



Ottawa MedVent FAQ

What sort of person is MedVent membership aimed at?

The MedVent program is aimed at youth who are considering a career as a Paramedic, or in other Emergency Services or Health Sciences, and would like to be exposed to aspects of that career option. The program is also aimed towards those youth wishing to provide first-aid services to their community at a level above the norm.

The ideal member is mature, eager to learn and participate, and ready to try new things.

What sort of activities do the MedVents participate in?

MedVent activities can be broken down into two basic groups: **Meetings** and **Events**.

Meetings usually have a “business” component, and a training component, and we’ll often have specific “training-only” sessions.

Events are further broken down into three basic types: Camps, PR Events and Operational Events.

Camps are either our own camps, where we’ll normally focus on training (and fun!), or requests for service at camps where we will provide first aid services to the camp participants.

PR Events include hosting small groups (cubs, beavers, etc.) for tours of Ottawa Paramedic Headquarters, visits to small groups to talk about first aid, paramedics, etc., and other miscellaneous non-operational events.

Operational Events are usually larger events where we will partner with the Paramedic Service, or be specifically engaged by community organizations to either assist in paramedic operations, or provide first aid services to the public.

What sort of time commitments should I expect?

Meetings: 2 per month, currently on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month, plus some special training events through the year. **New recruits must attend 100% of the meetings for at least the first six months, due to the critical training. After that, they must maintain a minimum 60% meeting attendance.**

Training weekend: Early in the Fall, typically between late-August and early-October, there is a full-weekend training session conducted at Paramedic HQ. This is mandatory for all new recruits, since it allows us to bring everybody to the same certification levels, and provides additional training that will get the recruit up to speed quickly, and let them start participating in events. New applicants will be advised of the dates soon after they apply, so they can block off that time in their calendars.

Training Camp: Usually over the winter, we run a full training camp at a local campsite. This is a combination of team-building exercises, and also a lot of skills practice. It’s considered mandatory for all.

Camps: On average 3 weekend camps per year (Friday- Sunday), mostly in the summer and fall months, where we’ll be engaged to provide first-aid services. Not all are mandatory.

Public Relations Events: On average, 1 or 2 events per month, mostly in the fall and early spring. All members are expected to participate in at least some of the PR events. In addition, between October and April the MedVent unit

coordinates tours of Paramedic HQ for scouting/guiding groups. **There is a mandatory minimum number of PR hours and HQ Tour participation required of all members.**

Operational Events: On average, 1.5 Event/Days per month. Busiest event months are February (Winterlude), and the summer months. **All members are required to perform a minimum of fifty hours of operational service per year.**

There are some events that are considered mandatory for all-member participation. This includes Canada Day, and at least a few shifts during Winterlude. Operational events include community events, city events and scout activities like some camps where we will be engaged in first aid from Friday to Sunday.

A good estimate for new members is to expect two mandatory meetings per month, and another two or three days of operational/PR event participation. The MedVent Unit does not take a “summer break”, meetings and events run year-round.

What are the requirements to join the MedVents?

- Be between 15 & 17 years of age.
(If you turn 15 during this calendar year, that counts. You must have at least one more full year of high school remaining)
- Have a valid Standard First Aid certificate (2-day course).
- Have a solid understanding of the time & participation commitments.
- Have a personal e-mail account, and be ready to check it at least daily.
- Attend an interview session, in which your aptitude will be judged, and a brief test of your basic first aid knowledge will be conducted. This allows the recruiting team to “score” applicants for potential membership.

What are the requirements to remain with MedVents if accepted?

- Attend 100% of all meetings for at least the first six months, and then no less than 60% of meetings after that.
- Participate in a minimum of 50 event operational hours per year, including participation in any events deemed mandatory.
- Participate in a minimum of 10 Public Relations (PR) hours per year, including a minimum of 3 Paramedic HQ Tours in the first year (when HQ tours are possible).
- Regularly attend extra Training sessions offered from time to time in order to maintain & improve skills.
- Clearly understand and abide by the Ottawa MedVent Standard Operating Guidelines (SOGs).
- Maintain the supplied uniform & equipment to MedVent standards, and return all promptly on demand.
- Maintain a respectful and helpful attitude at all times.
- Once you turn 18, maintain a clear Police Records Check.
- There is no maximum age once you become a member. As long as you remain in good standing (hours, behavior, etc), you can remain as long as you like.

