

A photograph showing two Air Methods flight crew members in blue uniforms and caps loading a patient onto a stretcher on a helicopter. The patient is lying on a stretcher with white blankets and is being secured with black straps. The helicopter is white with blue and red stripes and has the word "New" visible on its side. The scene is set outdoors on a clear day.

Becoming an Air Methods Flight Nurse or Flight Paramedic

 **Air Methods**[®]

What It Takes

Today, hundreds of thousands of people nationwide are living healthy, active lives, and enjoying time with family and friends because of the high-quality assessment, triage, and treatment they received from Air Methods' medical personnel.

Our crews are some of the best in the air medical business today. As highly trained professional medical personnel, our staff has an enormous obligation to our patients and their families. Not only to assess the nature and extent of a patient's illness and injury and prioritize care needed, but also to assure safety remains the highest priority throughout the transport continuum.

The autonomy¹ to perform advanced patient care in one of the most modern fleets in the air medical industry is one of the many rewarding benefits of joining the Air Methods medical team. We expect all our medical personnel to start each shift by thinking about what will and can occur during the scope of a patient transport, and we expect all crew members to maintain positive interpersonal relationships with each other to ensure a positive safety culture. From the initial patient contact until patient care is relinquished to the accepting medical facility, a patient's safety is entrusted to us. Patients can choose their physicians, but not their flight crews. They have no choice but to trust us. To that end, we have an obligation to be worthy of that trust.

Working in EMS

Air Methods is the nation's largest provider of air medical emergency transport services in the United States and has flown 781,166 hours in the last 10 years. The company is dedicated exclusively to air medical transport, focusing on the quality of care to patients and safety in aviation operations. With 29 years of experience, the company transports more than 100,000 patients annually who require intensive medical care from either the scene of an accident or general care hospitals to highly skilled trauma centers or tertiary care centers. Air Methods has operations at 254 bases in 43 states, and is headquartered in Englewood, Colo.

¹ Utilizing standards and guidelines established by Air Methods Community-Based Services Medical Director(s)



Air Methods' fleet is one of the most modern in the air medical industry today and consists of approximately 320 helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft with 70% being Eurocopter products, 25% Bell, and 5% other.

From now until 2010, approximately 38 aircraft will be removed from the fleet as part of the company's fleet renewal initiative. Currently, approximately 65 percent of the fleet is twin-engine and 35 percent single-engine.

Medical Crew Work Life

The nature of the air medical flight nurses' and flight paramedics' work environment requires them to work 24-hour shifts. In addition to performing advanced skills and procedures, other functions required during your shift may include, but are not limited to:

- Attend pre-flight briefings and post flight debriefings and complete necessary documentation
- Assist in pre-flight liftoff checklist and assist pilot as requested, i.e., radio, navigational, and visual observation activities
- Comply with safety standards to assure safety of self, medical personnel, patient, and equipment
- Serve as a flight safety resource to neonatal/pediatric personnel when transporting specialty patients by helicopter

Air Methods supplies the flight suits and helmets and the medical personnel are expected to maintain a professional appearance during work and when representing the company. Equally important is the ability to maintain positive interpersonal relationships with colleagues, EMS representatives, hospitals and the public, and participate in patient and referring institution follow-up and planned outreach marketing and education activities.

Getting Started

Air Methods has set the following minimum standards for its medical personnel.

Flight Nurse Required

Education:

Graduate of an accredited School of Nursing

Experience:

Minimum three years critical care/emergency nursing experience (five years for Mercy Air bases)

Licenses & Certificates:

- Current RN license(s) for states of practice
- EMS or MICN certification/licensure as required by state regulations
- Current certifications in BLS/CPR; ACLS; TNCC/ BTLS/PHTLS; and PALS or equivalent
- Specialty certification (CFRN, CCRN, or CEN) required within three years of hire
- Advance Trauma Course requirement: (1) of the following certifications are acceptable: TNCC, ATLS, or TNATC within 6 months of hire. (Please note a skills lab must accompany all of the above mentioned advanced trauma courses)
- NRP if program provides high-risk OB and/or neonatal transports within 6 months of hire
- NIMS Training IS 100, 200, 700, 800 upon hire (in Western region, the courses must be complete to qualify for an interview)

Flight Nurse Preferred

Education:

BSN or Bachelors degree in health-related field

Experience:

Pre-hospital experience

Flight experience

Flight Paramedic Required

Education:

High School Diploma

Experience:

