

First Responder Route Guide

NAME _____

DATE _____

PERIOD _____

Read the Numbers Correctly

The pay figures below are **U.S. median annual wages from May 2024**. A median is the midpoint for workers at many experience levels. It is **not** a starting salary or a DFW guarantee. Xello may be used to add a current local figure when the geography, date, and salary type are visible.

CAREER	WHAT THE WORK INCLUDES	COMMON ROUTE AFTER HIGH SCHOOL	2024 U.S. MEDIAN
Police and sheriff's patrol officer	Respond to calls, patrol, collect evidence, and write detailed reports	Requirements vary by agency; education ranges from high school to a degree, followed by an agency academy and on-the-job training	\$76,290
Detective / criminal investigator	Gather facts and evidence, interview people, examine records, and investigate serious crimes	Detectives typically begin as police officers and gain law-enforcement experience	\$93,580
Firefighter	Respond to fires and other emergencies, rescue people, provide medical help, and write reports	High school diploma is typical; written/physical tests, fire academy, and locally required credentials such as EMT may follow	\$59,530
Emergency medical technician (EMT)	Assess patients, provide emergency care, transport safely, and document observations and care	Postsecondary EMT program; all states require licensure and requirements vary	\$41,340
Public safety telecommunicator	Answer emergency calls, collect location/details, dispatch responders, and track units	High school diploma is typical, followed by agency training; certification rules vary by state/locality	\$50,730

Sources checked August 9, 2026: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Occupational Outlook Handbook pages for Police and Detectives, Firefighters, EMTs and Paramedics, and Public Safety Telecommunicators. The Singley Academy page currently lists **Law Enforcement** and **Emergency Medical - EMT** pathways.

Compare Three Careers

Choose three careers from the guide.

CAREER 1: _____

One daily task:

One preparation, training, or credential step:

What the median does and does not tell you:

CAREER 2: _____

One daily task:

One preparation, training, or credential step:

What the median does and does not tell you:

CAREER 3: _____

One daily task:

One preparation, training, or credential step:

What the median does and does not tell you:

Compare Civilian and Military Route Systems

Civilian law-enforcement route: Requirements vary by agency and locality. A route may include education, an agency selection process, an academy, and on-the-job training.

Military law-enforcement route: A service member enlists and completes the branch's initial and job-specific training. Military experience may build related skills and credentials. Army COOL is one official program that helps soldiers identify and pursue credentials.

Transfer boundary: Military training or experience does not automatically replace every civilian agency requirement, academy, state license, or certification. Verify the exact civilian requirement before assuming that it transfers.

One similarity between the route systems:

One difference between the route systems:

One civilian requirement or credential you would verify before assuming transfer:

Connect the Cluster and District Routes

1. Connect both current Singley Academy pathways. Name one career from this guide connected to **Law Enforcement** and one connected to **Emergency Medical - EMT**.

2. Which two careers have the biggest difference in preparation? Explain with one fact about each route.

3. Which career would you investigate next? Use one work fact and one preparation fact. Interest is not a commitment.

4. Describe the Law, Public Safety, Corrections and Security cluster. Use at least two careers from the guide and explain what responsibility connects their work.

Optional local check: Xello career _____ · geography shown _____ · figure/range _____ · date checked _____

Sources checked August 9, 2026: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Police and Detectives*; U.S. Army, *Army COOL: Certifications and Credentials*. Requirements vary by agency, locality, service branch, occupation, and credential.