What is the process for becoming a MedVent?

First, you are required to have a valid Standard First Aid with CPR-B or CPR-C certification from a WSIB-compliant source (Red Cross, St. John Ambulance, etc.). We will not accept recruits without this certification.

Monitor Ottawa MedVent on social media. In early summer, an application form will go online on our site at

<http://www.ottawamedvent.ca>, which you'll complete and submit. You'll get to talk to some of the current members to ask questions and get their personal views on MedVent participation.

Once your application is submitted, carefully watch your e-mail. All formal communications with the unit will be via e-mail, and you are totally responsible for ensuring that you're receiving, reading and acting upon all e-mail received from the Unit.

We'll schedule an interview with several senior members and possibly an advisor. We may ask you to provide a brief resume and/or provide some references from people in your community attesting to your character and ability to meet our standards. There is usually a short testing component to verify some of your first aid skills & knowledge. The annual recruiting drive typically begins in June of each year, with the interviews taking place during July/August. New recruits start attending meetings in September.

If you make it past the interview, you'll become a "recruit". You will need to register with Scouts Canada as a Youth Member, and pay the Scouts Canada annual fee (see: [How much does membership in Ottawa MedVent cost.](#))

By early Fall, you'll usually be issued some uniform gear, and be able to participate in some events and meetings (certain events have higher requirements and are not open to recruits). Once you've attended a few meetings and events and maintained the standards we require, you'll become a "basic member".

When does Ottawa MedVent open for recruitment?

Typically, we'll open the recruitment drive for the coming year starting around the third week of June. We stop accepting applications the end of the second week of July. We'll conduct interviews through July and into August as required. Final selections are made by around mid-August. New recruits will typically be invited to an orientation evening late in August, but officially start the beginning of September.

We'll announce on social media before the recruitment drive opens, and specify exact start and end dates there.

I missed the recruitment drive for this year. Can I still apply?

No. The process is very rigid because there's a lot of work to be done to process applications, and we need to keep it fair for all. There are no exceptions made.

What is the MedVent uniform?

The basic MedVent uniform is a dark blue or black crested shirt, dark blue paramedic-style pants, black CSA-approved safety boots, a yellow reflective jacket or a yellow reflective vest. Other components of the uniform will include PPE (respirators, safety glasses, etc), a ball cap and toque.

What parts of the uniform are provided?

The uniform shirt and pants are provided as early as possible to new members, and a reflective jacket typically by their first outdoor event participation. PPE will also be provided by their first event participation, and other parts as they become available and required.

Each member is required to purchase safety boots (details provided early in September), and an undershirt. Over time, members will be provided other uniform parts (belts, etc.) and equipment.

All provided uniform parts must be returned to the unit on demand, and the member will be required to sign (and have their parents/guardians sign) a contract acknowledging they will receive an invoice for unreturned material. Upon joining, new members will get access to the Standard Operating Guidelines document, which will explain the uniform requirements in detail, which are quite strict.

How much does membership in Ottawa MedVent cost?

There is an annual fee for Scouts Canada, payable each September, currently set at \$292 (2026). This fee covers a scouting year from January to December, with the first year overlapping. Ottawa MedVent does not actually receive any of the Scouts Canada fee.

Each member is required to purchase their own pair of black CSA-approved safety boots ("green triangle"). Prices can vary from around \$150 and up, but a good pair of boots will last several years or longer.

There may be a small (typically around \$20) "camp fee" to partially offset the annual training camp.

And there will sometimes be some optional “personal equipment” purchase options, normally done through a group buy to keep costs down (T-shirts, radio earpiece, etc).

In general, all other Unit operational costs are covered via fundraising and income from certain events, and non-monetary considerations from the Ottawa Paramedic Service.

All mandatory training is provided free of charge, but certain optional advanced certification courses (eg. First Responder) require payment of a course fee. Normally, the Unit is able to provide some subsidization based on member participation above the minimum requirements.

What is the nature of the partnership with the Ottawa Paramedic Service?

