT or AEMT. Paramedics generally work for ambulance services or fire departments, but some paramedics find employment in hospital emergency departments, aeromedical services, medical clinics, sports medicine, tactical medicine, industrial medicine and similar occupations. Graduates of this program are eligible to take the credential examination of the National Registry of EMTs to become a Nationally Registered Paramedic. The credential is recognized by Pennsylvania Department of Health (DOH) for Pennsylvania certification as a paramedic.

CCAC's EMT training is a four-month program that includes 120 lecture hours and 52 lab hours, totaling 172 hours. The college currently has six EMT classes scheduled for the 2025 spring semester, with a few open seats still available. The CCAC EMT course prepares students with the knowledge and skills to provide basic level emergency care in the prehospital setting. This course is aligned with the National EMS Education Standards for EMT as approved by the Pennsylvania DOH. Students need to meet all eligibility requirements of the functional position description for EMT. Students who successfully complete the course will be eligible for the DOH certification exams for EMT.

CCAC's AEMT training is a four-month program that includes 144 hours of lecture and 64 lab hours, totaling 208 hours. This course prepares students with the knowledge and skills to provide advanced level emergency care in a prehospital setting and is aligned with the National Education Standards for AEMT as approved by the Pennsylvania DOH. The course includes classroom sessions, skill labs, and required clinical rotations in hospitals and ambulance services. Participants must be at least 18 years of age as of the first class. Students must meet all eligibility requirements of the functional position description for AEMT. These include vision and hearing acuity as well as reading/writing and physical abilities and be a certified EMT.

For more information, contact PSI@ccac.edu or visit <https://ccac.edu/workforce-and-community/public-safety-institute/index.php>