



News Release

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New Paramedic Program Opens to Select Students at College of the Desert
Existing and recently-graduated EMT students invited to apply

PALM DESERT, CA (December 10, 2024) College of the Desert has added an exciting new offering to its lineup of certificate programs, the EMS Paramedic Academy. Current and recently graduated EMT students can apply now until January 5, 2025. A mandatory orientation will be taking place on Tuesday, December 17 and Monday, January 6. Program applicants must submit their completed application prior to one of these orientation dates to attend. The program will take place in the spring semester of each year and has capacity for 30 students.

"This program will aid in filling a dire shortage of qualified paramedics," said Walt Meyer, Director of the Public Safety Academy. "It is our goal, at College of the Desert, to provide programs that benefit students and the broader community. This program caters to the needs of our neighbors and allows students to enter a position that is in high demand."

Through a needs assessment and according to the recommendation of the Fire Academy and EMR/EMT Advisory Committees, it has become clear that there is a shortage of paramedic candidates in the Coachella Valley. The shortage has forced many local agencies to relax staffing requirements to fill roles. The Labor Market Analysis determined that the number of jobs open in this field will increase by 8% through 2027.

The shortage is due to two factors. First, Coachella Valley's aging population continues to increase creating more need for positions like paramedics and nurses. Second, during the pandemic, some local paramedic training facilities shut down. This has created an increased need and diminished supply.

For additional information about the EMS program, contact Laurie Green at lgreen@collegeofthedesert.edu.