

## Emergency Call Handler

Emergency call handlers are the first point of contact for the public in providing lifesaving advice and assistance. They are responsible for prioritising calls and giving first aid and medical advice over the telephone, in emergency 999 and non-emergency situations. Most jobs are with the NHS.

### The Work

You could be:

- taking calls from the public, doctors or the NHS 24 Service
- recording details from calls on a computer including exact location and details of the emergency
- prioritising calls in order of urgency
- getting as much information out of the caller as possible, to pass on to the ambulance crew before they arrive
- keeping ambulance crew up to date with the situation
- talking with the caller and keeping them calm until the ambulance arrives
- giving first aid and medical advice to people in life threatening situations
- answering non-emergency calls from GP surgeries wanting a patient transferred to hospital.

### Pay

Scottish ambulance staff are paid on the NHS Agenda for Change. The current pay scales are from April 2025. Emergency call handlers are on Band 3, £28,011 to £30,230 a year. Emergency medical dispatchers are on Band 4, £30,353 to £33,016 a year.

You also get a salary enhancement for working any unsocial hours.

### Conditions

- You would work in a control room as part of a team. In Scotland there are six regional centres, based in Hillington, Cardonald, Clydebank, South Queensferry, Dundee and Aberdeen.
- You would often work 12-hour shifts including evenings, nights and weekends, providing a 24-hour cover, 365 days a year.
- You would face a computer monitor and wear a telephone headset.
- You will have to sit at a desk for long periods of time.
- You would need to work quickly to meet the standards for response times.

### Getting In

- There are no formal entry requirements, however a good level of literacy is required.
- You must have some experience working with in a service-based environment.
- You should be familiar with computer software packages.
- good keyboard skills with a high level of accuracy.
- You will require a satisfactory criminal record check from Disclosure Scotland to show that you are

suitable for this type of work. Contact [Disclosure Scotland](#) for details on the type you would need.

Job vacancies appear on the [myjobscotland](#) website.

## What Does It Take

You must be:

- able to communicate with people of all ages and from different backgrounds
- able deal with people in distress
- able to follow clear instructions
- able to remain calm under pressure
- able to prioritise, solve problems and make decisions
- patient and understanding
- able to concentrate and stay focussed for long periods of time
- tactful and diplomatic
- able to work well as part of a team.

## Training

- Full training will be given on the job.
- There is a 12-month probationary period while you complete your training, which includes a one-week induction, three weeks of classroom training and 10 weeks of working with a buddy.
- Training varies between emergency and patient transport services.
- Training includes using the switchboard, radio communications and other equipment.
- It also covers first aid, the work of accident and emergency crews, prioritising calls, giving telephone advice and using the computerised command and control systems.

## Getting On

- You will be required to complete 24 hours of continual educational development every two years, which is for re-certification as an emergency call handler.
- After completing your training and have shown you are competent in call handling, you could apply for a position as an emergency medical dispatcher (EMD).
- EMDs are responsible for ensuring the nearest and correct type of vehicle and crew are dispatched out to an emergency. This could be an ambulance, rapid response car, motorcycle or air ambulance helicopter.
- With further experience you could become a control room manager.

## Contacts

### NHS Scotland Careers

Website: [www.careers.nhs.scot](http://www.careers.nhs.scot)

Website (2): [jobs.scot.nhs.uk](http://jobs.scot.nhs.uk)

### Scottish Ambulance Service

Website: [www.scottishambulance.com](http://www.scottishambulance.com)

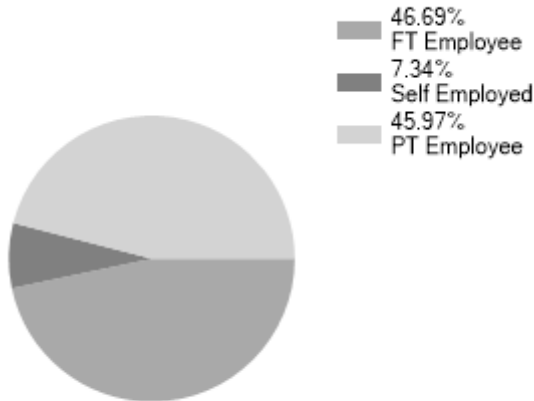
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Facebook: [www.facebook.com/scotambservice](http://www.facebook.com/scotambservice)



## Statistics

Employment Status UK %

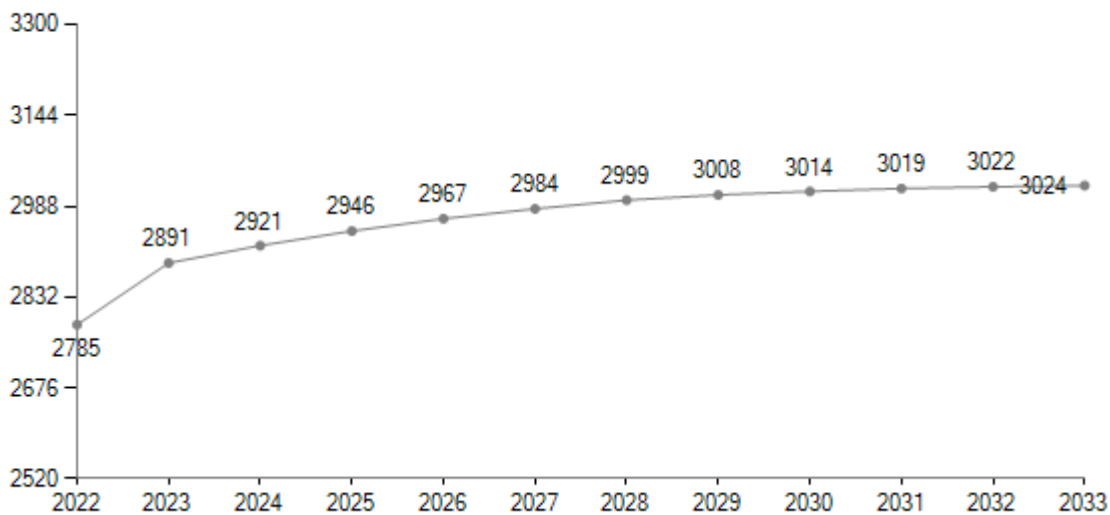


Past Unemployment - Scotland

No Claimant statistics available for Scotland.

LMI data powered by [LMI for All](#)

Predicted Employment in Scotland



LMI data powered by [Lightcast](#)