

Memphis (TN) Fire Department

The Memphis Fire Department is a progressive Fire-based EMS system with over 400 firefighter/paramedics and 1,100 EMT/firefighters. On any given shift, 40-46 of the engine or ladder companies are ALS-capable. Moreover, every paramedic or EMT in the department is a firefighter.

Patient care is the primary focus of the Memphis Fire Department. One statistic that underscores this fact is a Return of Spontaneous Circulation of 16.7% for all cardiac arrest patients (the national average is 5%). The department also has an aggressive STEMI (St Elevated Myocardial Infarction) program. The average time from door-to-balloon is 46 minutes for every call, and the average time from a 9-1-1 call to balloon is 87 minutes. The department also has an induced hypothermia program for resuscitated cardiac arrest victims that has proven invaluable towards a patient's full and complete recovery.

EMS training is both innovative and extensive. Since 1992, all firefighters have to become EMT's and since 2007, they have to become paramedics. The department conducts out-of-the-box training, including a first-in-the-country procedural anatomy lab with complete non-embalmed cadavers utilizing high risk/low frequency life saving procedures, gross anatomy lessons combined with standard and new technology treatment modalities, methodologies and equipment. The department's EMS Quality Management Office offers an innovative Field Training Officer program (FTO) for new employees. The department is also the first fire department in the US to conduct Six Sigma Quality Management Training for key personnel to enhance clinical and system challenges, and continues to improve response and care for pediatric patients through joint programs with area hospitals.

The Memphis Fire Departments' fire-based EMS System is leading the way in educating and exercising the region in disaster readiness initiatives.