Minimum three years experience in a busy 911 system

Licenses & Certificates:

- Registered EMT-P licensed in state(s) served
- National Certification may be required to meet state licensure requirements
- Specialty certification: FP-C is required within three years of hire
- Current certifications in BLS/CPR; ACLS; BTLIS or PHTLS; and PALS or equivalent
- Advance trauma course: auditing of (1) of the following is acceptable TNCC, ATLS, or TNATC within 6 months of hire (Please note a skills lab must accompany all of the above mentioned advanced trauma courses)
- NRP if program provides high-risk OB and/or neonatal transports within 6 months of hire
- NIMS Training IS 100, 200, 700, 800 upon hire (in Western region, courses must be complete to qualify for an interview)



Flight Paramedic Preferred

Education:

Bachelor's degree in health-related field

Experience:

Previous critical care transport experience

Flight Experience

The Hiring Process

First, we ask that you apply online through the Air Methods Web site. A Human Resources representative will screen your resume to ensure you meet our minimum requirements. If so, your resume will be passed onto the area medical manager who will scrutinize it further. Next, if you further qualify, you will be invited for a base visit. We want to make sure you meet the aviation and maintenance staff, see the aircraft, and tour the base to ensure you think it's a good fit. Next, an interview consisting of a panel assessment, clinical skills assessment, and written examination is completed as part of the interview process. A drug screen and background check are also required. If all of this comes back favorable, you will be offered a position and begin your training.

Pre-employment and annual physicals will be provided to include appropriate immunizations as required, background screening, and a PPD skin test for tuberculosis. The noise level in the work environment is usually loud, requiring hearing protection while in-flight, and at a moderate level when in the hospital environment. Pre-employment and annual audiograms will be provided to monitor for hearing loss. Noise attenuation devices will be provided to all employees to help prevent hearing loss.

Medical Operations and Training

Air Methods has developed standardized medical and operations orientation programs for all new hires. The Regional Medical Services Director oversees orientation with assistance from other Medical Managers and Medical Education Coordinators within the company. Air Methods utilizes both clinical and didactic education in development of its medical teams. We have invested heavily in the METI critical care patient human simulators and a Web-based distance learning system to support the local medical education process. Medical personnel also are required to attend a certain number of staff meetings and the employee must keep current all requisite job criteria.

Air Methods utilizes an electronic medical patient record with direct interface to our QA/QI process. This system supports both corporate and local medical oversight and medical direction. Standard medical crew configuration for Air Methods consists of a flight nurse and a flight paramedic operating under the direction of a local medical director. We have developed national standard protocols and standards of care as well as systematic review of best practices. These are provided for the local medical director to support their efforts, but are subject to local needs and revision as long as the overall corporate standards are met. Air Methods has more than 60 physicians supporting the Community-Based Services (CBS) side of the business; these physicians provide support and oversight within the local service area.

Medical Management

Because of the scope of Air Methods operations, flight nurses and flight paramedics are afforded many opportunities for relocation and upward career mobility. If a flight nurse or flight paramedic is willing to relocate, she can choose from more than 200 bases in 43 states. Additionally, if qualified, nurses and paramedics can move up from a staff position to a variety of medical management and non-clinical positions.



Medical Education Coordinator

Responsible for development and oversight of all initial and recurrent continuing education training for medical crew members within assigned area to achieve and maintain required competencies, coordinates activities to achieve and maintain accreditation, coordinates research in the air medical transport environment, performs duties of active flight crew member as assigned.

Medical Base Supervisor

Responsible for oversight of daily operations of assigned base(s); supervises personnel and coordinates activities of CBS medical personnel; assists management team in implementation and enforcement of new and existing Air Methods CBS standards; performs duties of active flight crew member.

Area Medical Manager

Responsible for oversight of the clinical care provided by CBS, ensuring that it consistently meets or exceeds standard of care; involved in goal setting, planning, problem solving, quality management, clinical education, organizing, leading and communicating same to staff; assists management team in development, implementation and enforcement of new and existing standards; responsible for oversight of quality assurance/ improvement program to insure Air Methods CBS meets its goals and objectives; performs duties of active flight crew member.

Regional Medical Education Coordinator

Responsible for collaboration in the development and oversight of all initial and recurrent continuing education for medical crew members within assigned region to achieve and maintain required competencies; coordinates activities to achieve and maintain accreditation; coordinates research in the air medical transport environment; performs duties of active flight crew member as needed.



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