



Southwest Florida Public Service Academy
4312 MICHIGAN AVENUE, FORT MYERS, FL 33905
Phone: 239-334-3897 www.swfpsa.org
Mr. Todd G. Everly M.P.A, Academy Director
Dr. Jeffrey Ziomek, EMS Program Coordinator

Southwest Florida Public Service Academy (SWFPSA)
Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Program – Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

- **What are the minimum requirements to apply to the program?**
The minimum requirements are available online at: [EMT Course Minimum Requirements](#)
- **How do I apply?**
Visit the SWFPSA website at <https://swfpsa.org> and under “Courses”, select EMT. After verifying that you meet the minimum requirements, follow the instructions to complete the application process online.
- **What is the duration of the EMT program?**
The EMT program spans 10 weeks and encompasses **300** instructional hours.
- **On which days are classes scheduled?**
Classes are held on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays. Schedules for field, clinical, and internship requirements may vary and are arranged by you based on your availability. These experiences are typically scheduled by recruits on Tuesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays. Regular classroom sessions do not occur during these times.
- **Will there be a graduation ceremony to recognize certification completion?**
Yes. The Academy will host a graduation ceremony at the conclusion of the 10-week program. The specific date and time will be scheduled and communicated near the start of the class.
- **Is this program accredited?**
SWFPSA is approved by the Florida Department of Health (DoH) to provide the Emergency Medical Technician program. The SWFPSA adheres to the standards put forth by the DoH and Florida Department of Education (DoE). We also follow the curriculum frameworks published by the DoE for the Emergency Medical Technician-Applied Technical Diploma (ATD). The DoE recognizes, through the curriculum frameworks, eleven college credits for the EMT-ATD program. It is up to the individual educational institution to determine how the credits are matriculated.



Southwest Florida Public Service Academy
4312 MICHIGAN AVENUE, FORT MYERS, FL 33905
Phone: 239-334-3897 www.swfpsa.org
Mr. Todd G. Everly M.P.A, Academy Director
Dr. Jeffrey Ziomek, EMS Program Coordinator

Program Costs, Financial Aid, and Payment Information

- **What is the cost of the program?**
For the most current information regarding fees, please refer to our website and the application documents available online. While we strive to provide timely updates, please be advised that fees are subject to change without prior notice.
- **Is financial aid available for this program?**
Yes, financial aid is available. Although the EMT (FIRE) program is not eligible for Pell Grants, we utilize the FAFSA to assess eligibility for other financial assistance. You may complete the FAFSA online at studentaid.gov, ensuring that you select Fort Myers Technical College (the Academy is an extension of FMTC) as your institution of choice. The Federal School Code is 007558. Upon acceptance into the program, please contact the Financial Aid department at fmtcfinancialaid@leeschools.net. In addition, we accept VA Education Benefits, Career Source funding, Florida Prepaid, and Bright Futures scholarships.
- **What payment methods are accepted?**
We accept payment via Debit or Credit Card.
- **When is payment due?**
All account balances are required to be paid on or before the final Orientation Day. If your financial aid source has not provided payment by this date, you will be responsible for the payment and may receive reimbursement once your financial aid source submits payment.

CASAS Test Overview & Requirements

- **What is the CASAS test?**
The Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment Systems (CASAS) test measures adult learners' reading and math skills to determine eligibility for educational programs. It is a timed exam that may take up to four hours to complete.
- **How often may a candidate retake the CASAS test?**
The CASAS test may be taken at intervals of 30 days.
- **What are the minimum score requirements for program admission?**
To be eligible for application, candidates must attain a minimum score of 244 in Reading and 230 in Mathematics on the CASAS test.



Southwest Florida Public Service Academy
4312 MICHIGAN AVENUE, FORT MYERS, FL 33905
Phone: 239-334-3897 www.swfpsa.org
Mr. Todd G. Everly M.P.A, Academy Director
Dr. Jeffrey Ziomek, EMS Program Coordinator

CPR, HEALTH REQUIREMENTS, AND PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS

- **Where may I obtain my CPR certification?**
The completion of AHA CPR certification is required through the Academy. This certification entails an additional out-of-pocket expense and consists of an online didactic component, as well as an in-person skills practice and assessment session. The online segment must be finalized prior to Orientation #1. The practical session will take place during Orientation #1.
- **Where can I receive my immunizations?**
Immunizations may be acquired through your primary care physician, or the local health department.
- **Where do I obtain my physical examination?**
Physical examinations must be conducted by your personal physician or a walk-in medical clinic, utilizing the Academy's required physical examination form.
- **Is a flu vaccine mandatory?**
No, a flu vaccine is not required.

