



Joint Position Statement

Opposition to Proposed Degree Requirements for Accredited Paramedic Programs

**International Association of Fire Chiefs (www.iafc.org)
International Association of Fire Fighters (www.iaff.org)
National Fire Protection Association (www.nfpa.org)
National Volunteer Fire Council (www.nvfc.org)**

The IAFC, IAFF, NFPA, and NVFC strongly support higher education for members seeking advanced degrees and educational opportunities at any level. We believe that individual agencies can and should consider strategies and provide incentives that encourage personnel to pursue higher education.

However, requiring a college degree for entry-level paramedics would create hardships for fire departments and make EMS systems financially unsustainable in many states. There are no identifiable data or other evidence suggesting that requiring paramedics to obtain a college degree would result in better patient outcomes, enhanced professionalism for EMS providers, better performance, or higher pay.

Our organizations are concerned about ongoing legislative and regulatory efforts to require a college degree for entry-level paramedics. This completely arbitrary change would shutter over 20% of existing paramedic education programs, leaving colleges and universities as the only venues available for paramedic education, thereby severely restricting fire/EMS departments' ability to recruit and train paramedics. The justifications used to support a proposed transition to college degree educational requirements are unnecessary, untested and do not have the support of our organizations.

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