The MedVent Unit is under the direct supervision of the Special Operations Branch of the Ottawa Paramedic Service. This branch oversees several specialty units. In addition, special events are coordinated through this branch. This arrangement allows the MedVents to be invited to participate in a variety of special events, including Canada Day, Remembrance Day, etc. Normally this participation would involve partnering with paramedics to assist them in their duties, or in some cases taking on specific assignments of our own.

In addition, selected MedVent members may be invited to participate in paramedic training events or similar. Normally these are open to the more senior members, and some activities may be restricted to members 18 years of age or older.

What is the nature of the partnership with Scouts Canada?

The Medical Venturer program is one of several “Vocational Venturing” programs operated by Scouts Canada across the country. As a Scouting unit, we are obligated to fulfill the basic requirements of any Scouting member. Ottawa MedVent is under the direct oversight of the Voyageur Council Service Alliance, which encompasses several “service” units in the Ottawa area. All members are required to be registered Scouts Canada members, and this membership provides members with liability insurance coverage, and access to Scouts Canada programming.

Operationally, The Ottawa MedVent Unit assists with Scouting PR events, such as visiting groups (cubs, beavers, etc.) or providing tours of Paramedic Headquarters. In addition, the unit is asked to provide first aid services at several large camps each year.

What is the organizational structure of the MedVent Unit?

The MedVent Unit is youth-driven. This means that there is an executive committee comprised of youth members, and any youth member in good standing is eligible to become an executive member. Each year in the fall an election process is performed to select a new youth executive committee. All primary functions of the Unit are performed by youth members, and all major decisions undertaken through agreement of the youth members. There are several adult Advisors, who oversee Unit operations, ensure that all operations are performed within the standards dictated by the Unit itself and the Partners (Ottawa Paramedic Service and Scouts Canada), and provide guidance and assistance where required.

Does time spent in MedVent activities count towards my High School community service hours?

Time spent working on events, including public relations, does count towards the community service hours. Time spent at meetings does not. We do not encourage youth to use MedVent participation as their sole means of accomplishing their community service commitments, and encourage those thinking of MedVent membership primarily as a means to achieve that commitment to rethink their intent.

What sort of things will I learn through the MedVents?

You will receive the following training over the course of several years (some optional):

- Recertification in Standard First Aid (SFA) and CPR-C as required, including upgrading to the “Professional Rescuer” (formerly “Health Care Provider”) level.
- Additional post-certification first aid skills, over and above those required for SFA certification, including team-based first aid provision, oxygen administration and airway management.
- Optional advanced certifications at discounted rates with provider partners, such as First Responder and Emergency Medical Responder.
- Training in Personal Protection Devices and prevention of disease transmission
- Radio communications, focusing on paramedic radio operations
- Familiarity with basic Incident Management and Incident Command concepts
- Familiarity with most equipment routinely used by Paramedics
- Familiarity with basic Paramedic Service operations, and special operations
- And much more...

What other benefits may MedVent membership give me?

- MedVent participation will give you knowledge and experience in aspects of the paramedic career that is unprecedented.
- Many members will enroll in college paramedic programs, and in many cases MedVent membership may have made a difference towards acceptance into the program. In addition, MedVent members typically start their formal education ahead of their classmates due to prior exposure to much of the equipment and procedures they will be learning.
- The MedVent Unit is highly respected in the community, amongst the organizations that regularly interact with us, within Scouts Canada, and within the Ottawa Paramedic Service.
- You will make close friends within the unit, and be able to participate in a variety of fun events not open to many other people.
- You will be providing valuable service to your community, to the Scouting community, and possibly even save lives in the process.

What are the Ottawa MedVent policies & practices with respect to COVID-19?

The policies and practices we follow align and change with Ottawa Paramedic Service guidelines:

- We will train on proper use of PPE, and continue to use PPE with all patient contacts.
- There is a mandatory Covid vaccination policy, in line with the policy of the Ottawa Paramedic Service and City of Ottawa volunteer agencies, with allowances for approved medical exemptions. Proof of two or more vaccinations will need to be submitted.
- There is currently a mandatory self-screening process on entry to Paramedic Headquarters, which will be explained.
- Any changes to policies and practices will be communicated to all members, and followed.