ORIENTATION & STUDENT HANDBOOK

- **Is attendance at orientation Mandatory?**
Yes, attendance at both orientation sessions is mandatory. Failure to attend will result in dismissal from the program.
- **Where can I access the Student Handbook?**
The Student Handbook is available on the SWFPSA website under the Documents section. (<https://swfpsa.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/SWFPSA-Student-Handbook-revised-06-13-2024.pdf>)

UNIFORMS & EQUIPMENT

- **Where may I purchase uniforms?**
Uniforms are to be purchased from **Black Cat Embroidery**. Ordering instructions will be provided during the orientation. Do not acquire uniforms until instructed by the Academy.
- **Will I need to purchase a blood pressure cuff or stethoscope?**
No, the Academy will provide both items.



Southwest Florida Public Service Academy
4312 MICHIGAN AVENUE, FORT MYERS, FL 33905
Phone: 239-334-3897 www.swfpsa.org
Mr. Todd G. Everly M.P.A, Academy Director
Dr. Jeffrey Ziomek, EMS Program Coordinator

CLINICAL & FIELD INTERNSHIP

- **Where will I complete my clinical hours, ambulance or field internship?**
Students will fulfill clinical hours, in addition to completing Field internship hours, at one of our partnership locations.

EMPLOYMENT & CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

- **Can EMTs work in settings other than ambulance services?**
Yes, EMTs may find employment in hospital emergency departments, parks and recreation departments, even medical services, clinics, and various other healthcare environments.
- **How soon can I secure employment after graduation?**
Many EMS agencies often hire EMTs shortly after they obtain State of Florida certification, which is awarded upon successful completion of the NREMT examination.
- **Can I get hired as a firefighter with just an EMT certification?**
It depends. Most fire departments in Lee, Collier, and Charlotte counties require Florida EMT certification and Firefighter I & II certifications to be eligible for hire. The City of Fort Myers is an exception and may hire candidates without these certifications. Prospective applicants should contact the specific department they wish to work for to obtain detailed information regarding hiring requirements.
- **Will my background check disqualify me?**
Any conviction of a felony or of a misdemeanor involving perjury or false statement will disqualify you from consideration. All other questionable backgrounds will be reviewed by the Program Coordinator for final approval. It is important to note that Program acceptance does not guarantee certification. SWFPSA makes no guarantee that any specific offense will be cleared by the Florida Department of Health as this is beyond our control.



Southwest Florida Public Service Academy
4312 MICHIGAN AVENUE, FORT MYERS, FL 33905
Phone: 239-334-3897 www.swfpsa.org
Mr. Todd G. Everly M.P.A, Academy Director
Dr. Jeffrey Ziomek, EMS Program Coordinator

CERTIFICATIONS, SYSTEMS, AND EMS CONCEPTS

- **What is the NREMT?**
The National Registry of Emergency Medical Technicians (NREMT) is the certification examination mandated by the State of Florida for individuals aspiring to become licensed EMTs.
- **Is NREMT certification all I need to be hired in the State of Florida?**
No. You must obtain Florida State EMT certification to be eligible for employment in Florida. Instructions on how to obtain state certification will be provided near the end of the course. The process of obtaining state certification after earning NREMT certification is known as reciprocity and is available in most states across the country. There are no additional didactic or psychomotor requirements to obtain state reciprocity; however, an additional fee must be paid to the State.
- **What distinguishes CastleBranch from BridgesEXP?**
CastleBranch houses student medical information, including immunization records, and provides a platform for conducting criminal background checks. BridgesEXP delivers learning modules on behalf of Lee Health to educate students on hospital policies and procedures. CastleBranch is responsible for tracking compliance requirements, while BridgesEXP serves as the learning platform for coursework and communication.
- **What is the difference between municipal and private EMS services?**
Municipal services are government-operated and frequently offer long-term employment opportunities along with pensions. In contrast, private services may provide quicker hiring processes and more flexible scheduling options.
- **What does the term “paramilitary” signify in the context of EMS training?**
This term refers to a structured approach that emphasizes discipline, a chain of command, accountability, uniforms, and professionalism.
- **When does my EMT certification expire?**
Most state EMT certifications expire every two years. In the State of Florida, EMTs are required to complete continuing education (CE) to maintain certification. These hours are entered into a state-approved platform, after which a renewed certification is issued. There are no additional state exams or skills assessments required beyond the completion of the required CE credits. The State of Florida designates several approved platforms through which these CE credits may be obtained.