

## **Essential job functions of a Paramedic**

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A Paramedic must be a confident leader who can accept the challenge and high degree of responsibility entailed in the position. This requires excellent judgment and the ability to rapidly process information, prioritize decisions and act quickly in the best interest of the patient; must be self-disciplined, able to develop patient rapport, interview hostile patients, maintain safe distance, and recognize and use communication unique to diverse multicultural groups and ages within those groups. Must be able to function independently at optimum levels in a non-structured environment that is constantly changing. They must be lifelong learners; have knowledge with deep understanding; be complex thinkers; creative persons; active investigators; effective communicators; reflective and self-directed practitioners with the ability to meet the physical, intellectual, psychomotor and affective requirements demanded by this position. [https://one.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/ems/EMT-P/disk\\_1%5B1%5D/Intro-C.pdf](https://one.nhtsa.gov/people/injury/ems/EMT-P/disk_1%5B1%5D/Intro-C.pdf)

### **Mandatory Skills and Abilities**

#### **Language and communication – verbal and reasoning skills are used extensively**

- Communicate effectively (verbal, nonverbal and written) with English language fluency, range, accuracy, and clarity (speak smoothly and freely without the need for extended pauses to think about the grammar, vocabulary or pronunciation needed to communicate).
- Rapidly read, understand, analyze, apply and take action on work-related written messaging, assessments, policies, procedures, forms, publications, and regulations in a time-sensitive manner where there is no extended time or alternate accommodations for receiving, processing or deliberating on the content. This also includes accurately reading and discerning street names through signage, map or GPS reading, and correctly distinguishing house numbers or business addresses.
- Write factual, accurate, complete, and timely reports and business correspondence that includes all relevant data. This may require a detailed narrative relative to extenuating circumstances or conditions that go beyond what is required on a prescribed form or electronic template.
- Use required communication equipment to concisely and accurately describe verbally to dispatcher, supervisor and on-line-medical control (OLMC) their impression of situation and/or patient's condition.

#### **Reasoning skills**

- Understand and appropriately apply an extensive variety of complex technical and instructional materials.
- Must think critically and strive for clarity, precision, accuracy, relevance, depth, breadth and logicalness.
- Must solve problems and reach reasonable, ethical, and legally defensible conclusions from abstract variables and information which may be imperfect, ambiguous, conflicting or disjointed.
- Make accurate independent judgments and assumptions and determine a plan of care within their scope of practice and the limits set for time-sensitive patients; while following oral or written directives.

#### **Mathematical skills**

Accurately add, subtract, multiply, and divide in all units of measure (including metric) using whole numbers, common fractions and decimals; estimate patient weights in kg; convert centigrade and Fahrenheit scales, determine age from date of birth; calculate drug doses; draw up the exact amount of drug for each patient from original packaging, and administer IVF/drugs over time intervals specified bySOP/OLMC including IV drip rates.

#### **Psychomotor skills**

- Mental alertness, manual strength, physical dexterity, and hand-eye coordination sufficient to competently perform all BLS and ALS skills with safety and precision and without critical error as specified in the Program Procedure Manual
- Competently operate all EMS and communications equipment and drive an ambulance
- Accurately type assignments and enter data into and retrieve data from an electronic device using System-approved software and meeting System standards of competency

## **Physical demands**

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- Frequently: Sufficient strength, stamina, endurance, conditioning and motor control to stand, walk, run, crawl, squat, bend, kneel, climb stairs, lift, pull, push, balance, and carry patients/EMS supplies and equipment in all environments
- Frequent talking
- (Corrected) vision to 20/30 in at least one eye with color discrimination for at least red, amber, and green, and the ability to differentiate skin colors and the color of various body fluids
- (Amplified) hearing adequate to hear conversational speech and accurately auscultate BP, lung, bowel, and heart sounds
- Motor coordination and ability to move over rugged, uneven terrain, up and down stairs, in and out of tight spaces and vehicles (private and EMS-related)
- Lift usual and customary EMS equipment without weight restriction and safely lift and move patients of all sizes with adequate partners from the point of patient contact to the final receiving location
- Perform at least two minutes of uninterrupted high quality manual CPR with two minute breaks between compression sets for at least 30 minutes

## **Psychological/Social/Emotional skills**

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- Critical incident stress, fatigue, sleep deprivation, and cumulative stress are common within the EMS profession. The particular stresses vary depending on place and type of employment; work hours; work load/call volume; staffing levels; and nature/location of each call.
- Requires a survivor mentality, self-confidence, self-regulation; and self-compassion; strong emotional and social intelligence; tolerance and resilience to cope with stress, grief and loss, and the ability to maintain self-care while caring for others.
- Uses healthy coping strategies and effectively draws on a mental reservoir of strength that helps them appropriately respond to stress and hardship.
- Able to handle sensitive situations and keep confidential information in compliance with privacy laws, rules, and guidelines.
- Flexibility and adaptability to meet the demands of a VUCA world (volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous).
- Intellectual humility; integrity; fair mindedness; courage; empathy; autonomy; optimism (confidence in reason); and perseverance

## **Work environment**

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Considerable health and physical strength is necessary to perform the duties of a paramedic. Though safety measures are implemented whenever possible and a culture of safety is embraced, there remain numerous unavoidable aspects of a paramedic's job that may place the individual at risk of personal illness or injury.

These include, but are not limited to:

- Driving an emergency vehicle safely with and without using lights and sirens
- Exposure to hostile or combative patients and other individuals
- Response to violent scenes
- Response to incidents involving chemical, radiological, biologic, and explosive hazards
- Exposure to communicable diseases
- Danger from moving traffic at highway/roadway incidents
- Exposure to contaminated sharps and medical waste
- Performance of certain high-risk procedures in the delivery of patient care
- Noise level is moderate to high
- Temperatures vary from extreme cold to extreme heat
- Moisture level will vary from extremely dry to rain, snow and ice, and may require immersion in water

### **Abbreviations:**

ALS: Advanced Life Support | BLS: Basic Life Support  
CPR: Cardiopulmonary resuscitation  
OLMC: On-line medical control

BP: Blood pressure  
IVF: Intravenous fluids  
SOP: Standard Operating Procedures